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September 3, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Rudy Salakory, Oregon Fish & Wildlife Policy Analyst

SUBJECT: Restoring Ecosystem Processes and Fluvial Functions at Meaningful Scales in the Upper Willamette Basin, including the McKenzie River

BACKGROUND:

Presenters: Joe Moll, Executive Director McKenzie River Trust and Susan Fricke, Water Resources Supervisor at the Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB)

Summary: Susan and Joe will provide an overview of work supported by BPA over the last 20 years, implemented from the mouth to the headwaters on the McKenzie River. This presentation will discuss the growth of increasingly complex, large scale land protection and habitat restoration work and the success of partnerships involved in carrying it out.

Relevance: A component of the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program, Project #2011-004-00, one of the Council's Programs to assess and [mitigate](#) for [wildlife losses](#) due to hydropower construction and inundation.

Background: The State of Oregon (Oregon) and the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) entered into the Willamette River Basin Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Regarding Wildlife Protection and Enhancement in October 2010 to address federal habitat protection and enhancement commitments for wildlife in the Willamette basin. This MOA was implemented via the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program (WWMP) Using the Council's 2009 F&W Program as a guide to establish the terms of the agreement. Prior to the WWMP, BPA had supported projects on an annual basis.

Resources from those earlier projects and those following the MOA have been used over the last 20 years for a variety of projects in the Willamette Basin, including protection of floodplain and riparian habitats along the McKenzie River, a primary tributary to the Willamette River.

The McKenzie River flows west around 90 miles from the crest of the Cascade Mountains to where it joins the Willamette near Eugene, Oregon. Similar to other watersheds in the Pacific Northwest, regional development simplified rivers, reduced habitat diversity, and diminished ecosystem processes.

A strong partnership of non-profits, utilities, and local, state, and federal agencies has aligned behind shared goals for restoring river complexity for the mix of habitat, flood retention, drinking water protection, and other public values that connected floodplains and natural flows can provide.

More info:

[Habitat Evaluation Procedures supporting the Council's Fish & Wildlife Program \(StreamNet\)](#)

[McKenzie Watershed Council](#)

[McKenzie River Trust](#)

[Eugene Water and Electric Board](#)

[Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program](#)

Previous Presentations:

July 2025

[ISRP Habitat Retrospective Report](#) – A review and synthesis of progress and challenges related to habitat protection and restoration projects in the Council's Fish & Wildlife Program.

March 2015

[Update on the Willamette Wildlife Settlement Agreement](#) – A background to, and 5 year update to the WWMP

January 2013

[Follow-up for the Willamette River Basin Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Wildlife Protection and Enhancement: Project #2011-003-00, Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program \(WWMP\)](#) - Report on the Scientific Review of the WWMP

October 2010

[Discussion of Willamette River Basin Memorandum of Agreement](#) – A review of the proposed MOA between BPA and Oregon, including the original MOA