PRAIRIE OAKS AND PEOPLE

PROFILE PROJECTS

This document is a companion document to the Prairie, Oaks and People – a conservation business plan to revitalize prairie oak habitats of the Pacific Northwest.

Profile Projects

These projects are intended to showcase the range of projects that support the goal and objectives outlined in Prairie, Oaks and People – a conservation business plan to revitalize prairie oak habitats of the Pacific Northwest.

If you would like to update or add a project please contact Bruce Taylor, Pacific Birds Oak and Prairie Partnership Coordinator,

bruce@pacificbirds.org

GOAL:

Healthy and resilient prairie-oak habitats

across the Pacific Northwest that sustain all of their native species and generate benefits for current and future generations.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Recover populations

of 41 imperiled species and establish the ecological and social foundations to support their persistence over time.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Restore and maintain habitats

needed to conserve the biological diversity of prairie-oak ecosystems throughout their historic range.

PROJECT INDEX

Creswell Oaks Protection

CRESWELL, OREGON

DESCRIPTION:

Purchase of a conservation easement on this 1,700-acre property will protect one of the largest areas of oak habitats in the Willamette Valley. It supports remnant legacy oaks in a savanna setting, the largest population of Oregon Vesper Sparrow in the Willamette Valley, and a diverse matrix of oak and other habitat types. The most immediate threat is habitat conversion via the potential development of a golf course over a large portion of the property.

CONTACT:

ELSPETH HILTON KIM
Center for Natural Lands Management
ekim@cnlm.org

OUTCOMES:

A conservation easement will protect ecological values, initiate a major collaborative habitat restoration effort, and provide significant research opportunities.

COSTS:

$6,000,000

TIMEFRAME

5-10 YEARS

Wet Prairie and Oak Habitat Conservation at Lacamas Prairie

VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON

DESCRIPTION:

Supporting the only known population of Bradshaw's lomatium in Washington State and five other rare plant species, the Lacamas Prairie Natural Area, managed by the Washington Department of Natural Resources, currently protects 200 acres of wet prairie and oak habitats. This project will provide permanent protections for the remaining lands within the 1,820-acre boundary and work to restore habitat conditions on 100 acres of priority wet prairie and Oregon white oak habitats in one of the most rapidly developing counties in the state.

CONTACT:

DAVID WILDERMAN
Washington Natural Areas Program
david.wilderman@dnr.wa.gov

OUTCOMES:

Permanent protection of 1,600 acres within the Lacamas Prairie natural area and restoration 100 acres of wet prairie, Oregon white oak, and associated riparian habitat.

COSTS:

$6,500,000

TIMEFRAME

10 YEARS

Regional Conservation Partnerships Program: Willamette and Umpqua Valley Oak Habitats

UMPQUA VALLEY AND UPPER WILLAMETTE VALLEY, OREGON

DESCRIPTION:

Sixty partners have convened to develop a Conservation Implementation Strategy and synthesize the numerous oak habitat assessments including current and past oak restoration activities into one map to identify and prioritize key habitat restoration projects on private lands for funding through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Regional Conservation Partnerships Program. The group will be submitting a pre-proposal to the Natural Resource Conservation Service in spring 2017.

CONTACT:

DONNA SCHMITZ
Benton Soil and Water Conservation District
dschmitz@bentonswcd.org

OUTCOMES:

Creation of a network of private and public lands with highly functioning oak and prairie habitats. Target goals include close to 10,000 acres of oak and prairie habitats restored.

COSTS:

$10,000,000

WITH MATCH FUNDS FROM OTHER OAK HABITAT PROJECTS APPROXIMATELY $5,000,000

TIMEFRAME

2018 - 2023

Oak Restoration to Provide Connectivity for Songbird Range Expansions Under Climate Change

MEDFORD, OREGON

CONTACT:

JAIME STEPHENS
Klamath Bird Observatory
jlh@klamathbird.org

DESCRIPTION:

The Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network has a landscape scale restoration project underway at the Table Rock Management Area in southern Oregon, near the northern end of the range for several priority songbird species. The Table Rocks area is projected to favor oak habitats under climate change scenarios, and may play an important role for bird species experiencing northward range shifts. To date, 200 acres have been restored, 500 acres of restoration are under way, and 700 acres are shovel-ready for restoration over the next three years.

OUTCOMES:

Restoration of 700 acres of oak habitat, and doubling of use by Oak Titmouse, a songbird experiencing steep population decline.

COSTS:

$2,000,000

TIMEFRAME

5 YEARS

Evaluating Effectiveness of Oak Release on Waldron Island

WALDRON ISLAND, WASHINGTON

DESCRIPTION:

Point Disney, Waldron Island, has one of the largest areas of oak habitat between South Puget Sound and Vancouver Island and is currently managed by the San Juan Preservation Trust. Two phases of oak release have been completed in the highest quality oak woodlands. Evaluation will assess effects on biodiversity through avian, botanical, and lepidopteran surveys. The next phase of the project is in the adjacent lower-density oak woodland.

CONTACT:

DEAN DOUGHERTY
San Juan Preservation Trust
ddougherty@sjpt.org

OUTCOMES:

A metric to assess the effectiveness of oak release work in marginal oak habitat.

COSTS:

$30,000

TIMEFRAME

2017-2018

Grassland Restoration for Taylor's Checkerspot at Helliwell Provincial Park

HORNBY ISLAND, BRITISH COLUMBIA

DESCRIPTION:

Helliwell Provincial Park protects the largest known expanse of native grassland remaining in the northern Strait of Georgia. The park supported Taylor's Checkerspot butterfly as recently as 20 years ago. Butterfly habitat has declined due to conifer encroachment into the grasslands. In 2015, a pilot project began removing encroaching Douglas-fir and restoring native vegetation. Additional restoration will prepare a 40-acre portion of the park for reintroduction of Taylor's Checkerspot and benefit at least 20 additional grassland species at risk.

CONTACT:

JENNIFER HERON
British Columbia Ministry of Environment
Jennifer.Heron@gov.bc.ca

OUTCOMES:

Forty acres of native grassland enhanced or restored to suitable habitat for Taylor's Checkerspot.

COSTS:

$300,000

TIMEFRAME

5 YEARS

Prairie, Savanna, and Oak Woodland Restoration in Howard Buford Recreation Area

EUGENE, OREGON

DESCRIPTION:

The 2,200-acre Howard Buford Recreation Area supports one of the largest remaining blocks of prairie and oak habitat in public ownership in the Willamette Valley. A detailed Habitat Management Plan is nearing completion, which will guide restoration work over a 15-year period. To date, partners have restored over 200 acres of prairie and oak habitat.

CONTACT:

ED ALVERSON
Lane County Parks
Edward.Alverson@co.lane.or.us

OUTCOMES:

Restoration and enhancement of 425 acres of prairie, savanna, and oak woodland with interpretation and outreach activities involving prairie and oak habitat conservation.

COSTS:

$4,250,000

TIMEFRAME

5 YEARS

Oak Habitat Restoration on the Tahuya Peninsula

KITSAP COUNTY, WASHINGTON

DESCRIPTION:

Oak Patch Natural Area Preserve, managed by the Washington Department of Natural Resources, protects the largest Oregon white oak habitat on the Tahuya Peninsula. This 20-acre site supports populations of Puget Sound fritillary and hoary elfin butterflies, both Washington Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Fire suppression and invasive plant species have altered habitat conditions and threaten to further degrade the site. This project will restore structural conditions and species composition within the oak woodlands.

OUTCOMES:

Restoration activities will restore and enhance 20 acres of Oregon white oak habitat.

CONTACT:

DAVID WILDERMAN
Washington Natural Areas Program
david.wilderman@dnr.wa.gov

COSTS:

$100,000

TIMEFRAME

5 YEARS

Improving Habitat Restoration by Assessing Soil Factors That Control Plant Establishment

PUGET LOWLANDS, WASHINGTON AND WILLAMETTE VALLEY, OREGON

DESCRIPTION:

Habitat restoration is crucial for successful land conservation in prairies that support rare plants, butterflies, birds and other species. The seeds used in restorations are expensive, and site preparation can take years and thousands of dollars per acre, but plantings frequently fail. A regional assessment of soil conditions and their effects on seedling growth from seed is urgently needed to improve restoration success and efficiency.

CONTACT:

TOM KAYE
Institute for Applied Ecology
tom@appliedeco.org

OUTCOMES:

Connecting plant establishment from seed to specific soil conditions will result in better restoration success and more efficient use of our seed resources, making restoration possible at larger scales to benefit more species and habitats.

COSTS:

$1,400,000

TIMEFRAME

4 YEARS

Improving Site- Based Measures of Success Using Invertebrate Indicators

PORTLAND-VANCOUVER METROPOLITAN REGION

DESCRIPTION:

Current measures for prairie and savanna quality focus almost entirely on vegetation characteristics. Beginning in 2016, Metro and the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation are embarking on a partnership to better define the relationship between vegetation and invertebrate diversity in prairie and savanna ecosystems. Future work will aim to test preliminary findings, and develop and test robust field invertebrate-based measures of success for prairie and oak habitat.

OUTCOMES:

Revised measures of success for prairie and savanna habitat based on invertebrate indicators.

CONTACT:

JONATHAN SOLL
Metro Regional Government
Jonathan.Soll@oregonmetro.gov

SARINA JEPSEN
Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation
sarina@xerces.org

COSTS:

$300,000

TIMEFRAME

4 YEARS

Tracking Landscape Change to Guide Prairie-Oak Conservation

REGION-WIDE (NORTHWEST CALIFORNIA TO BRITISH COLUMBIA)

DESCRIPTION:

Understanding net losses and gains in prairie and oak habitat within the region can help the conservation community, landowners, funders, and policy makers understand where and how to target our limited conservation dollars. Currently, there is no system for tracking landscape change. Further investment is needed to create a spatial database and decision support tool that partners can use to input project data, view historic and current prairie-oak losses and gains, and quantify net conservation outcomes.

CONTACT:

BRUCE TAYLOR
Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture
bruce_taylor@pacificbirds.org

OUTCOMES:

Conservation partners and policy makers have data needed to assess the impact of conservation actions and habitat changes on a landscape scale.

COSTS:

$200,000

TIMEFRAME

ONGOING

Limiting Factors Assessment for Oregon Vesper Sparrow

PUGET LOWLANDS, WILLAMETTE VALLEY, AND KLAMATH MOUNTAINS

DESCRIPTION:

The imperiled population status of Oregon vesper sparrow warrants a sense of urgency. However, determining appropriate conservation actions requires an understanding of the cause(s) of the population status. Results from recent efforts indicate that demographic parameters (e.g., survival, productivity, recruitment/dispersal) are likely primary factors in the population declines and extirpations.

CONTACT:

BOB ALTMAN
American Bird Conservancy
baltman@abcbirds.org

OUTCOMES:

Site-level and regional understanding of the role of demographic factors in the population decline of Oregon Vesper Sparrow will provide land managers the essential knowledge needed to stabilize and recover populations.

COSTS:

$360,000

TIMEFRAME

3 YEARS

Reintroduction of Slender-billed White-breasted Nuthatch to the Puget Lowlands

PUGET LOWLANDS, WASHINGTON AND WILLAMETTE VALLEY, OREGON

DESCRIPTION:

The slender-billed white-breasted nuthatch was historically common in oak habitats of the south Puget Lowlands, but has been gone as a breeding bird since the late 1990s. Although significant habitat conservation efforts during the last decade have increased the extent and quality of oak habitats in many parts of the region, the nuthatch is not likely to return on its own. This project will reintroduce the nuthatch to the Puget Lowlands with birds from a stable breeding population in the Willamette Valley.

CONTACT:

GARY SLATER
Center for Natural Lands Management
gslater@cnlm.org

OUTCOMES:

A viable population of nuthatches in multiple breeding populations, and advanced education and awareness of the conservation of cavity-nesting birds and oak habitats.

COSTS:

$400,000

TIMEFRAME

5 YEARS

Reintroduction of Golden Paintbrush to Western Prairies

PUGET LOWLANDS, WASHINGTON AND WILLAMETTE VALLEY, OREGON

DESCRIPTION:

Golden paintbrush is a threatened species in Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. It has declined to the point where it is extirpated from the wild in Oregon and few populations remain elsewhere. A reintroduction program for the species has been initiated, but needs to continue through 2022 in order to ensure recovery success through seed production, habitat preparation, and planting.

CONTACT:

PETER DUNWIDDIE
pdunwidd@u.washington.edu

OUTCOMES:

A regional network of restored populations of golden paintbrush will support its removal from the endangered species list. In addition, this species is a food source for the endangered Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, so restoring its populations improves the viability of the butterfly as well.

COSTS:

$2,000,000

TIMEFRAME

6 YEARS

Reintroduction of Taylor's checkerspot butterfly to Oregon and Washington

PUGET LOWLANDS, WASHINGTON AND WILLAMETTE VALLEY, OREGON

DESCRIPTION:

Populations of Taylor's checkerspot butterfly have declined to the point that the species is listed as endangered, and the remaining wild populations face multiple threats. A reintroduction program has been initiated in Washington, but not in Oregon, where only two wild populations remain. Reintroduction of the species to new locations through habitat restoration, captive rearing and release, and ongoing habitat conservation is crucial to ward off extinction and recover the species.

CONTACT:

MARY LINDERS
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mary.Linders@dfw.wa.gov

OUTCOMES:

Multiple, stable and connected populations of Taylor's checkerspot butterfly will be established across the species historic range in Oregon and Washington sufficient to recover the species.

COSTS:

$4,000,000

TIMEFRAME

10 YEARS

Beacon Hill Park Species at Risk Habitat Improvement Project

BEACON HILL PARK, BRITISH COLUMBIA

DESCRIPTION:

Beacon Hill Park, the largest urban park in Victoria, contains small remnant populations of five Garry Oak ecosystem plant species protected under the federal Species at Risk Act: Deltoid Balsamroot, Purple Sanicle, Dense-flowered Lupine, Howell's Triteleia, and Yellow Montane Violet. The park also supported Golden Paintbrush until the late 1990's. Conservation work, including habitat restoration and a reintroduction of Golden Paintbrush, will continue through 2017.

CONTACT:

THOMAS MUNSON
City of Victoria Parks
TMunson@victoria.ca

OUTCOMES:

Enhanced population counts of all species, improved protection measures at all plant sites, and education of public regarding the importance of protecting Species at Risk in City of Victoria Parks.

COSTS:

$110,000

TIMEFRAME

2 YEARS

Supporting and Sustaining a Regional Prairie-Oak Partnership

BRITISH COLUMBIA

DESCRIPTION:

Regional partnerships are essential to coordinate prairie-oak efforts among partners. The Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team of British Columbia has been in existence since 1999, but funding to support staff time is needed to sustain an effective partnership.

CONTACT:

VAL SCHAEFER
Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team Society
schaefer@uvic.ca

OUTCOMES:

Leadership that will coordinate annual meetings, function as a clearing house for information and networking, provide support for development of proposals, conduct outreach for participation, and serve as the linkage to other regional partnerships.

COSTS:

$180,000

FOR A PART-TIME COORDINATOR FOR EACH ECOREGION

TIMEFRAME

3 YEARS

Development of East Cascades Oaks Partnership

SOUTH-CENTRAL WASHINGTON AND NORTH-CENTRAL OREGON

DESCRIPTION:

This effort will engage multiple partners and dozens of stakeholders who currently work on Oregon White Oak conservation in the East Cascades in a coordinated planning effort to prioritize protection, restoration and enhancement opportunities. Planning will place an emphasis on a diversity of stand types with intact understories and predicted resilience to climate change.

CONTACT:

LINDSAY CORNELIUS
Columbia Land Trust
lindsayc@columbialandtrust.org

OUTCOMES:

Partners will implement conservation on priority lands across ownerships, cultivate funding sources, improve the exchange of information, implement better science, and undertake focused outreach and advocacy activities to improve outcomes for Oregon White Oak habitats in the East Cascades.

COSTS:

$80,000/YEAR

FOR PART-TIME COORDINATOR

TIMEFRAME

5 YEARS

Supporting and Sustaining the Northwestern California Oak Network

NORTHWESTERN CALIFORNIA

DESCRIPTION:

The Northwestern California Oak Network (NCON) was formed in 2015 by a core group of scientists and natural resource managers who meet regularly with a focus on policy, management and research. A coordinator is needed to solidify the group, maintain momentum, and expand the group's capacity to achieve results. Funds are also needed to develop and maintain a website, which would serve as a clearinghouse for oak-related resources and information, as well as a public interface for NCON.

CONTACT:

MATHEW COCKING
NRCS Eureka
Mathew.cocking@ca.usda.gov

OUTCOMES:

More effective coordination of partners, development of an NCON website, and staff support to coordinate quarterly meetings, maintain the website, and expand linkages with other regional oak networks, teams, and collaboratives.

COSTS:

$180,000

FOR A PART-TIME COORDINATOR AND COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

TIMEFRAME

3 YEARS

Oak Woodland Product and Market Feasibility Analysis

NORTHWESTERN CALIFORNIA

DESCRIPTION:

Without an economic return for oak habitats on private land, these ecosystems remain under threat of conversion to profit-viable non-oak enterprises. While markets for oak products are not currently apparent, the opportunity for sustainable, commercial resource use from oak woodlands is very real. Analysis is needed to investigate whether a self-sustaining oak resource economy is possible, as it would be a critical step toward increasing the societal and cultural value of oaks.

CONTACT:

LENYA QUINN-DAVIDSON
University of California, Eureka
lquinndavidson@ucanr.edu

OUTCOMES:

Analysis of potential marketable resources produced in oak ecosystems, their relation to processed and finished products, the feasibility of a self-sustainable oak industry, and limitations that currently hinder market development.

COSTS:

$200,000

TIMEFRAME

4 YEARS

Northern Willamette Valley Regional Prairie-Oak Priority Setting

PORTLAND-VANCOUVER METROPOLITAN REGION

DESCRIPTION:

The 30-member Intertwine Alliance Oak and Prairie Working Group will prioritize oak and prairie conservation in the 1.83 million-acre Greater Portland-Vancouver Region through 4 related mapping and analysis projects examining distribution and connectivity of oak habitats and prairie or semi-natural grasslands. Partners will then develop a prioritization model to help drive future investment in the suite of oak-prairie habitat types.

CONTACT:

LORI HENNINGS
Metro Regional Government
Lori.Hennings@oregonmetro.gov

OUTCOMES:

Map of existing oak and prairie habitat; habitat specific connectivity assessment tool; priority model.

COSTS:

$700,000

TIMEFRAME

2016-2019