

## Benton County Prairie Species Habitat Conservation Plan



Stakeholder Advisory Committee  
March 15, 2007

## Today's Agenda

- Brief re-introduction to the HCP
- Updates on progress/directions
- Summary of Technical Advisory Meetings
- 2007 Field Season
- Public Outreach/Involvement
- Conservation Measures
- Next Steps
- Public Comments

## A Habitat Conservation Plan for Benton County

### Goal:

- Balance conservation of rare species and their habitats with economic growth and development in Benton County



## What is a Habitat Conservation Plan?

### A plan that specifies the:

- (1) Likely harm to endangered/threatened species resulting from County activities (and others)
- (2) Steps to avoid, minimize, and mitigate such harm – Conservation Measures
- (3) Funding available to implement the conservation measures

## Why does Benton County want a HCP?

- Research through the HCP process:
  - Learn about rare species distributions & habitats
  - Use info to benefit conservation in the County
- With approved HCP, USFWS will issue Benton County an Incidental Take Permit
  - Protects the County from legal liability if unavoidable or accidental harm to species takes place
  - Coverage can be offered to other landowners
- HCP will make additional funding options available

## Update on HCP Progress and Direction

- Added plant species
- Developed proposed list of Covered Activities
- Determined permit area for each species (based on where State/Federal regulations apply)

## What Species?

- Listed Animals  
Fender's Blue Butterfly



- Candidate Species  
Taylor's checkerspot



Streaked Horned Lark



- Plants  
Kincaid's lupine



Willamette daisy



Nelson's checkermallow



Bradshaw's lomatium



Peacock larkspur



## Covered Activities

- Specifically - Benton County Activities
- Activities for which Benton County issues a permit that could impact the covered species
- Any activity on public or private lands that have the potential to affect the species

## What will the HCP Cover?

Which Species?  
Which Lands?  
Which Covered Activities?

County Considered  
6 Different Approaches

## Benton County Prairie Species Habitat Conservation Plan

| Species                 | Federal ESA                                   |                    | State ESA                  |                    |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
|                         | Non-Federal Public Lands                      | Private Landowners | Non-Federal Public Lands   | Private Landowners |
| Fender's Blue Butterfly | Protected                                     | Protected          |                            |                    |
| Taylor's Checkerspot    | Not protected until listed                    |                    |                            |                    |
| Streaked Horned Lark    |   |                    | Not protected until listed |                    |
| Kincaid's lupine        | Protected if associated with Fender's         |                    | Protected                  |                    |
| Willamette daisy        |   |                    | Protected                  |                    |
| Nelson's checkermallow  | Not protected unless there is a Federal Nexus |                    | Protected                  |                    |
| Bradshaw's lomatium     |   |                    | Protected                  |                    |
| Peacock Larkspur        |   |                    | Protected                  |                    |

## → The Preferred Approach ←

- Who can be covered at some level?
  - All Benton County landowners (public and private)
- What species are covered?
  - Benton County Property: All eight species
  - Everyone else: Fender's & associated Lupine
- Who can join via a Certificate of Inclusion?
  - Any landowner seeking coverage for Fender's and associated Lupine

## Benefits and Drawbacks

- Benefits**
  - Can offer help to all Benton County landowners
  - Private landowners can obtain a Certificate of Inclusion from County for impacts to Fender's, instead of seeking USFWS permit
  - Concurs with species protection in Federal ESA
- Drawbacks**
  - More work for County re: permit issuance
  - Other non-Federal public lands do not receive coverage for plants/candidates
    - THIS CAN POTENTIALLY BE ADDRESSED IF THERE IS INTEREST EARLY IN THE PROCESS

## What else was considered?

- Who can be covered at some level?
  - Only Benton County Properties?
  - Only Benton County + non-federal public lands?
- What Covered Species?
  - Only Fender's Blue Butterfly?
  - Only Animals (including candidates)?
  - All species with full coverage on all lands (even plants and candidates on private lands)?

## Summary of Technical Advisory Committee Meetings



## Technical Advisory Committee

- Whole Group Meeting
  - Formed Species-Subcommittees
    - Streaked Horned Lark
    - Plants
    - Butterflies
- Key points of discussion:
  - State Endangered Species Act
  - HCP Biological goals
  - Coverage area for HCP
  - adding Peacock Larkspur as a covered species



## Streaked Horned Lark Subcommittee



- Members:
  - Bob Altman (American Bird Conservancy)
  - Randy Moore (OSU)
  - Doug Robinson (OSU)
  - Ann Kreager (ODFW)
  - Nick Testa (ODOT)
- Discussion Topics:
  - Lark Biology
  - Lark locations in County
  - Current and upcoming research
  - 2007 Surveys
    - Road Rights-of-Way
    - Presence/Absence
    - Nest Success
  - Covered Activities



## Plants Subcommittee



- Members:
  - Ed Alverson (TNC)
  - Deborah Clark (OSU)
  - Rebecca Currin (ODA)
  - Andy Gray (OSU)
  - Donna Schmitz (SWCD)
  - Ann Kreager (ODFW)
  - Nick Testa (ODOT)
  - Duncan Thomas (OSU, Benton Co.)
  - Laurie Starha (Benton Co.)
- Discussion Topics:
  - Pooling species location data into common database
  - Survey Methods/Strategies
  - Areas to survey in field assessments
  - Biological Goals
  - Covered activities



## Butterfly Subcommittee



- Members:
  - Dana Ross (Private Lepidopterist)
  - Cheryl Schultz (WSU)
  - Mark Wilson (OSU)
  - Paul Hammond (OSU)
  - Al Kitzman (Benton County)
  - Ann Kreager (ODFW)
  - Duncan Thomas (OSU, Benton County)
- Discussion Topics:
  - Upcoming research
  - Species requirements
  - Coordination of Field Surveys
  - Biological goals
  - Covered Activities

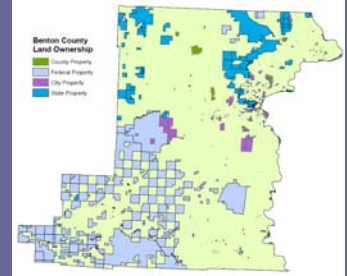


## 2007 Field Season Planning

- HCP Field Assessments
- Butterfly Dispersal Research (WSU)
- Graduate Student Project (Field Naturalist Program)

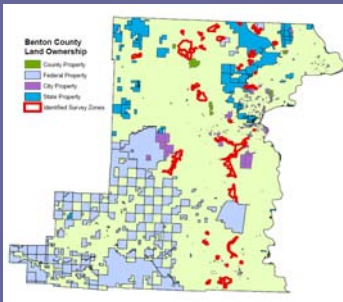
## 2007 HCP Field Assessments

- Objectives
  - Search for covered species
  - Describe habitats
  - Describe high quality prairie remnants
- Public lands
  - Benton County
    - including Rights of Way
  - OSU
  - City of Corvallis
  - EE Wilson
  - Others?



## 2007 HCP Field Assessments

- Visit as many private properties as possible
  - Surveys focus on Kincaid's Lupine and Fender's Blue (uplands)
  - Select surveys for Taylor's Checkerspot
  - Wet prairie areas: Daisy, Lomatium, Checkermallow, Larkspur
- Will send letters to request survey
- Landowners can request a survey at the HCP website: [www.co.benton.or.us/parks/hcp](http://www.co.benton.or.us/parks/hcp)



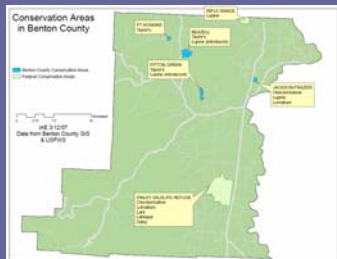
## Fender's Blue Butterfly Dispersal Project

- Cheryl Schultz & Dina Roberts (WSU)
  - Investigate butterfly dispersal behavior in hilly, partially wooded habitats of Cardwell Hill Near Wren
    - How far will they move?
    - What barriers will they cross?
    - What habitats will they use?
  - This information will be critical for Fender's Blue conservation planning in Benton County



## Field Naturalist Graduate Student Research Project

- Sara Mulford, University of Vermont
- **Project:** Take first steps in developing a Conservation Reserve Network
  - Describe currently protected habitats
  - Evaluate their suitability for each species
  - Examine connectivity



## Outreach & Public Involvement

- Butterfly Dispersal Project
  - Informative evening get together in late April
- Butterfly Identification Workshop (Late Spring)
- Involve landowners in site assessments and monitoring
- Next public meeting in September



## Potential Conservation Measures

- Habitat Acquisition
  - Fee Simple
  - Conservation Easement
- Habitat Restoration and Enhancement
- Population Transplants, Augmentations or Reintroductions
- Conservation Banking
- Vegetation Management
  - Revised timing for mowing and spraying
- Expedited Permit Process
- Tax Incentives
- Fee-in-Lieu
- County Permitting Process Revisions

## Potential Conservation Measures

Anything we are missing?

## Next Steps for SAC

- Next Meeting – September 2007
- Tasks
  - Review results of field work
  - Discuss refined conservation measures
  - Discuss implementation strategies (e.g., funding opportunities, monitoring, management)
- Interim
  - Review list of covered activities: Is it complete?
  - Identify additional conservation measures, opportunities
  - Let us know of any private landowners who might want their property surveyed in 2007 and 2008 for FBB and KL

## Estimated Timeline

### 2006

- Field assessments
  - April-July
- TAC and SAC meetings

### 2007

- Public Meetings
  - January, September
- TAC and SAC meetings
- Field assessments
  - April-July
- Draft HCP Document
  - December

### 2008

- Public Meetings
- TAC and SAC meetings
- Field assessments
  - April-July
- Draft NEPA document
- Finalize HCP

### 2009

- Final NEPA documentation
- Incidental Take Permit Issued

Public Comments?