

Benton County Prairie Species HCP

Stakeholder Workshop: Developing the Prairie Conservation Strategy

March 4, 2008

Members of the stakeholder committee were presented with brief summaries of the Benton County Prairie Species HCP (Tom Kaye) the Oregon Conservation Strategy (Ann Kreager) and the USFWS Recovery Plan for Prairie Species of Western Oregon and Southwestern WA (Mikki Collins). Workshop participants are identified in Table 1.

The committee was asked to brainstorm goals for the Prairie Conservation Strategy portion of the Benton County Prairie Species HCP and identify target species for conservation. The Prairie Conservation Strategy is a small part of the larger HCP, and ideally can have flexibility to address imperiled species beyond the eight covered species of the HCP. Below is a draft outline for the strategy that was prepared based on comments from the stakeholder workshop:

1. Introduction

The Benton County Prairie Conservation Strategy: A plan for all interested parties (public and private) to work together to help conserve and restore prairie habitat and recover at-risk prairie-dependent species in Benton County in a non-binding, non-regulatory framework.

DRAFT goals for the Prairie Conservation Strategy

1. Aid interested landowners in conserving, restoring and managing prairie and oak savanna habitat in Benton County.
2. Maintain a broad focus on prairie habitats and biodiversity while still considering the needs of special-status species.
3. Serve as a mechanism for proactive conservation to prevent further listing of prairie-dependent species in the County.
4. Serve as a local implementation of the U.S.F.W.S. Recovery Plan for the prairie species of Western Oregon and Southwestern Washington (Public draft expected summer 2008).
5. Encourage Adaptive Management (flexibility to adapt to climate change, funding, knowledge, etc.) to ensure greater efficacy in achieving conservation goals outlined above.

6. Emphasize voluntary actions for species conservation. The strategy will serve as a non-threatening, non-regulatory resource to facilitate collaborative planning and implementation of conservation actions between public agencies and private landowners.
 - a. Provide flexibility in involvement. A sliding scale of commitment to protection will be outlined.

7. Assist with planning and developing conservation and restoration projects that make the best use of available funds and are robust to low funding cycles.

Objectives:

1. Complete an analysis of habitats and species groups as they relate to the recovery plan.
2. Conduct analyses to determine where high quality prairie exists and what the capacity for stewardship on those lands is.
3. Identify and engage landowners and partnerships and then identify the organizational roles and capacities of those entities.
4. Identify and engage outreach and education partners and resources.
5. Develop mechanisms for implementing a sliding scale of commitment to protection.
6. Decide whether or not to make the strategy a conservation agreement so that USFWS can sign on to allow participants easier access to federal dollars.
7. Identify incentives for landowners to participate (funding and others).
8. Form a working group and determine a meeting schedule (this task will assist with project planning, distribution of funds, budgeting, etc.).
9. Identify logistical needs for implementation.
10. Interpret recovery plan (non-technical language in a clear summary).

Potential participants:

1. Local government:
 - a. Benton County
 - b. City of Philomath
 - c. City of Corvallis

2. State agencies
 - a. OSU
 - b. ODOT
 - c. State Parks
 - d. ODF
 - e. ODFW (E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area)

3. Conservation organizations:
 - a. The Nature Conservancy

- b. Greenbelt Land Trust
- 4. Watershed councils (private landowner participation)
 - a. Luckiamute ?
 - b. Marys
 - c. Soap ?
 - d. Long Tom ?
- 5. USFWS, Finley NWR
- 6. Others
 - a. Landfill?
 - b. Rifle Range?
 - c. Other cities?
- 7. Potential target species (Table 2).

2. Species Information

- a. Brief descriptions
- b. Ecology
- c. Locations and population sizes (natural and introduced)

3. Prairie Habitat in County

- a. Where does suitable habitat occur for the species in the County?
- b. Where can restoration work take place?
- c. What issues can prevent recommended actions from taking place and what are solutions for working around those issues.

4. Habitat improvement and population introduction/augmentation needs in the county

- a. Where are the connectivity problems, species/habitat on unprotected lands?
- b. What is needed for recovery? (recommended actions at specific locations, based on recommendations of recovery plan – including specific actions and goals for each species)

5. Resources for Cooperation

- a. Solutions for collaboration with other agencies conducting prairie conservation/restoration.
- b. Communication tools (How the strategy will remain a relevant, viable tool for collaboration over time)
 - Email list?
 - Working group?

6. Research Tools

- a. What are gaps in conservation knowledge?
- b. Where can research take place?

Table 1. Workshop attendees.

Dave	Lysne	OSU College of Forestry	dave.lysne@oregonstate.edu
Tom	Kaye	Institute for Applied Ecology	tom@appliedeco.org
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Ann	Kreager	Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife	ann.kreager@state.or.us
Mikki	Collins	US Fish and Wildlife Service	mikki_collins@fws.gov
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Table 2. Potential target species for the Benton County Prairie Conservation Strategy (this list may be reduced if some species are “umbrellas” for others and if Stakeholders choose to narrow the strategy's focus).

Common name	Scientific name	Federal	STATE	ODFW strategy species	USFWS W.V. Refuges Conservation Targets
Plants:					
Bradshaw's lomatium	<i>Lomatium bradshawii</i>	E	E	x	x
golden paintbrush	<i>Castilleja levisecta</i>	T	E	x	
Howellia	<i>Howellia aquatilis</i>	T			
Kincaid's lupine	<i>Lupinus sulphureus</i> ssp. <i>Kincaidii</i>	T	T	x	
Nelson's checkermallow	<i>Sidalcea nelsoniana</i>	T	T	x	x
Oregon white oak	<i>Quercus garryana</i>				x
peacock larkspur	<i>Delphinium pavonaceum</i>	SOC	E	x	
shaggy horkelia	<i>Horkelia congesta</i>				
thinleaf pea	<i>Lathyrus holochlorus</i>				
white rock larkspur	<i>Delphinium leucophaeum</i>	SOC	E		
white-topped aster	<i>Aster curtus</i>	SOC	T		
Willamette daisy	<i>Erigeron decumbens</i> var. <i>decumbens</i>	E	E	x	
Birds:					
acorn woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>	SOC		x	x
American kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>				
common snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>				
grasshopper sparrow	<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>				
lazuli bunting	<i>Passerina amoena</i>				
northern harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>				x
Oregon vesper sparrow	<i>Pooecetes gramineus affinis</i>			x	
prairie falcon	<i>Falco mexicanus</i>				
savanna sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>				
short-eared owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>				
slender-billed (white-breasted) nuthatch	<i>Sitta carolinensis aculeata</i>			x	x
streaked horned lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris strigata</i>	C	SC	x	
Swainson's thrush	<i>Catharus ustulatus</i>				
western bluebird	<i>Sialia mexicana</i>	SV		x	
western kingbird	<i>Tyrannus verticalis</i>				
western meadowlark	<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>	SC		x	x
yellow-breasted chat	<i>Icteria virens</i>	SOC	SC	x	
Invertebrates:					
American grass bug	<i>Acetropis americana</i>	SOC		x	
Fender's blue butterfly	<i>Icaricia icarioides fenderi</i>	E		x	x
Field crescent*	<i>Phycodes pulchella</i>				
Sonora skipper*	<i>Polites sonora</i>				
Tailed copper*	<i>Lycaena arota</i>				
Taylor's checkerspot	<i>Euphydryas editha taylori</i>	C			
Mammals:					
Roosevelt elk	<i>Cervus canadensis</i>				
Townsend's big-eared bat	<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	SOC	SC	x	
Western gray squirrel	<i>Sciurus griseus</i>		SU	x	x
Amphibians and reptiles:					
Foothill yellow-legged frog	<i>Rana boylei</i>	SOC	SV	x	
Northern red-legged frog	<i>Rana aurora aurora</i>	SOC	SV	x	
Northwestern pond turtle	<i>Emys marmorata marmorata</i>	SOC	SC	x	
Western painted turtle	<i>Chrysemys picta belli</i>		SC	x	

*Confirm with Dana Ross.