

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Focal Areas



Rogue Watershed Resiliency

Background

The Rogue is unique among coastal watersheds in Oregon. The traits that make it unique enhance its importance to people, ecosystems, and the economy, yet also make it vulnerable to threats. With most of the valley habitat located well inland from the ocean, low gradient streams of the Rogue are exposed to much warmer air temperatures, and many small tributaries of the inland valley sustain flows only during the winter and spring and become intermittent or dry in summer. Far more people live in the Rogue watershed than any other coastal watershed in Oregon, so impacts from development are much more significant. The combination of a naturally warmer summer climate and extensive human development make the Rogue more susceptible to extreme weather under climate projections. Given these factors, many streams in the Rogue have been identified as water quality impaired and lack sufficient flows to meet water use demands, including instream targets.

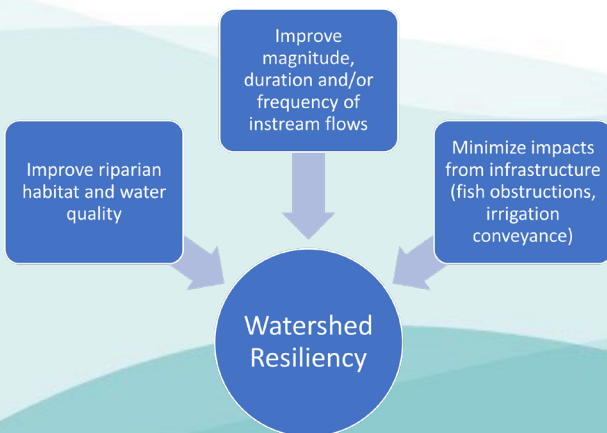


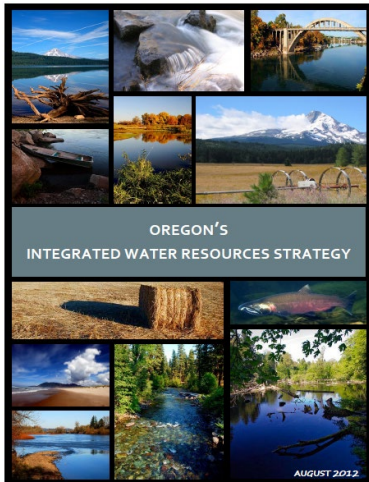
These challenges are particularly concerning given the critical importance of the Rogue to fishery resources. The Rogue supports the largest population of naturally produced spring chinook salmon on the coast of Oregon. The interior Rogue is also the only sizable producer of coho salmon in the Oregon portion of Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast Coho (SONCC). Rogue steelhead exhibit a half pounder life history trait, found only in the Rogue and several watersheds in California. Salmon and steelhead populations of the Rogue have a more southerly ocean distribution than populations to the north. Additionally, Rogue Chinook salmon contribute to fishing off the Oregon Coast at a much higher rate than Chinook produced in the mid and north coasts of Oregon and are valued by commercial fishers.

Many different recent factors and processes have provided focus to the Rogue both in terms of its critical importance to human and ecological communities, but also to its vulnerabilities. Many different stakeholders, including irrigation districts, watershed councils, and conservation organizations are looking for solutions to ensure that the water needs of the environment and the community can be met into the future.

ODFW Implementation Strategies

The Rogue Watershed Resiliency Initiative seeks to advance state and federal investments that will restore water quantity and quality and upgrade infrastructure to promote fish passage. This collective effort will help build resiliency in native fish populations allowing them to persist in an increasingly challenging environment into the future.





The Initiative seeks to accomplish its objectives while providing other system benefits where possible, such as preparing developed infrastructure for flow extremes by modernizing water management systems and right-sizing culverts for the impacts of climate projections.

Guided by the Rogue South Coast Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan and other strategic plans, the Oregon Dept of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and multiple partners throughout the watershed are developing packages of investments that build on the existing momentum for restoration of fish passage and streamflow in the Rogue watershed, accelerate project implementation, and build resilience. The proposed investments will benefit a variety of native migratory fish species including SONCC Coho Salmon (federally listed as Threatened), wild winter and summer steelhead, spring and fall chinook salmon, Pacific lamprey, and Klamath smallscale suckers. The upper Rogue is a particular focus due to its critical importance for water quality and a broad range of species.

Potential IIJA Funding Opportunities

ODFW The IIJA identifies several potential funding sources that may provide resources to advance the Rogue Watershed Resiliency Initiative's priorities, including:

- *NRCS Watershed and Flood Prevention Program* provides \$500 million for planning, designs, and construction of measures that address flood prevention, watershed protection, public recreation, and water management.
- *BOR WaterSmart Program* has multiple grant opportunities totaling approximately \$565 million for water management improvements that contribute to water supply sustainability, increase drought resilience, and have environmental benefits.
- *BOR Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Program* provides \$250 million to support the design, study, and construction of aquatic ecosystem restoration and protection projects.
- *BOR Multi-benefit Projects to Improve Watershed Health* provides \$100 million towards projects that support habitat restoration and watershed health in basins impacted by a reclamation project.
- *NOAA Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants* provide \$491 million to protect and restore habitat to sustain fisheries, recover protected species, and maintain resilient coastal ecosystems and communities.
- *NOAA Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grants* provide \$400 million for fish passage by removal of dams and other in-stream barriers for native migratory fish.
- *USFWS National Fish Passage Program* provides \$200 million for fish passage and barrier removal projects.
- *NFWF American the Beautiful Challenge* includes IIJA funds from the DOI, USFS, and USDOD totaling approximately \$85 million a year for projects that connect and restore lands, waters, and wildlife.

Keep checking ODFW's IIJA website for updated information (<https://dfw.state.or.us/IIJA/>)

