



The Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program

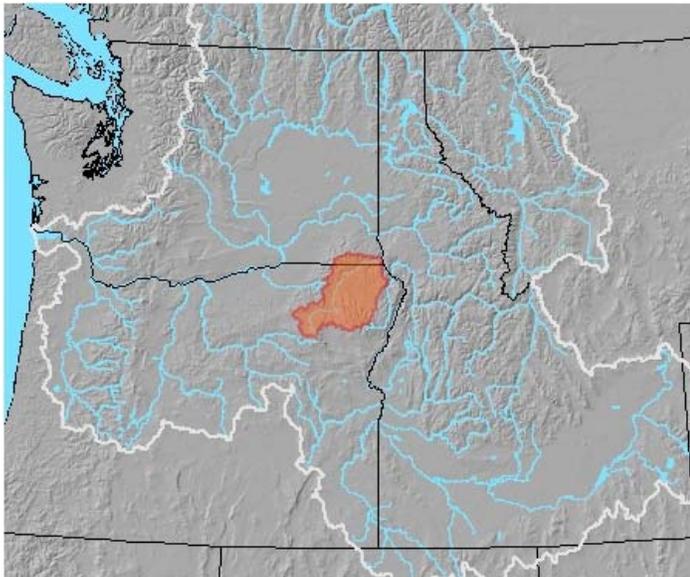
Situated in the Blue Mountain region of northeast Oregon and southeast Washington, the Grande Ronde River basin is home to a diverse array of fish and wildlife habitat, including critical habitat supporting threatened and endangered populations of

salmon, steelhead and bull trout. The Bonneville Power Administration works to improve conditions for fish and wildlife in the Grande Ronde basin through an innovative watershed management initiative known as the **Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program** (GRMWP).

Working with federal, state, and local agencies, as well as tribal representatives and private landowners, the GRMWP coordinates a wide variety of in-stream, riparian, and upland habitat enhancement and restoration projects. The GRMWP coordinates local habitat restoration efforts based on regional fish and wildlife mitigation actions identified by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, and other regional and local watershed planning initiatives.

Since 1994, approximately 300 watershed enhancement and habitat improvement projects have been implemented through the GRMWP, focusing on a comprehensive array of environmental factors influencing water quality and water quantity, in-stream habitat complexity, riparian and upland habitat conditions, and fish passage.

Enhancement and habitat improvement work accomplished through the GRMWP focuses on improving in-stream habitat for anadromous and resident fish; stabilizing stream banks to protect water quality and reduce sedimentation; enhancing riparian and upland habitats; improving fish passage facilities; monitoring water quality; removing and reconstructing roads to reduce impact on stream habitats; and modifying agricultural and livestock practices to benefit fish as well as landowners. Examples of specific accomplishments include:



Grande Ronde subbasin

Selected Accomplishments 1994-2002

- 210 miles of in-stream improvements
- 323 miles of fencing installed
- 2,738 acres of riparian habitat improved
- 16,775 acres of upland habitat improved
- 15,531 acres of mixed habitat improved
- 287 miles of roads closed/removed
- 176 miles of road improvements
- 387 off-stream watering sites developed
- 50 fish passage improvements completed
- 19 irrigation improvements completed

Source: Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program



- **Re-establish floodplain connections and habitat diversity to benefit salmon:** With funding from BPA, the GRMWP partnered with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, to assist a private landowner in restoring approximately 500 acres of wet meadow and riparian habitat along the Grande Ronde River, Bear Creek and Jordan Creek. The restoration effort re-established floodplain connections, improved water quality and in-stream habitat diversity for adult and juvenile summer steelhead and spring chinook salmon.
- **Improve rangeland for livestock and reducing sedimentation in streams:** Partnering with BPA and the Union Soil and Water Conservation District, the GRMWP worked with local landowners to seed disturbed areas in riparian zones and replant pastures on rangeland in upland areas. In addition to improving the quality of pastures and range for livestock, the vegetative cover reduces soil erosion, and sedimentation in adjacent streams. In fiscal year 2004, six landowners seeded a total of 124 acres.



- **Assist landowners with improving riparian habitat along streams:** With funding from BPA, the GRMWP partnered with the Wallowa Soil and Water Conservation District to establish a coordinator position for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. CREP provides landowners with annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term riparian buffers along streams that contain anadromous fish. In 2003, the CREP coordinator assisted with the enrollment of 527.7 acres of riparian buffer into the CREP program.

BPA Support for the GRMWP

BPA plays a pivotal role in supporting the GRMWP by funding projects that contribute directly towards the recovery of threatened and endangered species in the basin, as well as projects that mitigate for the operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System. In fiscal year 2004, BPA will provide approximately \$1.6 million in funding to the GRMWP through the Council's Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program to support various watershed enhancement and habitat restoration projects, including:

- Reducing sedimentation and improving water quality and riparian habitat supporting summer steelhead in Bear Creek.



- Enhancing rearing habitat for migrating juvenile Chinook salmon and summer steelhead in Catherine Creek.
- Developing livestock watering sites away from streams to benefit critical riparian habitat and facilitate more efficient livestock distribution for stockowners.
- Re-establishing year-round fish passage at the Swackhammer diversion structure on Catherine Creek.
- Restoring riparian and floodplain habitat on the Wallowa River supporting juvenile summer steelhead and spring chinook.
- Establishing site-specific passage facilities for adult and juvenile steelhead on Doe, Billy and Summit creeks.

- Improving passage facilities for Snake River steelhead and native rainbow trout in the Dry Creek watershed.
- Restoring riparian, floodplain and wetland habitat to benefit endangered Snake River summer steelhead in the Willow Creek system.
- Restoring fish passage at the Poley Allen diversion located on the Lostine River.

Partnerships – key to success

A key element in the success of the GRMWP is the ability to develop partnerships with project cooperators. Since 1994, the GRMWP has developed funding and cost-sharing agreements with numerous federal, state and local agencies, as well as private organizations, private landowners, tribal entities and local



schools. For every funding dollar provided to the GRMWP by BPA, the GRMWP has secured four additional dollars to support critical watershed enhancement and habitat protection efforts.

The following table summarizes funding secured by the GRMWP from fiscal years 1994 through 2002 to directly accomplish project work. This includes funds expended to complete projects, and estimates of funding to complete projects still in progress.

Funding Partner¹

Bonneville Power Administration	\$5,222,414
Bureau of Land Management	\$24,925
Bureau of Reclamation	\$744,754
Environmental Protection Agency	\$71,600
Farm Services Administration	\$359,669
Federal Emergency Management Agency	\$44,750
Federal Highway Administration	\$2,000
National Marine Fisheries Service	\$97,200
Natural Resources Conservation Service	\$409,617
Northwest Power and Conservation Council	\$5,000
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	\$10,000
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	\$54,900
U.S. Forest Service	\$3,146,608
Oregon Department of Agriculture	\$61,730
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality	\$105,260
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	\$331,968
Oregon Department of Forestry	\$73,001
Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries	\$54,146
Oregon Department of Transportation	\$80,600
Oregon Parks & Recreation Department	\$51,637
Oregon Water Resources Dept.	\$17,220
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board	\$4,451,696
Conservation Districts	\$49,843
County/City/Schools	\$1,121,602
Misc. State Agencies/Universities	\$61,201
Tribes	\$438,504
Private	\$2,357,831
Non-Government Organization	\$487,099
Other	<u>\$166,865</u>
Total	\$20,103,640

Source: Grande Ronde Model Watershed

¹ Excludes GRMWP staff and administrative costs.

For Additional Information

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