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July 2, 2024

### MEMORANDUM

**TO: Council Members**

**FROM: Mark Fritsch**

**SUBJECT: Update on Project #2007-397-00, John Day Watershed Restoration**

### **BACKGROUND:**

**Presenter:** Stefan Kelly, Watershed Restoration Coordinator, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

**Summary:** Stefan will provide an update and overview of the accomplishments of this project that solicits and implements watershed restoration activities within the John Day Subbasin.

**Relevance:** [Project #2007-397-00, John Day Watershed Restoration](#) is one of the seven umbrella<sup>1</sup> projects supported by the Fish and Wildlife Program. The project uses a comprehensive watershed management approach, using structured and science-based decision tools to enhance implementation of on the ground activities, resolve conflicts, and formulate priorities for action.

This presentation was requested as part of the Council recommendation associated with the Anadromous Fish Habitat and Hatchery Review in April 2022. The periodic presentation is intended to provide an update on the project's accomplishments and results. No decision is needed at the meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> see page 2 for information regarding the Program's umbrella projects.

Workplan: Fish and Wildlife Division work plan 2024; Program planning & coordination.

Background: The John Day Basin is the fourth largest drainage basin in the state of Oregon, encompassing nearly 8,100 square miles in north central and northeastern Oregon. The Basin is bound by the Columbia River to the north, the Blue Mountains to the east, the Aldrich Mountains and Strawberry Range to the south, and the Ochoco Mountains to the west. Elevations range from 9,000 feet in the Strawberry Range to 200 feet at the Columbia River confluence, providing a diverse network of tributaries encompassing more than 500 main river miles, nearly half of which have some formal designation as wild or scenic and an overall total of 9,711 stream miles. The John Day River itself is the third longest undammed river in the western United States, and the longest free-flowing river with wild salmon and steelhead in the entire Columbia River Basin, flowing 284 miles from its source to its confluence with the Columbia River just upstream from the John Day Dam.

The John Day Subbasin supports wild runs of spring Chinook salmon and summer steelhead in the upper areas of the subbasin, while the lower mainstem supports limited fall Chinook salmon. In addition, Pacific lamprey are present throughout the basin and the John Day is the only basin in Oregon with resident populations of westslope cutthroat trout. Other fish species important to the aquatic ecosystem include resident populations of redband trout, bull trout, and western brook lamprey.

The John Day Watershed Restoration Project works to address limiting factors by implementing restoration actions that protect and restore passage, flow, and habitat for anadromous fish and listed species in the John Day River Subbasin.

### *Umbrella Projects*

Umbrella projects are a smaller subset of the projects (#7) currently being implemented through the Program. These umbrella projects are unique, because of the coordination role they play in a particular sub-region, and also because of their approach to their implementation in offering a solicitation and review process that can fund local entities to implement projects. The funding, review and selection process is much like a mini-grant program for the area. The science review that would normally occur through an Independent Science Review Panel (ISRP) review occurs at the local level with ISRP-reviewed criteria and local technical teams. While the processes differ slightly in each area the umbrella projects under this recommendation are largely defined by their approach to: 1) serve as a coordinating entity among sponsors in a particular sub-region to identify, review, and select projects; 2) use a formal project solicitation process;

and 3) allocate and administer Bonneville funds to other entities for implementation.

More Info:

- Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, [Branch of Natural Resources, Fisheries Department](#)
- [John Day River Restoration Strategy](#)

# John Day Watershed Restoration

## Project #2007-397-00



Stefan Kelly

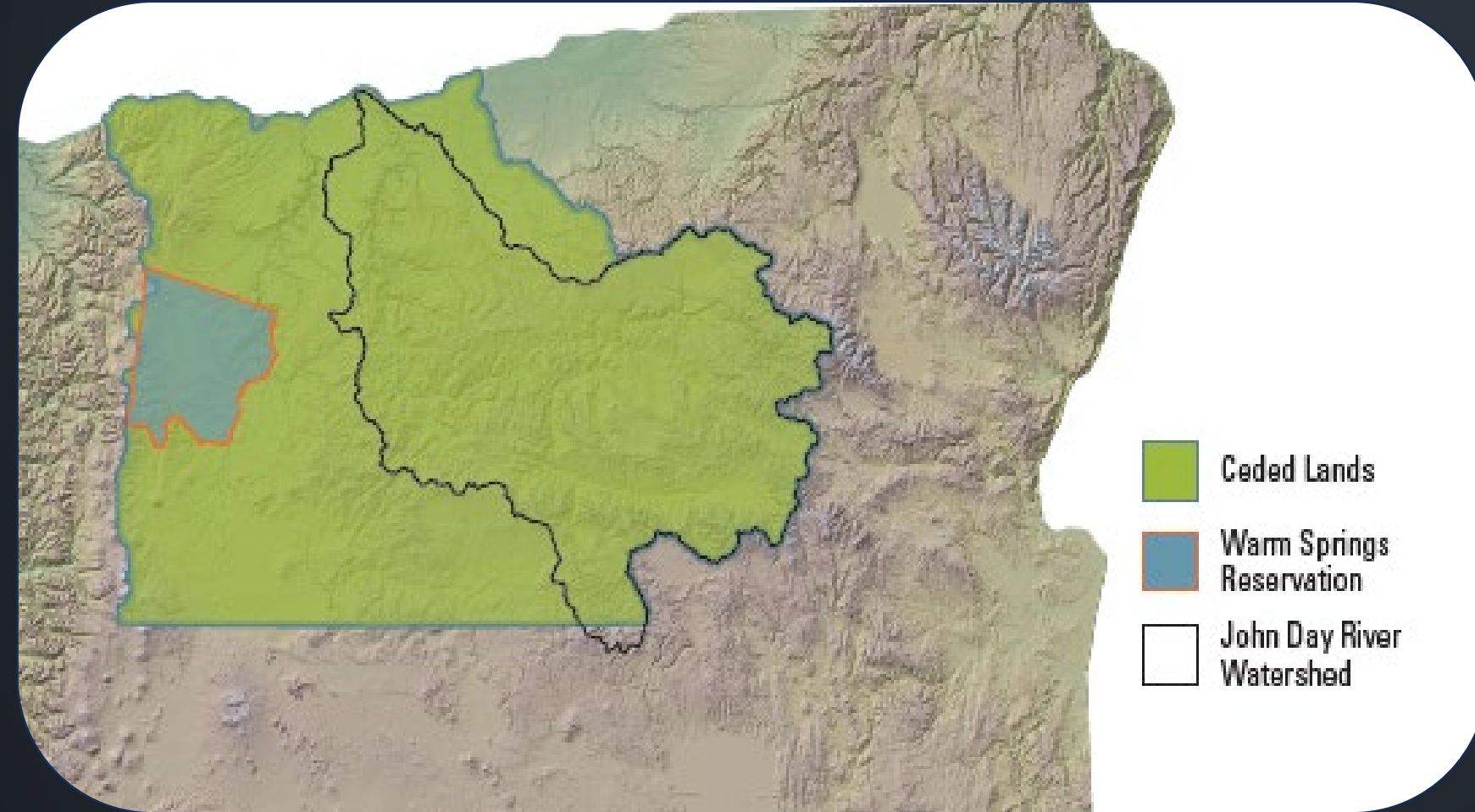
John Day Watershed Restoration Coordinator  
Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon



# Watershed Setting

- 8,100 Square Miles
- 61% private, 38% federal, 1% state
- 54% Agricultural lands





# Project Background



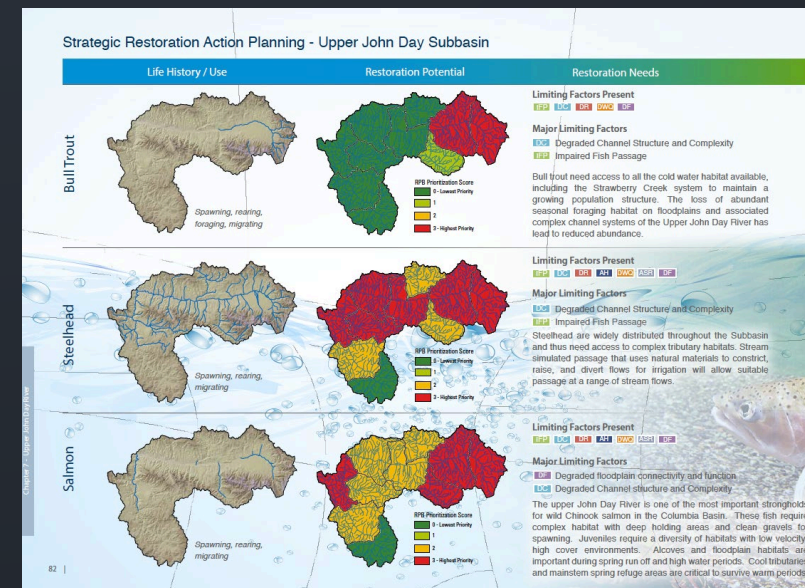


# Project Goals (2022 ISRP)

1. Protect high quality habitats with functioning ecological processes
2. Restore site-appropriate aquatic habitat quantity and quality based on limiting factors, life history and restoration needs
3. Restore site appropriate riparian and wetland habitat
4. Restore site appropriate floodplain connectivity and function
5. Restore flow timing and duration, during critical flow periods
6. Monitor and evaluate project effectiveness
7. Participate and cooperate with communities, agencies, and organizations

# Prioritization – Restoration Strategy

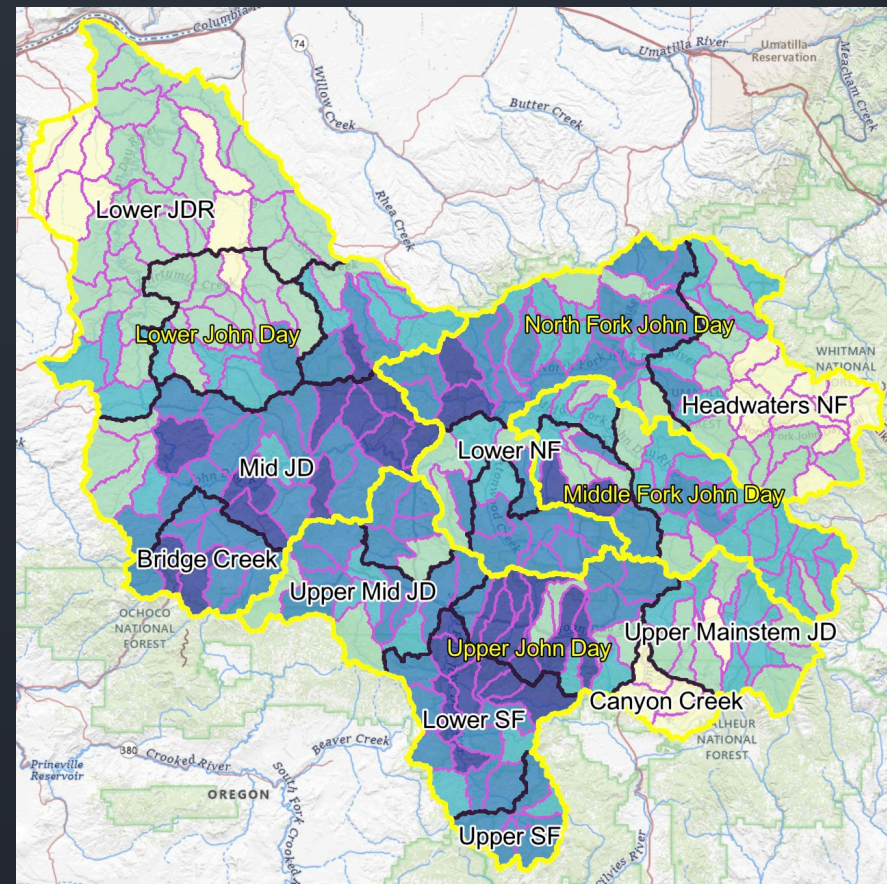
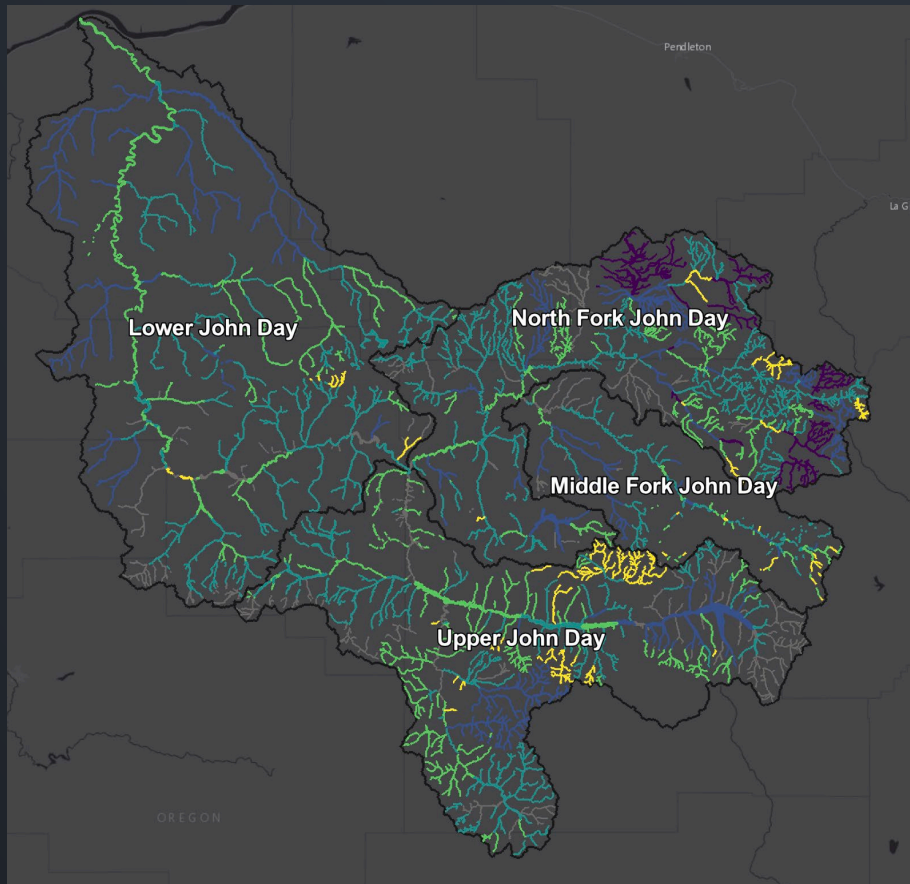
- Completed in 2014
- “Protect, manage, restore” approach
- Prioritize projects that support/protect CTWSRO treaty rights
- Limiting factors analysis
- Incorporate stakeholder priorities
- “Common ground” benefits
- Effectiveness monitoring





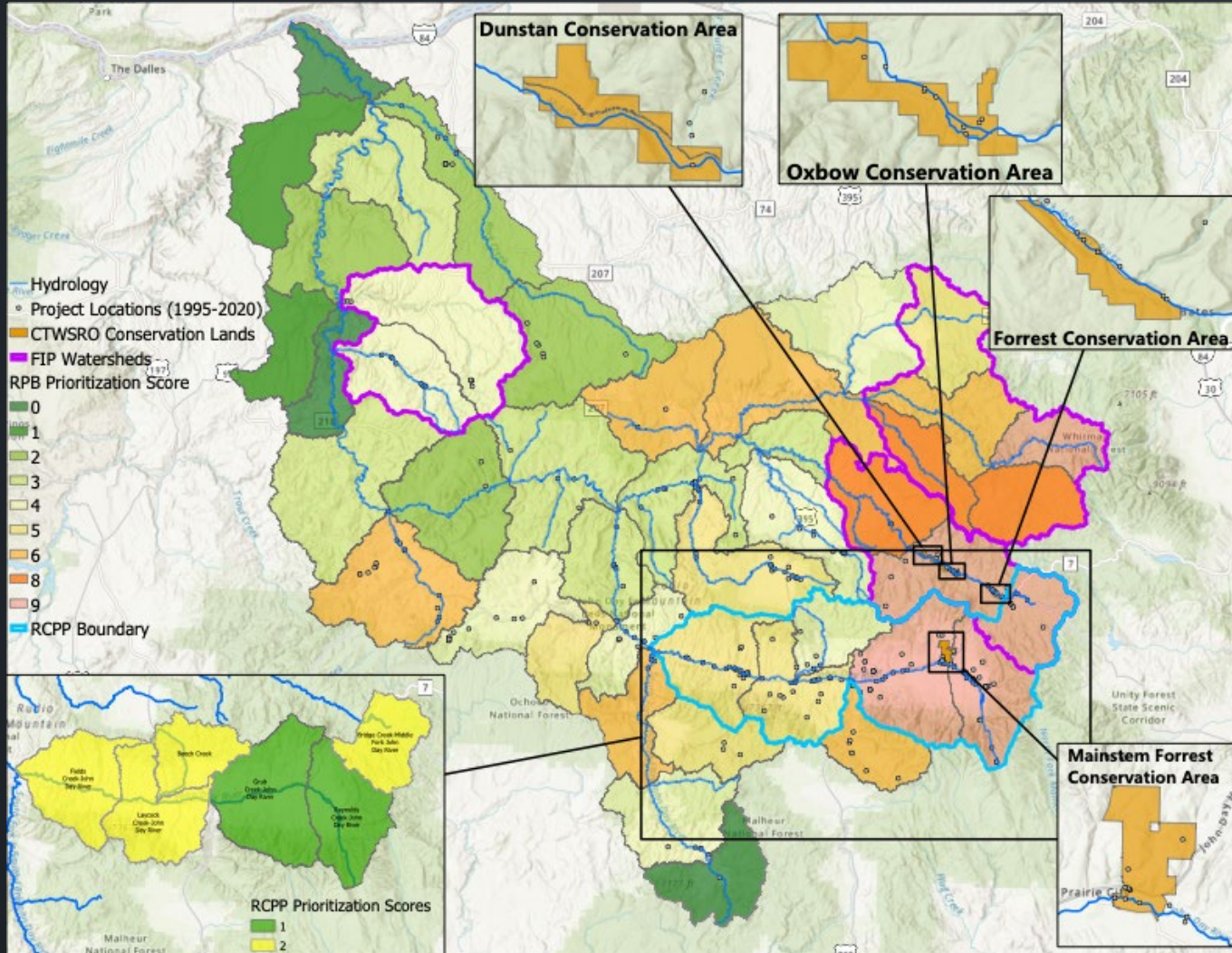
# Prioritization - ATLAS

*“a collaborative, evidence-based habitat restoration prioritization framework that utilizes empirical data, published research evidence, and local knowledge to determine priority areas and actions within a watershed.”*



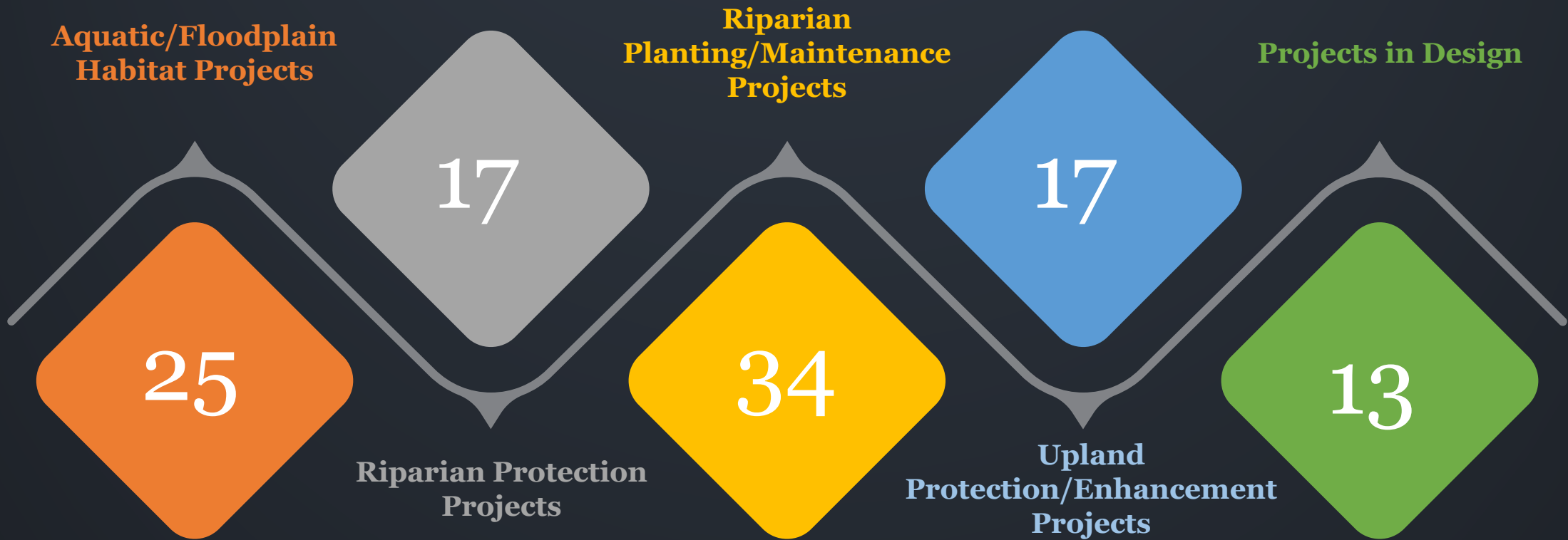


# Prioritization – SIM (and others)



	Mainstem		Middle Fork		South Fork	
	Phase	RM&E	Phase	RM&E	Phase	RM&E
2020	Plan	-Adults: ChS -Parr & Smolts	Implement	-Adults: ChS -Parr & Smolts	Control	-Adults: StS -Parr & Smolts
2021	Plan	-Adults: ChS -Parr & Smolts	Restoration Pause	-Adults: ChS -Parr & Smolts	Control	-Adults: StS -Parr & Smolts
2022	Plan	-Adults: ChS, StS -Parr & Smolts	Implement	-Adults: ChS -Smolts	Control / Murderers Cr. Imple.	-Adults: StS Smolts
2023	Implement	-Adults: ChS, StS -Smolts	Monitor	-Adults: ChS, StS -Parr & Smolts	Control / Murderers Cr. Eval.	-Adults: StS -Parr & Smolts
2024	Implement	-Adults: ChS, StS -Smolts	Monitor	-Adults: ChS, StS -Parr & Smolts	Control / Murderers Cr. Eval.	-Adults: StS -Parr & Smolts
2025	Implement	-Adults: ChS, StS -Smolts	Monitor	-Adults: ChS, StS -Parr & Smolts	Control / Murderers Cr. Eval.	-Adults: StS -Parr & Smolts
2026	Monitor	-Adults: ChS, StS -Parr & Smolts	Learn	-Adults: ChS, StS -Smolts	Control	-Adults: StS -Parr & Smolts

# Progress (2018 – 2023)





# 2018 - Fox Creek Mid-Reach 10 Restoration

Partners: CTWS, Grant SWCD, USFWS, NFJDWC

Subbasin: North Fork John Day

Land Ownership: Private

Focal Species: Mid-C Steelhead

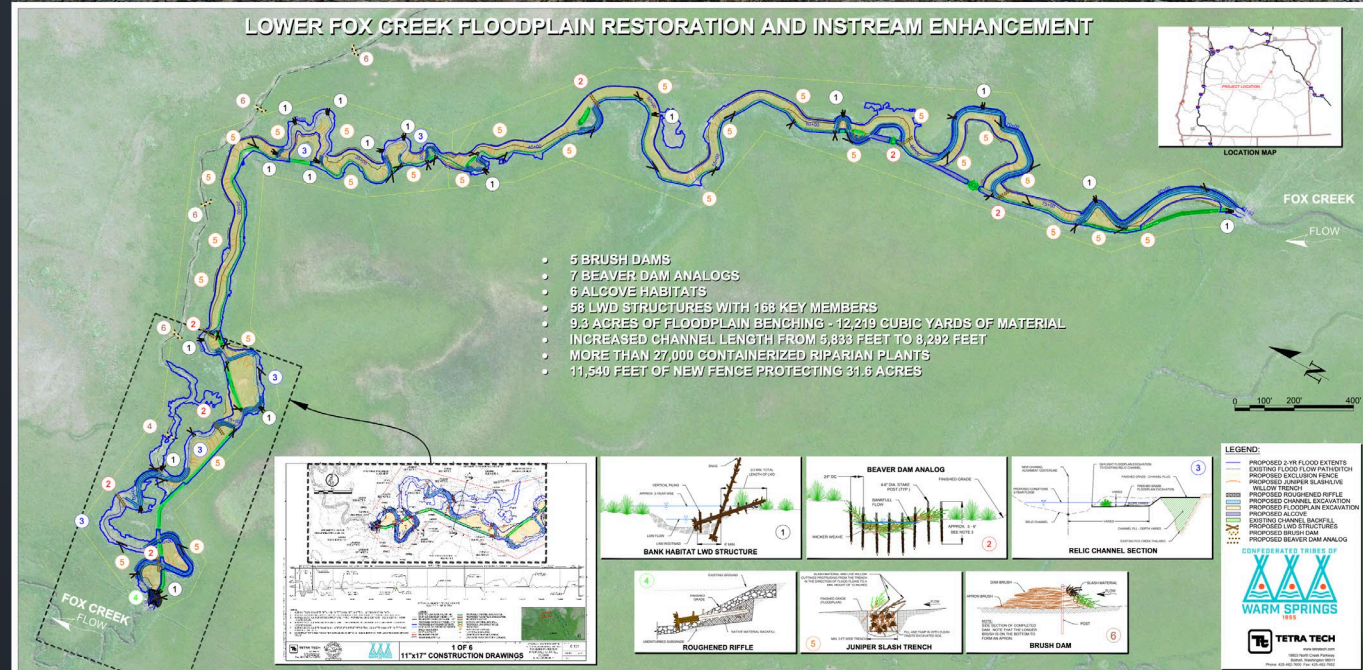
Secondary Species: Freshwater mussels, interior redband

trout

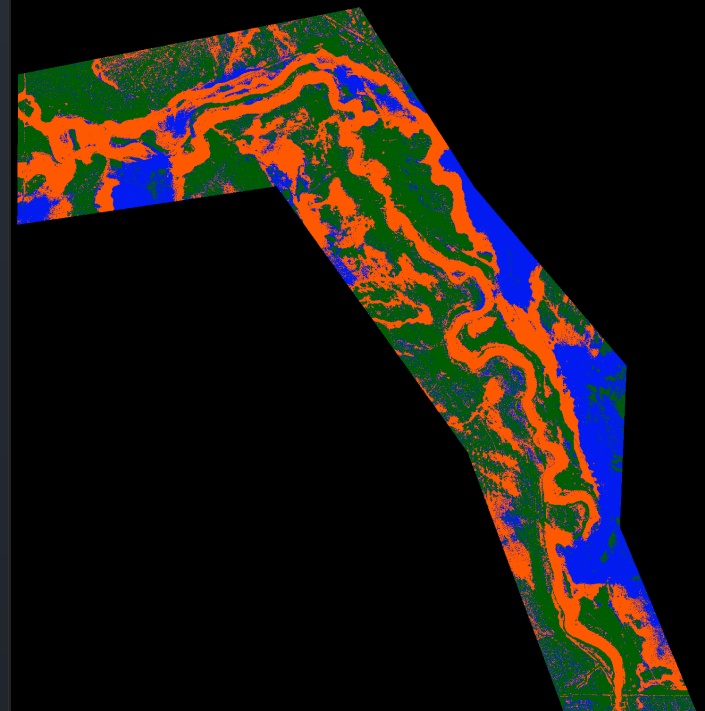
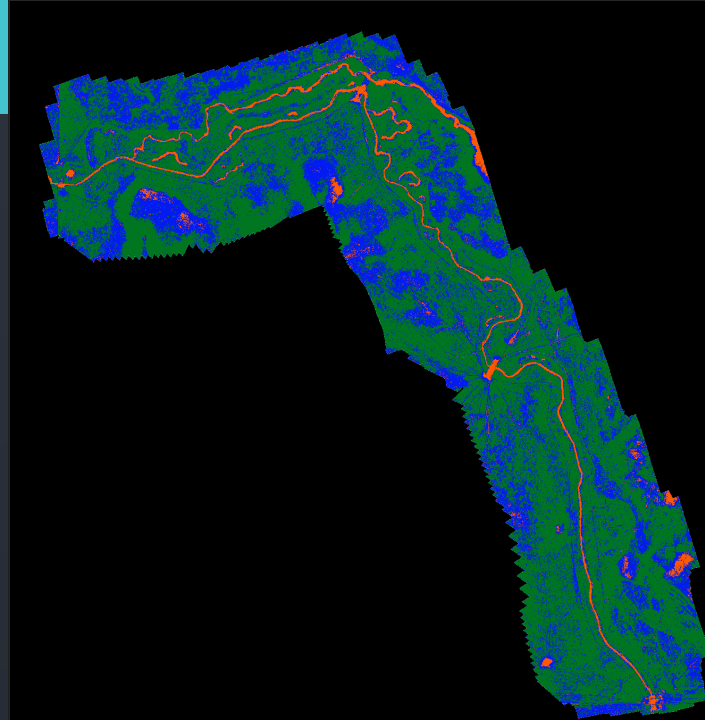
Limiting Factors Addressed: FP connectivity, channel

complexity, riparian condition, hydrologic processes, water

quality









# 2018 – Wiwaanaytt Creek Restoration

Partners: CTWS, BPA, USFS, OWEB, ODFW,  
ONDA

Subbasin: Middle Fork John Day

Land Ownership: Public – Malheur NF

Focal Species: Mid-C Steelhead, Spring Chinook

Secondary Species: Freshwater mussels, interior  
redband trout, bull trout

Limiting Factors Addressed: FP connectivity,  
channel complexity, hydrologic processes, water  
quality, passage





# 2019 – Fox Creek Upper Reach 18 Restoration

Partners: CTWS, BPA, NFJDWC, MSWCD, USFS, USFWS, Freshwater Trust, Grant SWCD, ODFW, OWEB, Private Landowner

Subbasin: Middle Fork John Day

Land Ownership: Public – Malheur NF

Focal Species: Mid-C Steelhead, Spring Chinook

Secondary Species: Freshwater mussels, interior redband trout, bull trout

Limiting Factors Addressed: FP connectivity, channel complexity, riparian condition, hydrologic processes, water quality, passage





# 2020 –Camp Creek Phase II Restoration

Project Partners: CTWS, BPA, USFS, NFJDWC

Subbasin: Middle Fork John Day

Land Ownership: Public – Malheur NF

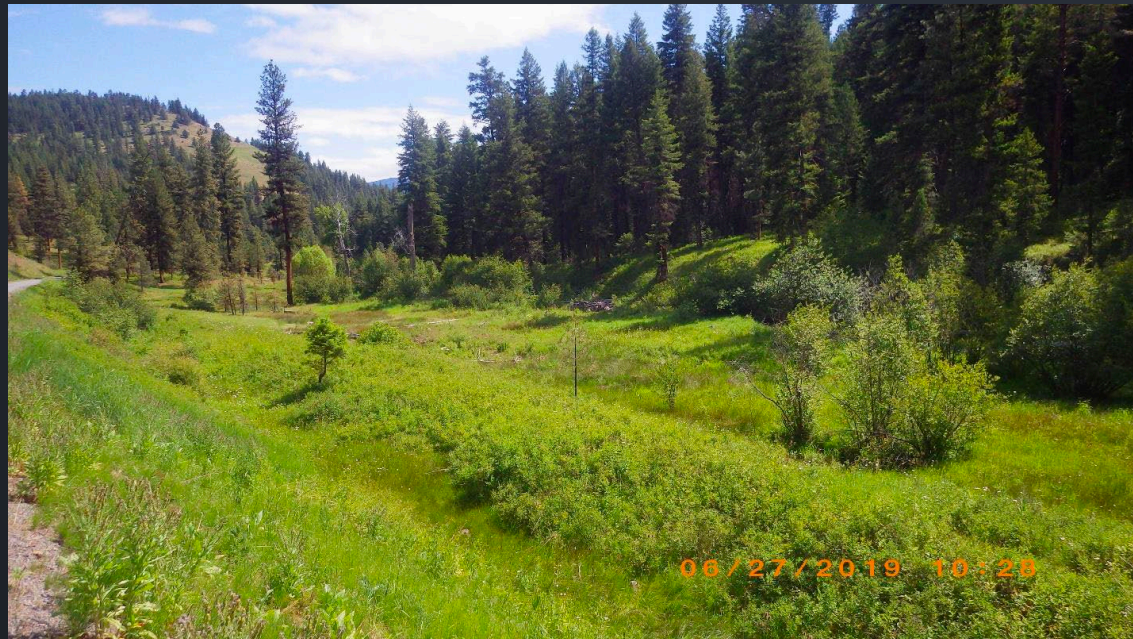
Focal Species: Mid-C Steelhead, Spring Chinook

Secondary Species: Freshwater mussels, interior redband trout, bull trout

Limiting Factors Addressed: FP connectivity, channel complexity, riparian condition, hydrologic processes, water quality









2021



Top Left: Fox Creek Reach 10 Diversion

Lower Left: DCA Railroad Breaching

Lower Right: Jeff Davis Creek BDAs





# 2022 – Vincent to Vinegar Instream Restoration

Partners: CTWS, BPA, BOR, OWEB, ODFW

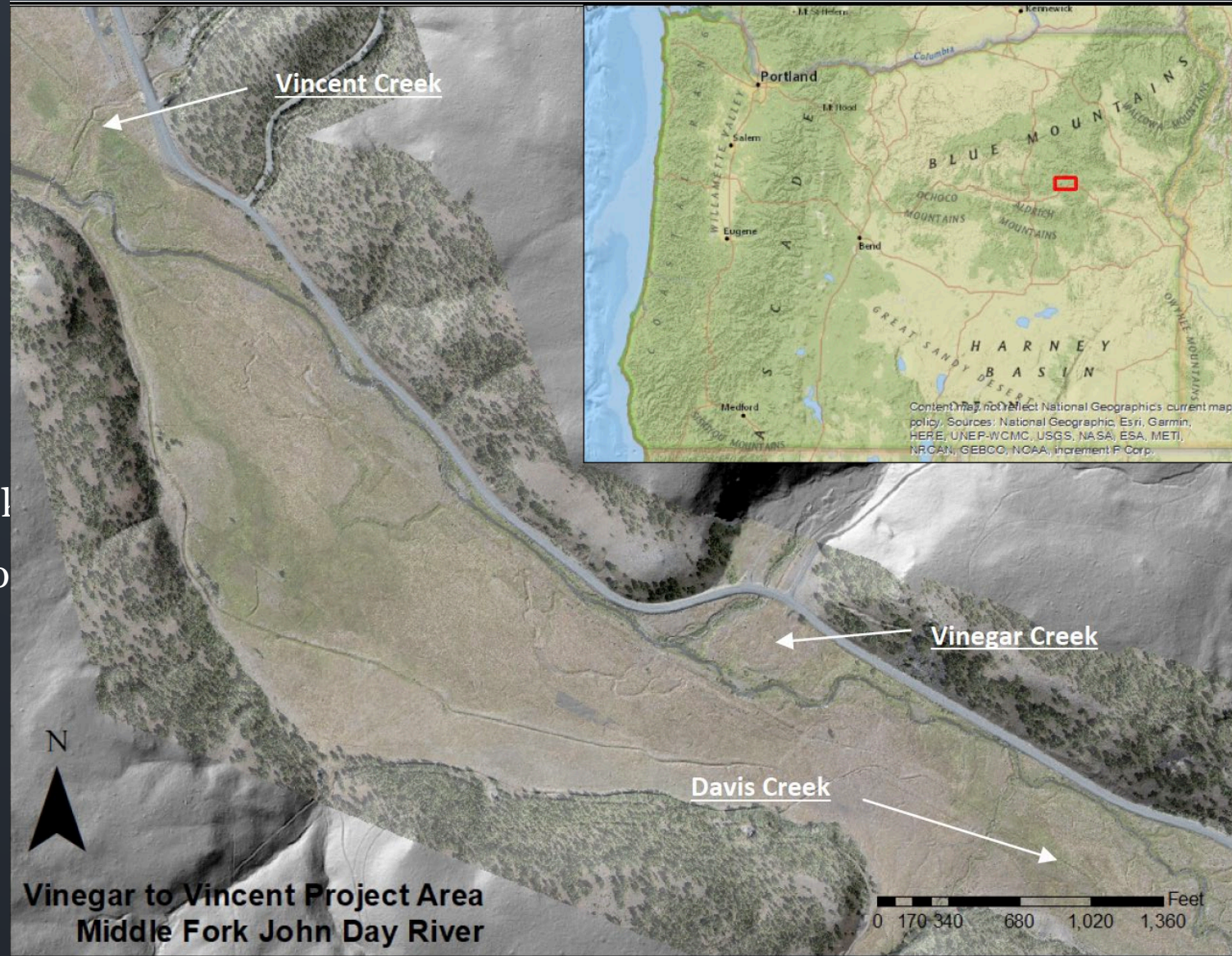
Subbasin: Middle Fork John Day

Land Ownership: CTWS

Focal Species: Mid-C Steelhead, Spring Chinook

Secondary Species: Freshwater mussels, interior redband trout, bull trout

Limiting Factors Addressed: FP connectivity, channel complexity, riparian condition, hydrologic processes, water quality







- Created 0.96 miles of main channel
- Created 2.23 miles of side channel
- 0.65 miles of channel filled
- Over 1,700 pieces of wood installed 8,320 feet of willow trenches

- Two engineered riffles
- 71 acres protected by fencing
- 49,301 plants installed on the project total between 2020 and 2022.
- Removed ~1 miles of railroad grade
- ~150 pools created





Dead Cr  
Gu

2010





Dead Cow  
Gulch

W-2010

20

















# 2023 – Murderers Creek Restoration Phase I

Partners: SFJDWC, BOR, ODFW, CTWS,  
BPA, OWEB

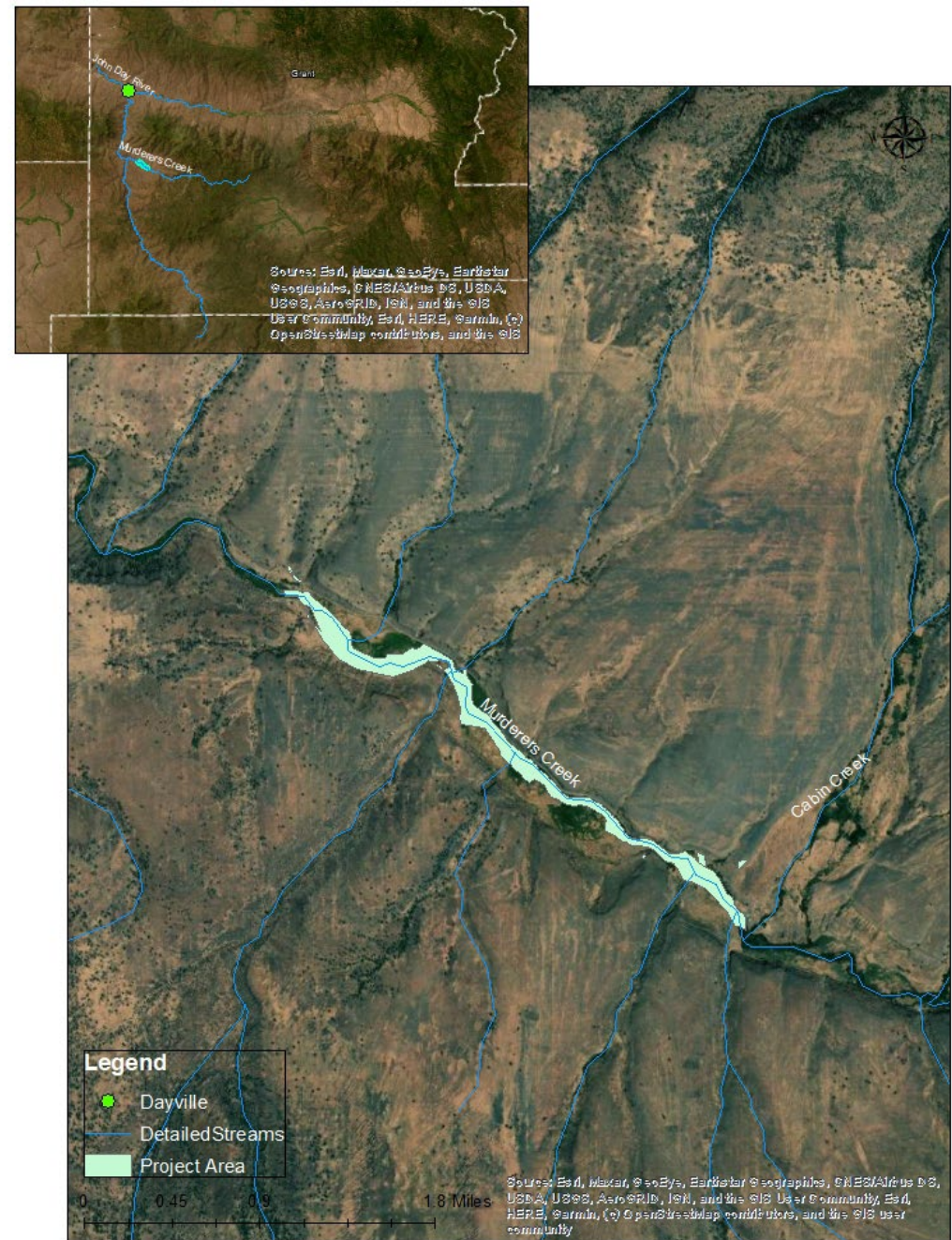
Subbasin: South Fork John Day

Land Ownership: State - ODFW

Focal Species: Mid-C Steelhead

Secondary Species: FW mussels, redband  
trout

Limiting Factors: FP connectivity, channel  
complexity, riparian condition, hydrologic  
processes, water quality









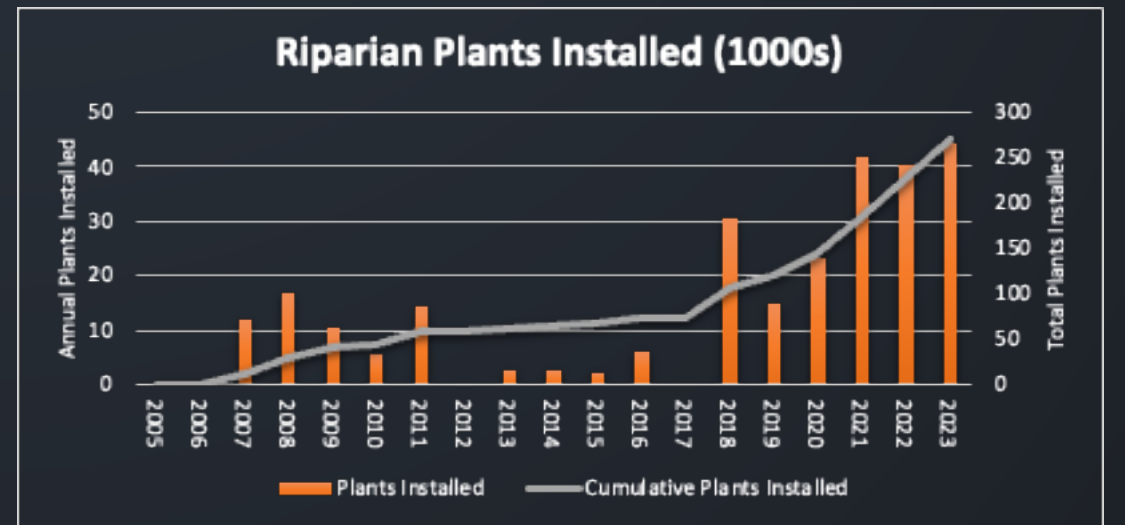
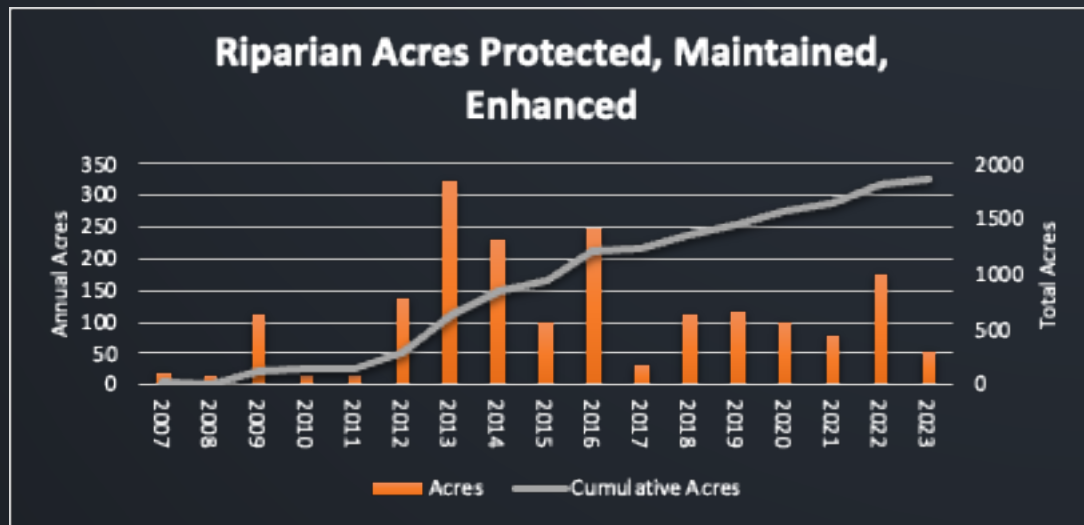
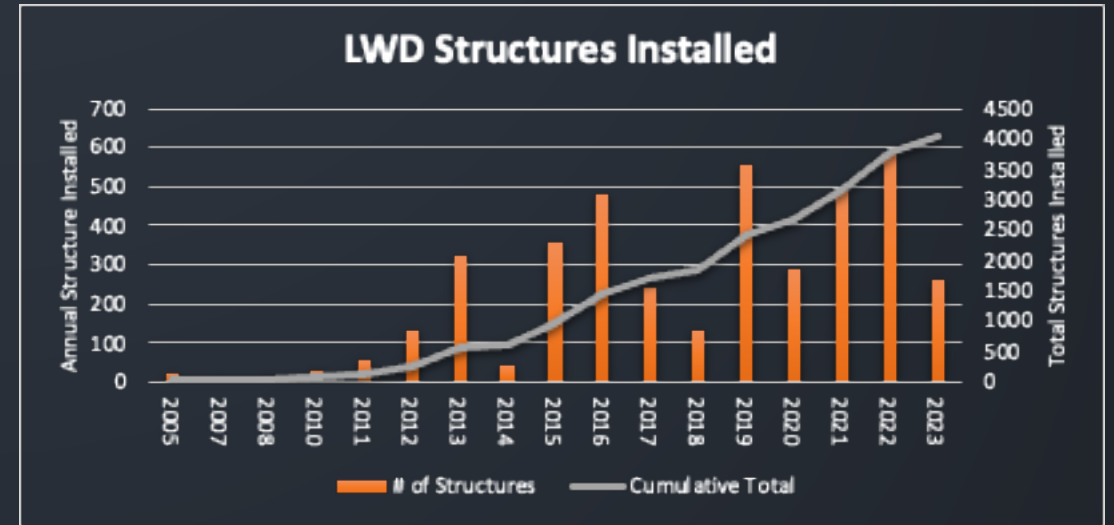
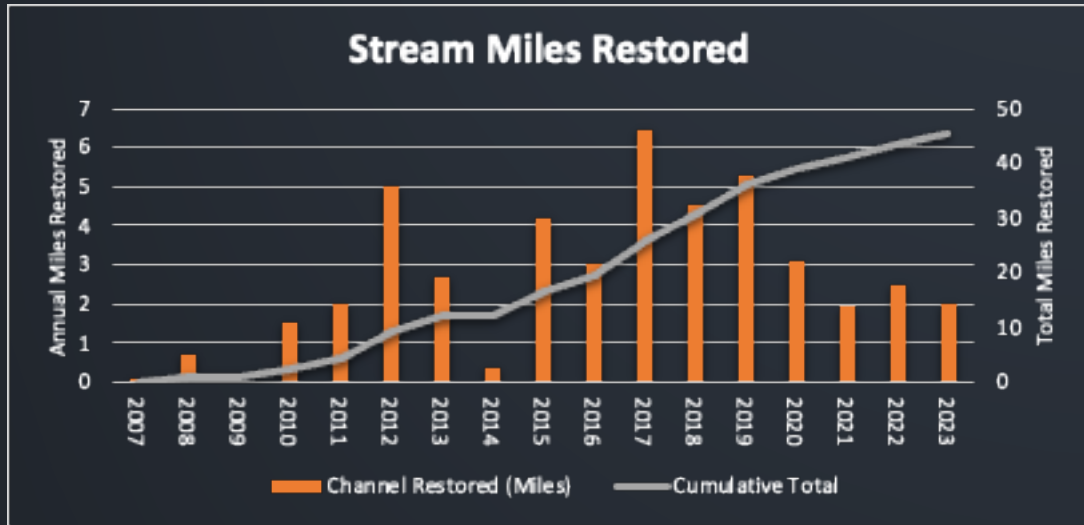
# Projects in Development

- 6 Mile Creek Restoration (NFJDR 2024)
- Belshaw Creek Phase I (UJDR 2024-25)
- Cottonwood Creek LTPB Restoration (NFJDR 2024-25)
- Oxbow Phase 6 (MFJDR 2025)
- Caribou Creek Reconnection (MFJDR 2025)
- Rock Creek Diversion (2025)
- Indian Creek Diversion (2025-26)
- Phipps Meadow Restoration (MFJDR 2026)
- Fox Creek Reach 9 (2026)
- Mainstem Forrest Conservation Area Restoration (UJDR 2027)
- Dunstan Conservation Area Restoration (MFJDR 2027)



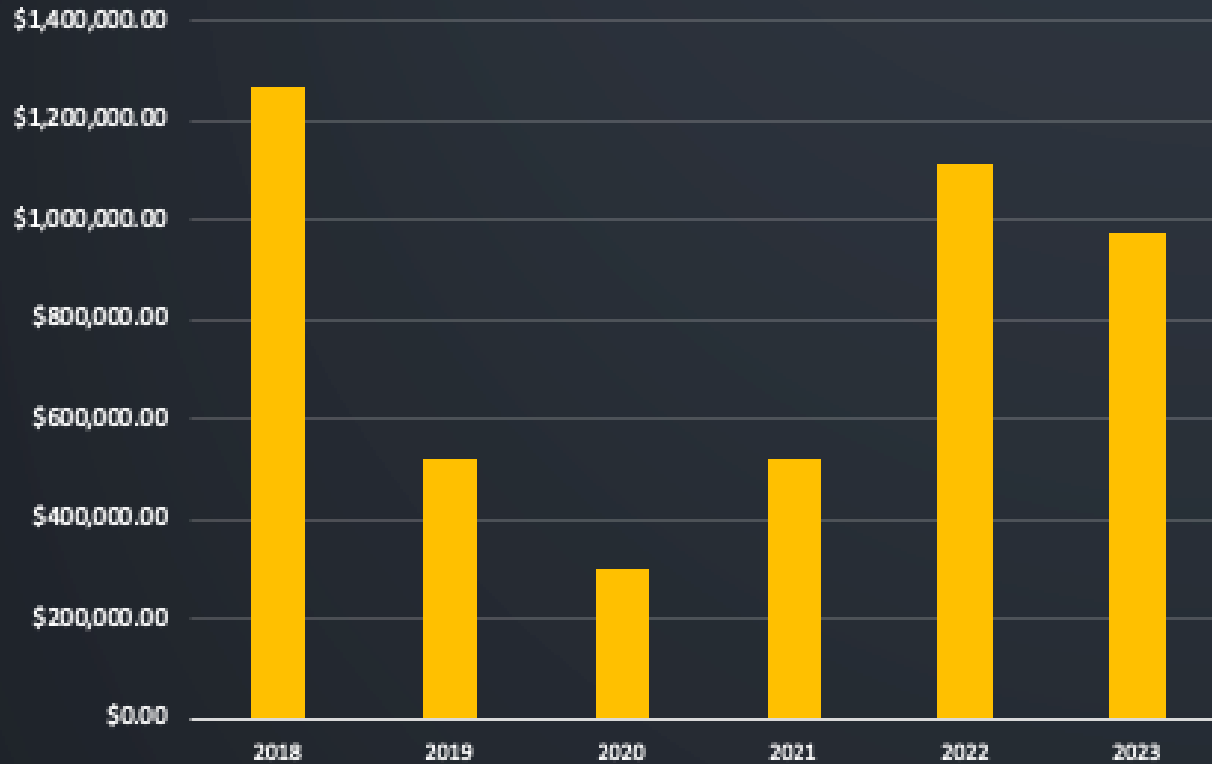


# Progress – By the Numbers

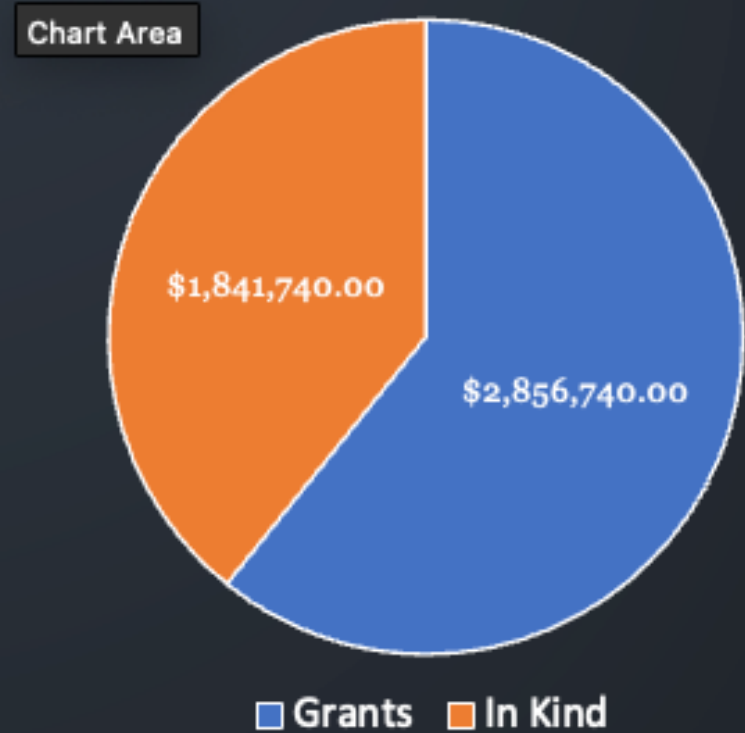




## Cost Share



## Cost Share Source



In Kind: NFJDWC, Grant SWCD, Gilliam SWCD, Wheeler SWCD, ONDA, BOR, USFS, ODFW, Private Landowners  
Grant Funders: OWEB, USFWS, USFS, NRCS, PCSRF



# Monitoring

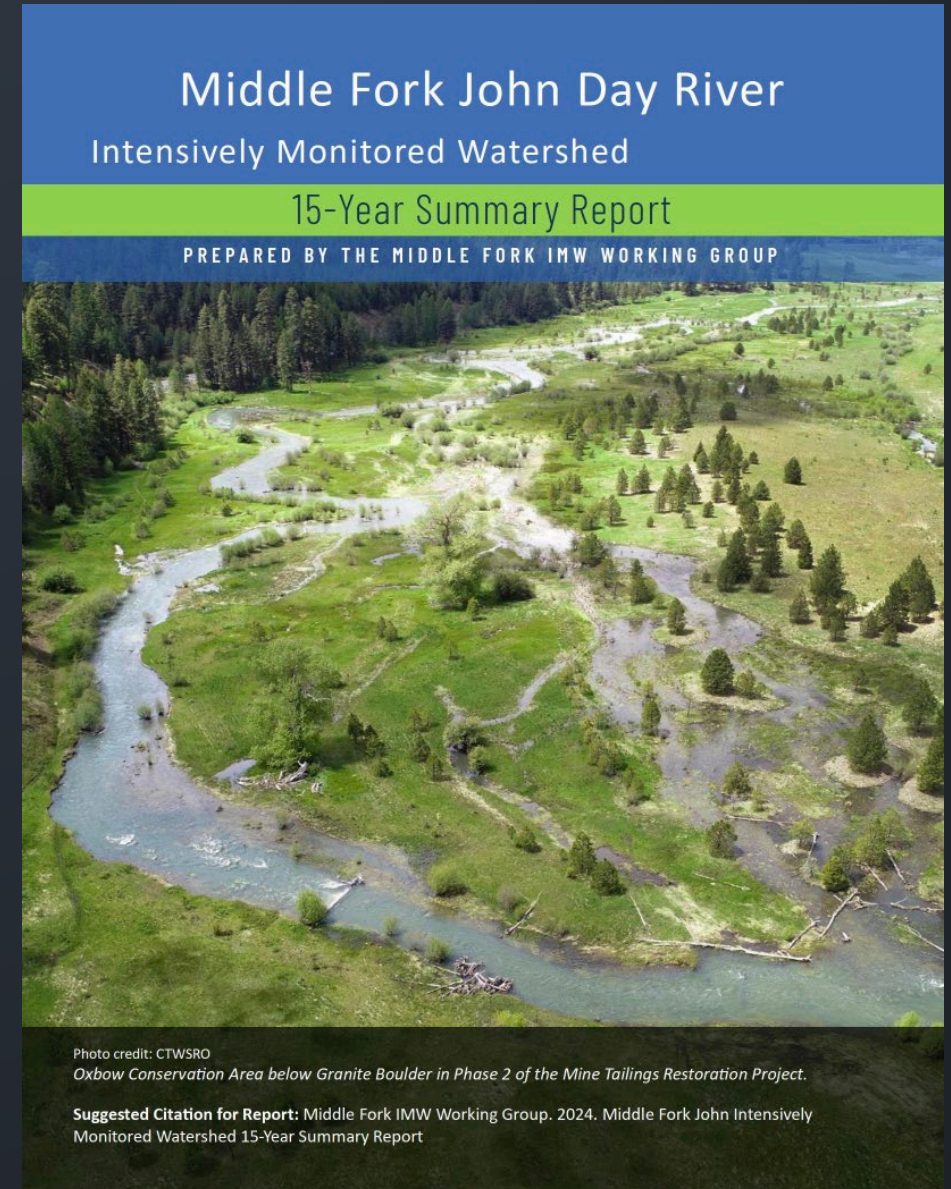
- SIM Framework
  - Coordinated with ODFW
  - Establish when, where, why, monitoring occurs
  - Compliment, not duplicate
- Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plans
  - Larger, complex projects
  - Limiting factors -> project objectives -> monitoring metrics (SMART)
  - Monitor -> evaluate -> (adaptive management) -> lessons learned
- Implementation Effectiveness
  - Smaller or less-complex projects
  - Defined monitoring timeline
  - Streamlined monitoring criteria





# Monitoring 2018-2023

- SIM Framework
  - MFJD
  - CTWS – Habitat, implementation effectiveness
  - ODFW – Fish response
- Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plans
  - 3 projects – Post implementation
  - 4 projects – Pre implementation
- Implementation Effectiveness
  - 138 IEM site visits (2018-2023)
- Data Management
  - ITMD Project (CRITFC)
  - CDMS
  - Improved data collection, analysis, and communication





# Partnerships/Coordination

- John Day Basin Partnership
  - Steering committee
  - Technical and subbasin workgroups
  - Outreach committee
- Blue Mountain Land Trust Conservation Committee
- OWEB Region 6 Review Team
- OWEB Small Grants Teams
- Bull Trout Working Group
- Pacific Northwest Freshwater Mussel Workgroup
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
  - Implementation with Habitat and Screens Projects
  - Structured Implementation & Monitoring
  - Quarterly coordination meetings
- CRITFC
  - ITMD Project
  - MFJD Research and Monitoring
- Ritter Land Management Group
- Middle Fork IMW



# John Day Basin Partnership

- Initiated in 2014
- Aquatic ATLAS completed 2018-19
- Upland ATLAS completed 2024 (OWEB Technical Assistance)
- OWEB FIP secured 2019
  - NF, MF, Thirtymile/Butte watersheds
  - \$12 million / 6 years
  - 43 projects implemented through 2 bienniums
  - \$12 million match secured through 2 bienniums

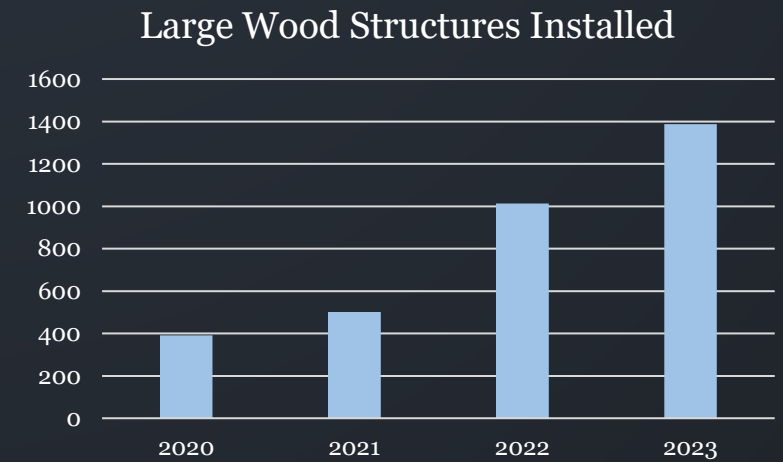
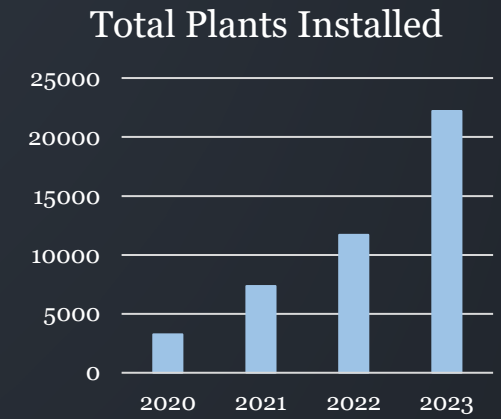
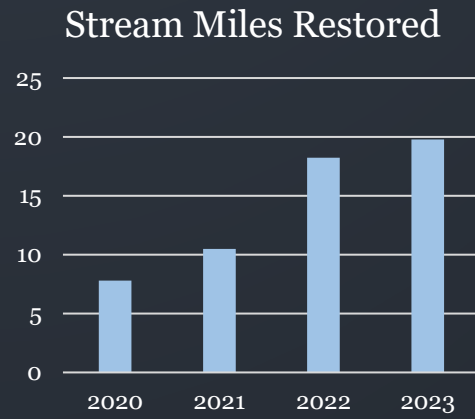


Grant SWCD  
Mid John Day Watershed Council  
Burns Paiute  
Sherman SWCD  
BOR  
Wheeler SWCD  
BLM  
Gilliam-East John Day Watershed Council  
Sustainable Northwest  
Oregon State Parks  
Ritter Land Management Team  
Blue Mountain Forest Partners  
USFWS  
Bonneville Power Administration  
Gilliam SWCD  
North Fork John Day Watershed Council  
South Fork John Day Watershed Council  
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
USDA  
USFS  
CTUIR  
CTWS  
Blue Mountain Land Trusts  
Monument SWCD  
Morrow SWCD  
Oregon Department of Agriculture  
Trout Unlimited



# OWEB Focused Investment Partnership

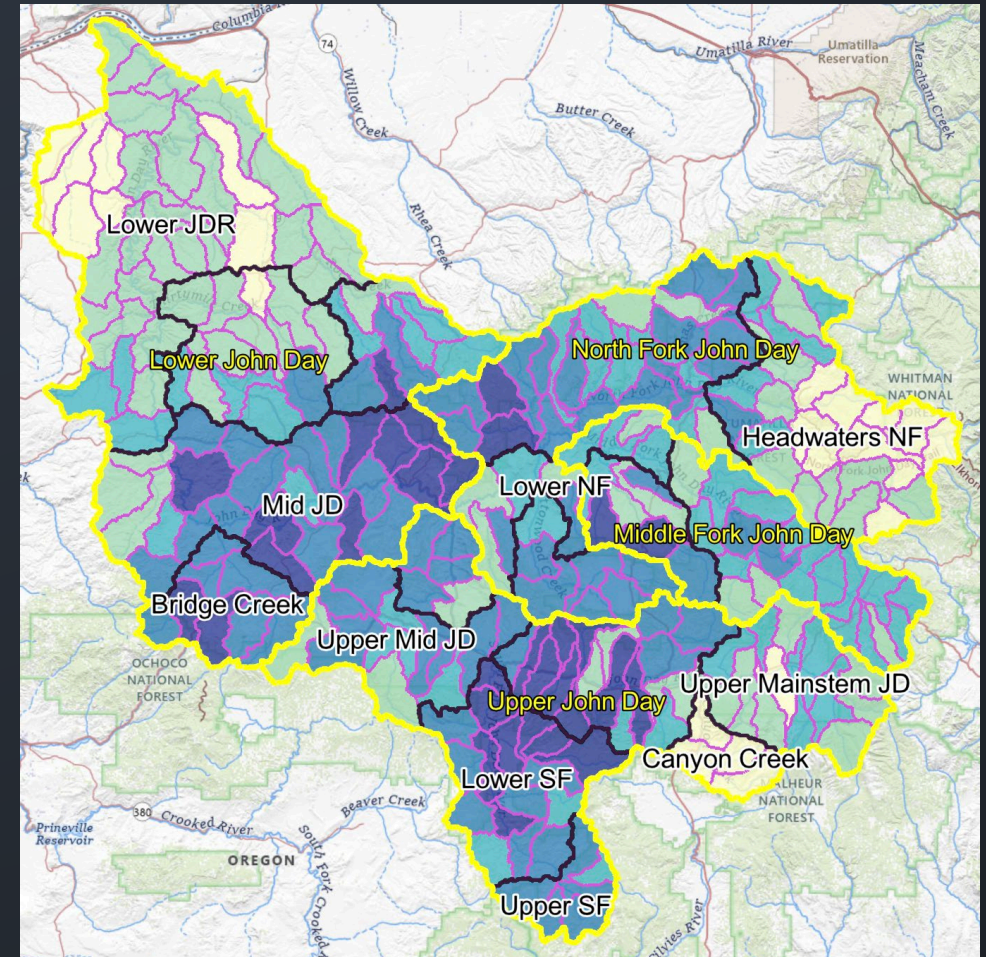
<b>1 - PROTECT LAND AND WATER</b> 5 Projects	<b>2 - RECONNECT FLOODPLAIN</b> 20 Projects	<b>3 - INCREASE RIPARIAN CONNECTION &amp; PLANT COMMUNITIES</b> 22 Projects
<b>4 - IMPROVE INSTREAM CHANNEL CONNECTIVITY &amp; COMPLEXITY</b> 22 Projects	<b>5 - INCREASE PHYSICAL CONNECTIVITY TO HABITAT</b> 8 Projects	<b>6 - INCREASE WATER QUANTITY &amp; QUALITY</b> 12 Projects
<b>7 - STREAMBANK SHADING INCREASED</b> 20 Projects	<b>8 - SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF NATIVE FISH INCREASED</b> 12 Projects	<b>9 - STREAM TEMPERATURE RESTORED TO DESIRED RANGE</b> 16 Projects
<b>10 - HABITAT DIVERSITY, COMPLEXITY &amp; STRUCTURE IMPROVED</b> 21 Projects	<b>11 - FLOWS SUPPORT FRESHWATER NATIVE FISH LIFE STAGES</b> 6 Projects	





# John Day Basin Partnership – Next Steps

- Partner Capacity
  - NOAA
- Uplands Restoration (ATLAS Prioritization)
  - America the Beautiful Challenge
- Continue aquatic restoration
  - Revise SAP
  - OWEB FIP





# Questions?

