

Deschutes Basin protection projects awarded \$3.5 million

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PGE & Warm Springs Tribes Award Funding for Projects Chosen to Enhance and Improve Habitats and Species

MADRAS, Ore. — More than 20 resource protection projects dedicated to enhancing and improving stream and land habitats and species in the Deschutes Basin were recently approved for funding by Portland General Electric (PGE) and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs (CTWS) through the Pelton Round Butte Fund. The \$21.5 million fund, established by PGE and CTWS in 2005, was created to support the environmental protection measures PGE and the Tribes are instituting at the Pelton Round Butte Hydroelectric Project, a 20-mile long complex that includes three dams in central Oregon. Many of these projects will support the success of a new fish passage system being constructed by PGE and the Tribes at the hydroelectric project, which will allow fish to migrate past the three dams for the first time in 40 years. Projects approved for the \$3.5 million funding available this year range from stream restoration and fish passage improvements to fencing improvements and repairs designed to promote stream restoration. The Upper Deschutes Watershed Council will receive more than \$1.3 million for five projects on the Metolius River, the Deschutes River, and Whychus Creek (a tributary of the Deschutes River), including restoration of 1.5 miles of Whychus Creek stream habitat at the Camp Polk Meadow Preserve in preparation for steelhead that are expected to return to the Deschutes, above the dams, in late 2010. "This much-needed funding will allow us to launch a number of projects, all dedicated to the reintroduction of salmon and steelhead to the upper Deschutes," said Ryan Houston, executive director of the Upper Deschutes Watershed Council. "For a lot of the folks working on the ground, the emergence of this new investment has been tremendous in helping us move forward on 10 years' worth of work people have wanted to do." The Crooked River Watershed Council will receive about \$850,000 for three projects to provide fish passage and screening on the Crooked River, as well as replace two culverts on McKay Creek. The Crooked River project includes a mechanical diversion to help nearby farmers with irrigation. "We now have an opportunity to move forward with some win-win projects that help fish, farmers and the forest," said Max Nielsen-Pincus, executive director, Crooked River Watershed Council. Other recipients this year include Wy'East Resource Council, Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District, Sisters Ranger District, Crooked River National Grassland, Bureau of Land Management, WolfTree, Inc., and CTWS Branch of Natural Resources. In 2005, the Pelton Round Butte Fund awarded approximately \$3.5 million to water conservation and habitat mitigation and enhancement projects. More Pelton Round Butte funds for water conservation projects will be made available in 2011 (\$6 million) and habitat mitigation and enhancement projects in 2013 (\$6.4 million). The fish passage system, located at Round Butte Dam, is being assembled on the shores of Lake Billy Chinook and will be lowered into place, largely underwater, during the next two years. While the dams were originally constructed with fish passage facilities, young salmon and steelhead could not find their way to those facilities because currents in the reservoir were disrupted. The new system will redirect water currents and allow fish collection for downstream transport. PGE and the Tribes are prepared to spend more than \$135 million on the project for improvement measures during the 50-year term of the license, the vast majority going to fish-related measures. More than \$21 million is dedicated to fish habitat improvement on Deschutes River tributaries through the Pelton Round Butte Fund. PGE, the Tribes and many other partners in the Basin are committed to the long-term cooperative effort that will be required to make reintroduction a success. Pelton Round Butte, the largest hydroelectric project within Oregon, generates 465 million watts capacity of electricity to serve PGE customers and the Tribes. Its total annual power production is about 1.5 billion kilowatt-hours, enough to power 137,000 homes or a city the size of Salem, Oregon. It is the only hydroelectric project in the nation jointly owned by a Native American tribe and a utility. Portland General Electric, headquartered in Portland, Ore., is a fully integrated electric utility that serves more than 804,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in Oregon. The Confederated

Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon is a federally recognized Indian Tribe with more than 4,000 members. Its reservation in north central Oregon covers 1,000 square miles.

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