

Summary of Projects Recommended for Access & Habitat Funding

The Access and Habitat (A&H) Board met October 15, 2019 in Frenchglen, Oregon to review projects recommended for funding by A&H Regional Councils (Councils). A project must receive at least four supporting votes from the Board to be recommended for funding. All projects received letters of support from the local District Wildlife Biologist. A brief description of the funding requested, access and habitat benefits provided, as well as Council and Board votes follows. The A&H Board recommends funding the following two projects:

Columbia Plateau Cooperative Habitat Initiative

- A&H Funds: \$75,000
- ODFW East Region: \$90,000
- Morrow Soil and Water Conservation District: \$122,445
- Farm Service Agency \$390,600
- Natural Resources Conservation Service: \$24,960
- Private Landowners \$100,000
- Total Project Cost: \$803,005
- Applicant: Morrow Soil and Water Conservation District
- Location: Heppner and Columbia Basin Wildlife Management Units
- Habitat Acres: Target of 5,000 acres over 3 years
- Project Duration: April 2020-April 2023
- Council Vote Yes: 7; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

This project will provide up to \$75,000 for supplies and materials used by a habitat technician for habitat projects in Morrow, Gilliam and Umatilla counties. Project funds may also be used to hire limited seasonal help if needed to complete time dependent actions. The technician will focus on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands enrolled in the Upland Cooperative Access Program, Heppner Regulated Hunt Area, and Columbia Basin Open Fields access programs, totaling over 120,000 acres. Based out of the Heppner Service Center the habitat technician's salary is cost-shared between the Morrow Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and license dollars from ODFW's East Region. The Farm Services Agency provides technical assistance and cost-share funds on Conservation Reserve Program projects. The habitat technician's activities include improving CRP areas by reseeded with native grasses and forbs, planting shrubs and invigorating decadent stands through burning, disking and mowing. Technicians have directly improved over 13,000 acres of habitat under the project in previous years.

Green Diamond Resource Company (GDRC) Access

- A&H Funds: \$448,306 (\$58,219/year OSP & \$91,216/year GDRC)
- Cost Per Acre: ~\$0.25/year (~\$0.097/acre OSP & ~\$0.153/acre GDRC)
- Cooperator Funds: \$262,000 (~\$87,333 per year)
- Total Project Cost: \$710,306 (~\$236,769 per year)
- Applicant: Green Diamond Resources Company (GDRC)
- Location: Klamath Watershed District
- Access Acres: 597,741 private
- Access Duration: 3 Years: March 2020 -April 2023
- Cooperators: JWTR LLC, JWTR Holding Company, Mule Deer-Foundation, ODFW Klamath District
- Council Vote: Yes: 4; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The proposed project would spend \$448,306 of A&H funds split between access payments to Green Diamond Resources Company (GDRC) and to hire a retired Oregon State Police (OSP) trooper to provide dedicated law enforcement on 597,741 acres of private timberland (Figure 1) for 3 years. The patrol period would be March-November, 2019-2023. Public access will be provided year-round through April 2023. Oregon Hunter Association does an annual cleanup on the property. The clean-up in June of 2019 removed 5,380 lbs. trash, 1200 lbs. scrap metal, and 86 tires. Additional cooperator funds would be used to administer and maintain road closures and conduct habitat improvements including guzzler maintenance.

GDRC provides 597,741 acres of public hunting access to industrial timberlands in the Keno, Klamath Falls, Interstate, Sprague, Silver Lake, and Fort Rock Wildlife Management Units (WMUs). GDRC's wildlife-friendly management practices have created superior deer and elk habitat through much of this range. For example, GDRC property provides more than 80% of big game winter range in the Keno Unit. Active timber management increases forage and supports higher densities of big game, therefore attracting a disproportional share of hunting pressure than adjacent public lands. In 2016, GDRC lands supported an estimated 11,424 big game and turkey hunter use days. These lands also improve access to approximately 10,000 acres of public land.

The GDRC Travel Management Area (Figure 2) first enrolled in A&H in 2009. During the first five years, the project proved successful in reducing destructive behavior such as poaching, habitat damage from OHV abuse, garbage dumping, and theft that if left unchecked would threaten continued public access.

Figure 1: Green Diamond Resource Co. Ownership



