



Date: May 16, 2019

To: **The Honorable Michael Dembrow, Chair**
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources



House Bill 2953A

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Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

The Department of Fish and Wildlife appreciates the opportunity to comment on House Bill 2953A. House Bill 2953A would require the Department of Forestry to report on outcomes of projects pursued in Oregon under the Good Neighbor Authority Agreement (GNA).

In 2018, the Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) received funding from Department of Forestry (ODF) to add a GNA coordinator position for a one-year period within ODFW. This position greatly increased the number of projects ODFW could cooperatively plan and implement with US Forest Service (USFS) to enhance fish and wildlife habitat.

Since the Master Good Neighbor Authority Agreement was signed in 2016, ODFW has initiated several GNA Supplemental Project Agreements (SPAs) in six National Forests (NF) and two with USFS Region 6. Additionally, the ODFW GNA Coordinator has begun the process to develop several more projects. Below are some examples of these efforts;

Completed and on-going projects;

- White-nose Syndrome Surveillance in bats (USFS Region 6) – implemented 2016, funds added in 2017 and extended through 2019;
- Baker Wildlife Inventory (Wallowa-Whitman NF) – implemented and completed in 2017;
- Bald-Angel Road Decommissioning Project (Wallowa-Whitman NF) – implemented 2017, initial work completed (29 miles of road closed), SPA modified in 2018 to extend through 2019 due to cost savings from original agreement; and
- Damon Aspen Restoration (Malheur NF) – implemented 2017, SPA modified in 2018 to add funds and extend through 2019.
- Early Seral and Meadow Restoration Management (Siuslaw NF)
 - The USFS is funding ODFW \$20,000 to maintain early seral habitat in 4 meadows, totaling 20 acres of ridge-top, forest area.
 - Status: SPA executed in May 2019.

Projects in Development;

- Western Pond Turtle Site Monitoring and Assessment for Restoration Opportunities (Region 6)
 - The USFS is funding ODFW \$15,000 to put toward an existing contract to conduct Western Pond Turtle surveys and habitat assessments for future restoration work. Western Pond Turtle is currently under federal review for listing under the ESA.
 - Status: Approved, awaiting final signature from Forest Service.
- Wildlife Partnership (Umpqua NF)
 - The USFS is funding ODFW \$98,000 to implement aquatic and terrestrial restoration activities including stream restoration and gate fabrication.
 - Status: SPA submitted for federal review in April.
- Road Closures (Ochoco NF)
 - The USFS is providing ODFW \$11,500 to obliterate/camouflage road entrances to improve elk security habitat.
 - Status: SPA submitted for federal review in April.
- Pigeon Prairie Restoration and Twin Sale Gate Installation (Willamette NF)
 - The USFS is providing ODFW funds (amount TBD) to install 6 gates and reduce conifer encroachment on 2 meadows (7.5 acres total).
 - Status: SPA submitted for federal review in April.

Proposed Projects

ODFW, ODF, and the Fremont-Winema National Forest are meeting May 15th to discuss strategies to expand the use of GNA across the landscape. Additional partners include Ecotrust Forest Management and the Oregon Hunters Association as we look at leveraging resources for cross-boundary habitat restoration (connected private, state, and federal lands).

ODFW, ODF, and the Willamette NF will meet in May to discuss overlapping interests, capabilities, and interagency collaboration on GNA projects across the forest. ODFW and ODF participated in a Willamette NF All Collaborative Workshop on May 13th to discuss the decision making process on Program Income from GNA timber sales.

A Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Good Neighbor Master Funding Announcement should be posted soon upon approval from U.S. Department of Interior. Several ODFW districts have expressed interest in pursuing agreements with the BLM for forest and rangeland restoration.

Through the Good Neighbor Authority, the BLM is awarding ODFW \$290,000 (up to \$500,000) over 3 years to document pronghorn antelope movements and migration corridors in southeastern Oregon.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

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Planned and Implemented GNA Projects - ODFW/USFS

