

CHAPTER 5 - PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A.	CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	5 - 2
	1. Concentrate On Non-Federal Lands In The Watershed.....	5 - 2
	2. Use A Watershed Scale Approach To Deal With Limiting Factors.....	5 - 2
	3. Develop Design Guidelines Which Can Be Fine-Tuned At Each Working Site	5 - 3
	4. Work Watersheds From The Top Down	5 - 3
	5. Act Quickly	5 - 3
B.	PROJECT SELECTION	5 - 3
	1. Project Identification	5 - 3
	2. Screening Criteria.....	5 - 4
	TABLE 5-1 Project Screening Criteria	5 - 4
C.	SAMPLE FORMS.....	5 - 5
	1. Example Of A Landowner Agreement.....	5 - 5
	2. CWA Project Prescription.....	5 - 9
D.	COOPERATIVE FRAMEWORK.....	5 - 10
	1. Partners.....	5 - 10
	2. Funding	5 - 10
E.	DISPUTE RESOLUTION	5 - 10
	1. The Consensus Process	5 - 11

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLE 5-1	Project Screening Criteria	5 - 4
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APPENDICES REFERENCED

APPENDIX I	Criteria for Planting and Fencing Stream Corridors.....	5 - 5
APPENDIX J	Criteria for Determining the Width of Riparian Setbacks:	5 - 5
APPENDIX K	Criteria for Selecting Sites for Off-Channel Improvements.....	5 - 5
APPENDIX L	Criteria for Selecting Sites for Instream Structure Placement.....	5 - 5
APPENDIX M	Partners In Action.....	5 - 10
APPENDIX N	Potential Funding Sources.....	5 - 10
APPENDIX O	Dispute Resolution.....	5 - 12

CHAPTER 5 - PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

The Coquille River has been identified as both water quality and habitat limited, directly affecting the abundance of many fish species. Addressing these limiting factors takes a broad perspective, linking ownerships in both upland and riparian areas. Listed below is a strategy which will assist the Coquille Watershed Association with identifying, prioritizing, coordinating, and accomplishing both immediate and long-range actions to address limiting factors identified in the Coquille watershed.

A. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The CWA has a two tier approach to identify restoration activities: 1) opportunistic, i.e., landowners call or walk in with proposals for projects on their land, or 2) site selective, projects arise after assessment of sub-watersheds. Site selective and opportunistic projects are complementary. Site selective projects require a door-to-door commitment and an additional level of planning. Opportunistic projects often result from successful site selective projects.

1. CONCENTRATE ON NON-FEDERAL LANDS IN THE WATERSHED

Approximately 70% of the Coquille watershed is in non-federal ownership. Water quality and habitat diversity on these lands is essential to survival of native anadromous fish. Non-federal landowners and managers often lack the resources to implement needed habitat restoration projects. Concentrating watershed restoration funding on non-federal land will help improve the overall level of aquatic management within the watershed and reduce dependence on federal land to provide high quality habitat.

2. USE A WATERSHED SCALE APPROACH TO DEAL WITH LIMITING FACTORS

The watershed scale approach is a process to assess overall conditions and determine which restoration actions will provide the greatest benefits for the money and effort expended. It begins with the review of small drainages to determine limiting factors, appropriate restoration actions, priorities, possible partnerships, and opportunities for cooperative and/or supportive efforts. Documents developed by cooperating agencies such as: the Tenmile-Coos-Coquille District Guide to Restoration Site Selection (ODFW, 1997); federal watershed analyses; the Core Area concept (Oregon Plan); Aquatic Diversity Areas (FEMAT); essential salmon habitat; etc., will be used as tools in the review. Specific sites and types of projects arise from this assessment.

The projects are rarely unique to a drainage but similar by zone (as discussed in Chapter 4), and almost universally needed. With the latitude of working on a watershed scale, limiting factors can be addressed directly without a struggle over what tributary is most important. For example, riparian restoration is just as important on all forks of the system

Individual landowner cooperation and stewardship commitment are vital to the success of the watershed approach. Implementing restoration actions at a landscape level will require a steady door-to-door, land-owner by land owner commitment on non-federal lands. Identified actions can be implemented first with cooperating landowners. By funding identified projects with cooperative landowners in

several drainages, adjoining landowners will see the positive benefits of restoration first hand. The projects and the landowners involved in them are the recruitment tool for future landowner involvement. This opportunistic recruitment approach, in the communities where people live, will facilitate the eventual treatment of entire sub-watersheds through time.

3. DEVELOP DESIGN GUIDELINES WHICH CAN BE FINE-TUNED AT EACH WORKING SITE

Restoration actions need to incorporate proven successful design features, and yet be flexible enough to quickly allow site-by-site adaptation. Typically, once a few demonstration projects have been completed in a sub-watershed, adjacent landowners are often willing to sign on to the program. For example the erosion control project implemented near Sturdivant Park in Coquille is serving as a positive example as to the effectiveness of both structural and vegetative solutions to erosion. Several other landowners have inquired about applying these techniques on their lands.

4. WORK WATERSHEDS FROM THE TOP DOWN

Where willing landowners permit, stream corridors through alluvial valleys can be worked from the top down, so that the benefits of upstream rehabilitation will accrue to downstream conditions.

5. ACT QUICKLY

Act quickly to accomplish restoration tasks and demonstrate success within the community. Demonstrate to the community that this is an action orientated organization.

B. PROJECT SELECTION

1. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

- a. A landowner contacts CWA or CWA contacts a landowner concerning a potential project.
 - i. Gather information for Project White Paper including a Monitoring Plan (see Chapter 6, Section D for more on the Monitoring Plan).
- b. Present White Paper to the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to review for technical soundness. They will recommend technical and/or design changes, other alternatives, or approval.
- c. Present White Paper to the Executive Council for review and approval/disapproval using the screening criteria listed in Table 5-1 below.
- d. If the Executive Council recommends disapproval of the project or monitoring plan as presented, then the project will be modified accordingly to reach consensus. If modified, the project would have to go back to the landowner for their approval of changes.

Agencies need to be informed of potential projects and need to submit a summary (either verbally at a meeting or written and mailed) of pertinent information (e.g. Watershed Analyses) related to a given project.

2. SCREENING CRITERIA

The *Coquille Watershed Action Plan* does not establish a priority list of stream reaches or projects which will be emphasized in restoration efforts. The *Action Plan* provides a "screen" through which proposed projects can be sifted. At the end of this process, only projects which meet all critical screening criteria in Table 5-1 below will be considered.

Funding and availability of resources will limit the number, types, and locations of projects the CWA will be able to implement. Excellent interagency and inter-program coordination currently exists and will be invaluable to accomplishing proposed restoration efforts. It is the consensus of the CWA, Coos SWCD, and the Technical Advisory Group that funding should be utilized to expand upon restoration momentum currently existing in the watershed. The CWA will work to better coordinate with the wide array of existing restoration programs currently in place.

**TABLE 5-1
PROJECT SCREENING CRITERIA**

	Critical	High
The landowner desires restoration projects on their property.	X	
The landowner's stewardship incentives are high, e.g., the landowner can provide in-kind services such as labor, equipment and materials, or desires to provide long term maintenance and/or monitoring.		X
The project addresses limiting factors.	X	
The opportunities are good for coordinating efforts with private, federal, and state groups to treat/restore sub-watersheds.		X
The project will focus on high priority salmonid habitat and/or water quality limited streams.		X
Opportunities exist for cooperative funding.		X
Projects are technically sound with clearly defined goals and objectives and compatible with watershed scale processes.	X	
Projects embrace and define a broad spectrum of values, supporting the Councils educational, cultural, scientific, and economic goals and objectives.		X
Those projects which promote public awareness, participation, and enhance educational opportunities associated with watershed health can be considered over those that do not.		X

Additional criteria for prioritizing small site-specific projects can be found in the following appendices:

- Appendix I - Criteria for Planting and Fencing Stream Corridors.
- Appendix J - Criteria for Determining the Width of Riparian Setbacks:

Appendix K - Criteria for Selecting Sites for Off-Channel Improvements.

Appendix L - Criteria for Selecting Sites for Instream Structure Placement

C. SAMPLE FORMS

1. EXAMPLE OF A LANDOWNER AGREEMENT

All fencing, planting, stock watering improvements, and off-channel ponds projects will identify landowner components per individual signed agreements. Landowner agreements will be designed on a site specific and project specific basis. As noted in the criterion for selection of restoration sites, landowner agreement and stewardship incentives must be secured prior to project implementation. Landowner agreements will identify commitments made by the landowner regarding long-term project maintenance and monitoring. Those projects identifying strong landowner commitment will be given priority for funding assistance. It is not the intent of the CWA to make long term landowner agreements or commitments burdensome. It is the intent of the CWA to identify sustainable projects with the potential to yield measurable long term improvements and to raise landowner comfort with long term project commitments. Below is a sample landowner agreement form.

Index No: _____

Coquille Watershed Association

Working Together to Promote Resource Conservation and Economic Stability

382 North Central - Coquille, Oregon 97423 - (541) 396-2229

LANDOWNER AGREEMENT

PROJECT: _____

(The purpose of this project is to improve fish & wildlife habitat and/or water quality)

COOPERATOR(S) _____

A. The undersigned landowner(s), hereinafter called the **COOPERATOR(s)**, and the **Coquille Watershed Association (CWA)**, on this _____ day of _____, 19____, do enter into this cooperative agreement to accomplish:

(Example: Site prep 1300 feet of stream bank; install 4 boulder weirs according to attached drawing; construct 0.9 miles of 2 strand electric fence.)

B. The lands involved are located in Section(s) _____, Township _____, Range _____ and Tax Lot # _____.

It is mutually agreed that development of the project shall be shared as follows:

C. The COOPERATOR(s) will:

1. _____

D. The CWA will:

1. _____

E. The **COOPERATOR(s)** will permit the **CWA** or their agent to enter onto the premises for the purposes of examining the condition of structures, repairing as necessary, and project monitoring. The **CWA** shall in all cases schedule such visits with the **COOPERATOR(s)** prior to entering the property.

- F. The **CWA** will repair or replace damages to structures resulting from flood so long as funding for restoration is available.
- G. The **CWA** will replant vegetated areas with less than 50 percent survival.
- H. The **CWA** will not be held liable for any damages to equipment or accidental harm or death of the **COOPERATOR(s)** or their employees or representatives.
- I. The **COOPERATOR(s)** will not be held liable for any damage to equipment or accidental harm or death of the **CWA's** employees or representatives.
- J. This agreement shall remain in full force and effect for the duration of five years unless sooner terminated by mutual consent of the parties or is terminated by either party after due notice in writing because of violation of any terms of this agreement.
- K. Implementation of this project shall be completed by _____, 19____.

THIS AGREEMENT PROVIDES NO COQUILLE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION OR ANY OTHER AGENCY CLAIM TO LAND.

COOPERATOR

CWA

Address

Date: _____ **Phone:** _____

Address

Date: _____ **Phone:** _____

2. CWA PROJECT PRESCRIPTION

Cooperator Name	Address	Phone
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Directions to Project Site

CWA Employees on Site _____ / ___ / ___
 Date

Site Prep: Blackberry: _____ Grass: _____ Shrubs: _____ Estimated Person Days: _____

Fencing:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Strands</u>	<u>Feet</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Barbed	_____	_____	
Electric	_____	_____	Electric ___ Solar ___ Battery ___
Non-Barbed	_____	_____	
Woven	_____	_____	
Gates	Yes _____ No _____	Number _____	Length _____

Planting:

<u>Conifer</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Conifer</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Vexar:</u> Yes ___ No ___
Sitka Spruce	_____	Douglas-fir	_____	<u>Matt:</u> Yes ___ No ___
Grand Fir	_____	W.R. Cedar	_____	
Hemlock	_____	Pine	_____	Other Materials _____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<u>Hardwood</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Hardwood</u>	<u>Number</u>	
Maple	_____	Myrtle	_____	
Cascara	_____	Cottonwood	_____	
_____	_____	_____	_____	
<u>Understory</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Understory</u>	<u>Number</u>	
Willow	_____	Dogwood	_____	
Vine Maple	_____	Elderberry	_____	
_____	_____	_____	_____	Estimated Person Days ___

Livestock: Horses _____ Cows _____ Sheep _____ Erosion _____

Off-Site Watering: Yes ___ No ___ Describe _____

Tributaries: Yes ___ No ___ Describe _____

Tidegate(s): Number _____ Type _____ Working? Yes ___ No ___

Cooperator Contribution:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Amount</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Materials, Equipment, and Labor:

Wood Posts _____ Steel Posts _____ Wire Rolls by Type _____
 Plastic Posts _____ Insulators _____ Wire Handles _____ Staples _____ Nails _____
 RR Ties _____ Gates _____ Tanks _____ Pumps _____ Estimated Total Person Days _____

D. COOPERATIVE FRAMEWORK

1. PARTNERS

Coordination is one of the objectives of the Coquille Watershed Association. Landowner cooperation and stewardship commitment are vital to the process of resource management and restoration on non-federal lands. Below are listed a broad partnership of cooperative project sponsors and funding entities have been identified to facilitate the implementation of these restoration activities, more information is included in Appendix M. Strong support of landowners, volunteers, students, and service clubs will provide broad-based local support for the strategy. The promotion of continued stewardship and non-federal landowner involvement and the development of all educational opportunities are key to this *Action Plan*.

- The Coquille Watershed Association (CWA).
- The Coos County Watershed Coordinating Authority (CCWCA).
- The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the United States Forest Service (USFS)
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW).
- Salmon Trout Enhancement Program (STEP).
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Coos Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)
- Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS).
- Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF).
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Bring Back the Natives Program.
- Ports of Coquille and Bandon.
- The Cities of Bandon, Coquille, Myrtle Point and Powers.
- Oregon State University Extension (OSU), Sea Grant.
- Oregon State Department of Agriculture (ODA).
- Friends of the Coquille.
- Coos County.
- Southwest Oregon Province Team
- Coastal Zone Management Association.
- Governors Watershed Enhancement Board (GWEB).
- Landowner Associations.
- Southwest Coos Watershed Council

2. FUNDING

Potential funding sources are listed in Appendix N.

E. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Building understanding and networking among individuals with diverse needs and beliefs is one of the major goals of the Coquille Watershed Association. State agencies, local governments, private landowners, and concerned citizens throughout the Coquille watershed and Oregon are being faced with complex natural resource issues which historically have been resolved through costly and frequently combative litigation. This has led to increased

polarization of interests and less communication and negotiation. Resolving disputes through channels other than litigation promotes the understanding and networking among individuals in the Coquille watershed who represent diverse needs and beliefs.

The Coquille Watershed Association's Executive Committee and Technical Advisory Group shall make decisions on the basis of consensus.

1. THE CONSENSUS PROCESS¹

Definition of Consensus: Although consensus is commonly used to mean "complete or unanimous agreement," its precise meaning is "general agreement". Consensus is reached, therefore, when all members of a group are willing to accept a decision. Even though a decision may not necessarily be an individual's first choice, he or she considers it a workable approach and in the best interest of the group and its goals.

Consensus is:

- Finding a proposal acceptable enough that all members can support it; no member opposes it.

Consensus is not:

- A unanimous vote - consensus may not represent everyone's first priorities.
- A majority vote - in a majority vote, only the majority gets something they are happy with; people in the minority may get something they don't want at all, which is counter to the goal of consensus.
- Everyone is totally satisfied.

Guiding Principles of Consensus Processes:

Purpose Driven - People need a reason to participate in the process.

Inclusive Not Exclusive - All parties with a significant interest in the issue should be involved in the consensus process.

Voluntary Participation - The parties who are affected or interested participate voluntarily.

Self Design - The parties design the consensus process.

Flexibility - Flexibility should be designed into the process. For example, the group can do the following:

- Discuss how decisions will be made, such as when to take a poll, when to decide by consensus, are there times when a decision by only a few people is acceptable?
- Explore more important issues by polling (each member is asked to state an opinion verbally or in writing about his or her support for the decision/issue).
- Decide important issues by consensus.

¹ Taken from: The Canadian Round Tables on the Environment and Economy, 1993 - "Guiding Principles - Building Consensus For a Sustainable Future" and "Watershed Initiatives".

- Use a test for consensus.

Equal Opportunity - All parties must have equal access to relevant information and the opportunity to participate effectively throughout the process.

- For participating entities (e.g. - agencies, companies, etc.) one spokesperson will be recognized for the group.

Respect For Diverse Interests - Acceptance of the diverse values, interests, and knowledge of the parties involved in the consensus process is essential.

Accountability - The parties are accountable both to their constituencies, and to the process that they have agreed to establish.

Time Limits - Realistic deadlines are necessary throughout the process.

Implementation - Commitment to implementation and effective monitoring are essential parts of any agreement.

Tests To Determine If Consensus Has Been Reached:

Does everyone accept the decision? A "yes" answer means that a decision has been made. Is there any opposition to this decision? If no one speaks, the answer may be that everyone agrees with the decision. The questioner should also be alert for non-verbal signs which could indicate opposition.

Can everyone live with the decision? A "yes" ensures that no one has a conflict with the decision.

Information on other types of dispute resolution can be found in Appendix O.