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NOTE TO EDITORS: [Link to b-roll video of first protected habitat](#)[Our Lady of Guadalupe Trappist Abbey](#)[Confluence of Coast and Middle forks of the Willamette](#)**[Links to photos of native wildlife species in Fact Sheet below](#)****New Oregon-BPA agreement protects Willamette habitat**

Portland, Ore. - [Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski](#) and Steve Wright, administrator of the [Bonneville Power Administration](#), today signed a landmark agreement to jointly protect nearly 20,000 acres of Willamette Basin wildlife habitat – more than twice the area of Oregon's largest state park.

The agreement dedicates stable funding from electric ratepayers for 15 years to cost-effectively safeguard Willamette habitat for many native species such as Oregon's state bird, the western meadowlark. It supports the governor's [Willamette River Legacy](#) and fulfills BPA's responsibility under the [Northwest Power Act](#) to offset the impacts of federal flood control and hydropower dams.

"This agreement marks a landmark partnership between federal, state and local governments and organizations," Gov. Kulongoski said. "This agreement allows us to not just maintain the crown jewel of the Willamette Valley – but to restore and enhance habitat for many future generations of Oregonians."

The state will engage tribes and others in a public process for allocating ratepayer funds to the most ecologically beneficial and cost-effective habitat projects. Tribes, agencies and others may use the funds to protect and restore wetlands, floodplains, grasslands, oak woodlands, riparian areas and other rare habitat, consistent with the [Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Oregon Conservation Strategy](#) and the [Northwest Power and Conservation Council's Fish and Wildlife Program](#).

Some river and stream habitat will benefit spring chinook and steelhead protected by the Endangered Species Act.

"This new partnership will ensure that we protect the most essential Willamette habitat in a way that delivers lasting value for ratepayers, and for Oregon and its wildlife," Wright said. "We're fulfilling an important obligation to wildlife, while remaining accountable to the electric customers who are providing this funding."

The agreement's signing provides for BPA funding of two major initial habitat acquisitions: Purchase of 1,270 acres at the confluence of the Middle and Coast forks of the Willamette River southeast of Eugene by [The Nature Conservancy](#) and a conservation easement on 1,310 acres of forest and other habitat owned by [Our Lady of Guadalupe Trappist Abbey](#) near Lafayette. Both should close by the end of October.

FACTS: Willamette Wildlife Habitat Agreement**WHAT IT IS**

A Memorandum of Agreement between BPA and Oregon specifying BPA wildlife habitat commitments to offset the impacts of federal dams on Willamette River tributaries, as required by the Northwest Power Act. The agreement will also provide some benefits to protected fish species, as required by the Endangered Species Act.

RARE HABITAT and SPECIES BENEFITED

Oak woodlands, grasslands, wetlands and riparian habitats listed as priorities in the ODFW's Oregon Conservation Strategy, home to strategy species including the western meadowlark, Oregon's state bird; western bluebird, short-eared owl, streaked horned lark and others protected by the Endangered Species Act including the Willamette daisy, golden paintbrush, Kincaid's lupine, Fender's blue butterfly, spring chinook salmon, steelhead, bull trout and Oregon chub.

ODFW photo gallery of native species

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/images/photo_gallery/photo_gallery_events.asp

Publication-quality photos of ESA-listed Willamette prairie species available at

<http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/Species/PrairieSpecies/gallery.asp>

WILLAMETTE RIVER BASIN FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT

Number of dams: 13, eight of which generate power

Ownership: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (BPA markets power from the dams)

Purpose: Primarily flood control, with hydropower, recreation and irrigation

When built: 1941-1969

Approximate hydropower generation: 180 average megawatts

THIS AGREEMENT, BY THE NUMBERS:**Acres**

Total lost to dam construction/inundation: 17,791

Negotiated total to mitigate for dam impacts: 26,537

Protected with BPA funds before 2010: 6,699

Protected 2010 (including Mount Pisgah/Wildish and Trappist Abbey):
2,958

Total protected so far: 9,657

Still to be protected: 16,880

BPA funding (amounts will increase 2.5% per year for inflation starting fiscal 2015)

Habitat protection fiscal 2011-2013: \$2.5 million/year

Operations and maintenance fiscal 2011-2012: \$837,000/year

Operations and maintenance fiscal 2013: \$1.1 million/year

Habitat protection fiscal 2014-2025: \$8 million/year

Operations and maintenance fiscal 2014-2025: \$1.7 million/year

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