R & E Grant Application 25-27 Biennium

Project #: 25-024

Whetstone Creek Large Wood

Project Information

Requested Cycle:	25-3
R&E Project Request:	$25,000
Other Funding:	$68,000
Total Project:	$93,000
Spending Start Date:	7/1/2025
Spending End Date:	6/30/2027
Project Start Date:	7/1/2025
Project End Date:	6/30/2027
Organization:	ODFW

Applicant Information

Name:	Geoffrey gerdes
Address:	1495 E. Gregory Rd. Central Point, OR 97502
Email:	Geoffrey.g.gerdes@odfw.oregon.gov

Past Recommended or Completed Projects

This applicant has no previous projects that match criteria.

Location Information

Where is it?

The project will occur on private land owned or managed by another party

Landowner Information

Name:	Linda Marr
Affiliation:	Owner
Address:	987 B St Ashland, OR, 97520
Phone:	541-324-1390
Email:	marrlinda@gmail.com

Site Description

Street Address, nearest intersection, or other descriptive location.

8422 Highbanks Rd, Central Point, OR 97502

Directions to the site from the nearest highway junction.

Brief Directions to the Site: From Central Point, travel north on I5 for 3 miles. Turn right on US 140, and continue for 4 miles. Turn left onto High Banks Rd, and continue for 2.5 miles until crossing Whetstone Creek.

Following project completion, public anglers will be allowed the following level of access to the project site:

No access

Please describe what leases, easements, agreements are in place to ensure angler access to the project site, and what is the length of each agreement.

NA

Dominant Land Use Type:

Aggregate mining

Project Location

General Project Location.

County:	Jackson
Town/City:	Central Point
ODFW Dist:	Upper Rogue
Stream/Lake/Estuary Name:	Whetstone Creek
Sub-basin:	Rogue River
Tributary of:	Rogue River

Specific Project Location.

Latitude	Longitude
42.43345	-122.92888

Project Summary

Project Summary

Please provide a couple sentence summary of the proposal.

Wood structures will be placed in Whetstone Creek to provide fish cover and overwinter habitat for juvenile steelhead. The project will further promote channel sinuosity, pool scour, and bedload sorting. Large wood will further increase water surface elevations and promote riparian growth.

Overall Project Goals

Describe the primary goals or outcomes of the entire project, including elements not requesting funding from R&E.

This project aims to restore ecosystem function and instream habitat for aquatic species in Whetstone Creek. The total project will remove invasive riparian plants, restore channel and floodplain complexity, and promote aquatic ecosystem function.

Primary objectives of R&E funding

Please describe the measurable objectives for the R&E portion of the funding request.

Add 3 large wood structures in Whetstone Creek in summer of 2026 using excavators to promote channel roughness and refuge for Rogue River steelhead.

Current Situation/Justification

Please describe the current situation and explain why this funding is needed.

Historic land use in Whetstone Creek post European-American colonization has ranged from agricultural ditching and ranching to aggregate mining, resulting in a stream that has been modified from its historic conditions. High stream temperatures, lack of channel complexity, no physical cover for fish, and an impaired riparian area are the results of local development of aggregate mining and livestock grazing. Woody riparian vegetation exists in some isolated stands, and patches of willow have been struggling to persist despite streamside planting events.

Approximately half of the treatment area consists of non-native grasses or blackberry.

The stream channel has an average Active Channel Height of .65ft deep, average Active Channel

Width of 20ft, and an average slope of 2%. Stream channel characteristics fit into the acceptable range illustrated in the Guide to Placement of Wood, Boulders, and Gravel for Habitat Restoration. This grant application is to place large wood in Whetstone Creek to begin remediation of past land uses. Wood will be placed in stream and in the floodplain to build direct fish habitat and promote channel sinuosity, pool scour, and bedload sorting.

Recreation and Commercial Benefit

This project will provide benefits to:

Recreational fisheries

Explain how this project will contribute to current (and/or potential) fishing opportunities, access, or fisheries management.

The Rogue River provides a unique fishing opportunity to fish for and harvest wild steelhead up to 5 months of the year. This recreational opportunity extends from the mouth of the Rogue to William Jess dam. Habitat restoration activities that increase juvenile steelhead rearing habitat will continue to promote and increase this recreational opportunity. The Rogue-South Coast

Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan (RSP) identifies habitat restoration as important to addressing population viability of steelhead and other salmonids. Particularly important is addressing juvenile rearing, the bottleneck for all RSP species.

Percent benefit split between Commercial and Recreational anglers:

0 % Commercial
100 % Recreational

Please explain, or justify, how the percentage split was determined:

Wild Steelhead are not commercially harvestable, and appear only as bycatch. All Rogue River wild steelhead legal take is from recreational anglers.

This project has been identified as an ODFW priority for:

Local/watershed

Does this project directly support implementation of the ODFW Strategic Plan and/or current Fish Division priorities?

Yes

This project supports multiple ODFW strategic plan goals, including Objective 1.1: effective stewardship of Oregon's fish, wildlife, and their habitats..." and Strategy 1.1.1 "tactic - include priority actions identified in existing fish and wildlife conservation plans". The RSP identifies habitat restoration as a priority in the Rogue Watershed.

Please briefly explain when this was identified as a priority and what process or workgroup was used to identified this as an ODFW priority.

The RSP identifies habitat complexity as a limiting factor to RSP covered species, including coho and steelhead. This conservation and management plan was developed in 2021 with a wide range of contributors aimed at ensuring the contued viability of steelhead, coho salmon, and cutthroat trout.

Identify any plan or other document that identifies this priority.

Rogue-South Coast Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan. "Implement actions to increase habitat structure/complexity identified in coho salmon strategic action plan."

Is this project part of an approved Salmon-Trout Enhancement Program (STEP) activity?

Yes

A STEP Salmon and Trout Advisory Committee mini grant was submitted and accepted for riparian restoration at this site.

This project is intended to benefit the following species:

Coho Salmon
Winter Steelhead
Summer Steelhead

This project will benefit anglers or fishery by providing:

Angling Opportunity

Angling Opportunity

This project will:

Enhance natural production of fish stocks to levels that allow for recreational fishing opportunities
Restore a degraded fishery

Project Description

Schedule

Activity	Date	RE Funding
Engineering design completion for large wood placement	7/1/2025	No
Begin riparian invasive plant treatment	7/1/2025	No
Complete riparian invasive plant brushing	11/1/2025	No
Continue riparian invasive plant maintenance	12/31/2030	No
Finalize in-stream permits (SHPO, DEQ, DSL, Army Corps, ODFW)	6/1/2026	No
Place large wood in-stream following engineering design.	9/15/2025	No

Permits

Permit	Secured?	Date Expected
Joint Permit (Army Corps, DSL, DEQ)	No	6/1/2026
SHPO authorization	No	1/23/2025
ODFW Fish Passage Letter of Authorization	No	
Jackson County - Riparian Landscape Plan, Land Use Planning	No	6/1/2026
NPDES 2300A Pesticide General Permit	No	7/1/2025

Project Design and Description

Please describe in detail the methods or approach that will be used to achieve the project objectives.

This project approaches stream restoration along two parallel but connected paths. The first, riparian restoration, involves the physical removal of invasive riparian plants such as blackberry and teasel using brushing and spraying methods. Brushing has already been completed, and funding has been secured for maintenance until 2030. This activity will allow native vegetation to recolonize without the need for intensive planting. This "release and recruit" strategy has been used to significant effect in Rogue River tributary restoration. However, contingency dollars have also been secured to plant native plants if too few native riparian plants are growing after several years of maintenance.

The second path for ecological restoration follows instream placement of large wood. Large wood is an important component of Pacific Northwest streams but has been eliminated in many, including Whetstone Creek. Due to downstream infrastructure, we have secured funding for and completed a contract to build several engineered log jams. This will reduce the risk to a downstream bridge and limit liability to ODFW. The design calls for the placement of three log jams within Whetstone Creek's channel, and adds logs to the floodplain for increased roughness.

Engineering

Does the project involve capital improvement, engineering, site grading or other construction?

Yes

Not associated with ODFW

Project Management and Maintenance

What is the life expectancy of R&E funded construction, structures, equipment, supplies, data or fishery?

Life expectancy of softwood logs in-stream is typically no greater than 30 years. No maintenance is anticipated for these log structures. No further funding will be required for this project by R&E funds.

Who is responsible for long term management, maintenance, and oversight of the project beyond

what is funded by R&E.

No maintenance is anticipated on the large wood placement that would be funded by this project. Continuing riparian maintenance to the end of 2030 is currently funded from other sources.

Will the project require ongoing maintenance?

No

Is there a plan to collect baseline data and to conduct monitoring efforts to measure the effectiveness of the project?

Yes

Two monitoring efforts will take place. Photo point monitoring will evaluate landscape impacts of restoration over time. Fish population surveys using electroshocking methods will be used to evaluate fish population response.

Project Funding

Funding

Have you applied for OWEB funding for this project?

No

Has this proposal, or similar proposal for this project location, previously been denied by OWEB or other funding source?

No

Other Funding Source	Type	Secured	Dollar Value	Comments
Oregon Wildlife Foundation	Cash	Secured	5,000	
Watchable Wildlife Foundation	Cash	Secured	15,000	
Salmon and Trout Enhancement Board Mini Grant	Cash	Secured	2,000	
Middle Rogue Steelheaders	Cash	Pending	4,000	
ODFW District Habitat Savings	Cash	Secured	42,000	
		Total	68,000	

Budget

Item	Unit Number	Unit Cost	In-kind or non-cash contributions	Funding from other sources	R&E Funds	Total Costs
PROJECT MANAGEMENT						
		SUBTOTAL				
IN-HOUSE PERSONNEL						
		SUBTOTAL				
CONTRACTED SERVICES						
Engineering and permit contractors (wetland delineation, no-rise analysis)				42,000		42,000
Riparian Restoration				22,000		22,000
Large Wood Placement #1				4,000	1,500	5,500
Large Wood Placement #2					5,500	5,500
Large Wood Placement #3					6,000	6,000
Large Wood Placement #4					6,000	6,000
Large Wood Placement #5					6,000	6,000
		SUBTOTAL		68,000	25,000	93,000
TRAVEL						
		SUBTOTAL				
SUPPLIES/MATERIALS						
		SUBTOTAL				
EDUCATION/OUTREACH						
		SUBTOTAL				
EQUIPMENT						
		SUBTOTAL				
FISCAL ADMINISTRATION						
		SUBTOTAL				
		BUDGET TOTAL	0	68,000	25,000	93,000

Internal Review Results

Review Score: 3.7 out of 5

(1 = Do Not Fund, 2 = Strengthen Proposal, 3 = Recommend with Conditions, 4 = Recommend, 5 = Strongly Recommend)

Summary of Review Team Comments

The review team was supportive of this project, and gave it a combined score of 3.7.

Specific Review Team Comments

The review team had some concerns about adequate fish passage at the large wood structures, and if the structures are fully channel spanning then fish passage review from ODFW would be needed. Are there any concerns of whether these structures could move during a high water event and cause damage to downstream infrastructure such as culverts or bridges?

Specific Review Team Questions

Are the large wood structures channel spanning? If they are, has adequate fish passage been accounted for in the design?

The large wood structures are not channel-spanning. They will be embedded in the bank with the bole of the tree within the active channel but will not span the entire channel. Further, Fish Passage consultation was sought earlier in the project and a letter dated March 20, 2025, was issued stating the project does not require a Fish Passage Authorization. I can provide this letter on request.

The application mentions 3 large wood structures, but the budget shows 5. Are the additional large wood structures in stream, or are they up on the floodplain?

Three large wood structures will be placed in Whetstone Creek, two will be placed on the floodplain to add habitat complexity and roughness.

Does the applicant have any data showing how many fish use Whetstone Creek? Is this an important tributary for salmon and steelhead?

Rogue Watershed Fish staff placed a passive hoop trap within the vicinity of the project for 3 weeks in 2006 and found 39 juvenile Southern Oregon Northern California Coast (SONCC) coho salmon (a federally threatened species) and 35 Rogue steelhead. This stream provides low velocity habitat for rearing salmonids during even the highest of winter and spring flows in the Rogue River. All tributaries accessible by SONCC coho salmon are considered critical habitat for the SONCC Coho Final Recovery Plan.

Additional Files

Budget Information

Maps

Photos

Cross Section	*Cross Section Photo*
Cross Section Photo 2	*Cross Section Photo*
Treatment Reach Photo	*Aerial Photo*

Design Information

Large Wood Plans	*Engineering Plans*

Management Plans and Supporting Documents

Authorization Page	*Authorization Page*

Permits and Reviews

Partnerships

Landowner Permission	*Landowner Permission*

Public Comment

Middle Rogue Steelheaders Letter of Support	*Letter of Support*
ODFW Letter of Support	*Letter of Support*
Watchable Wildlife Letter of Support	*Letter of Support*

Administrative Documents

Completion Report

A completion report has not been submitted for this project.