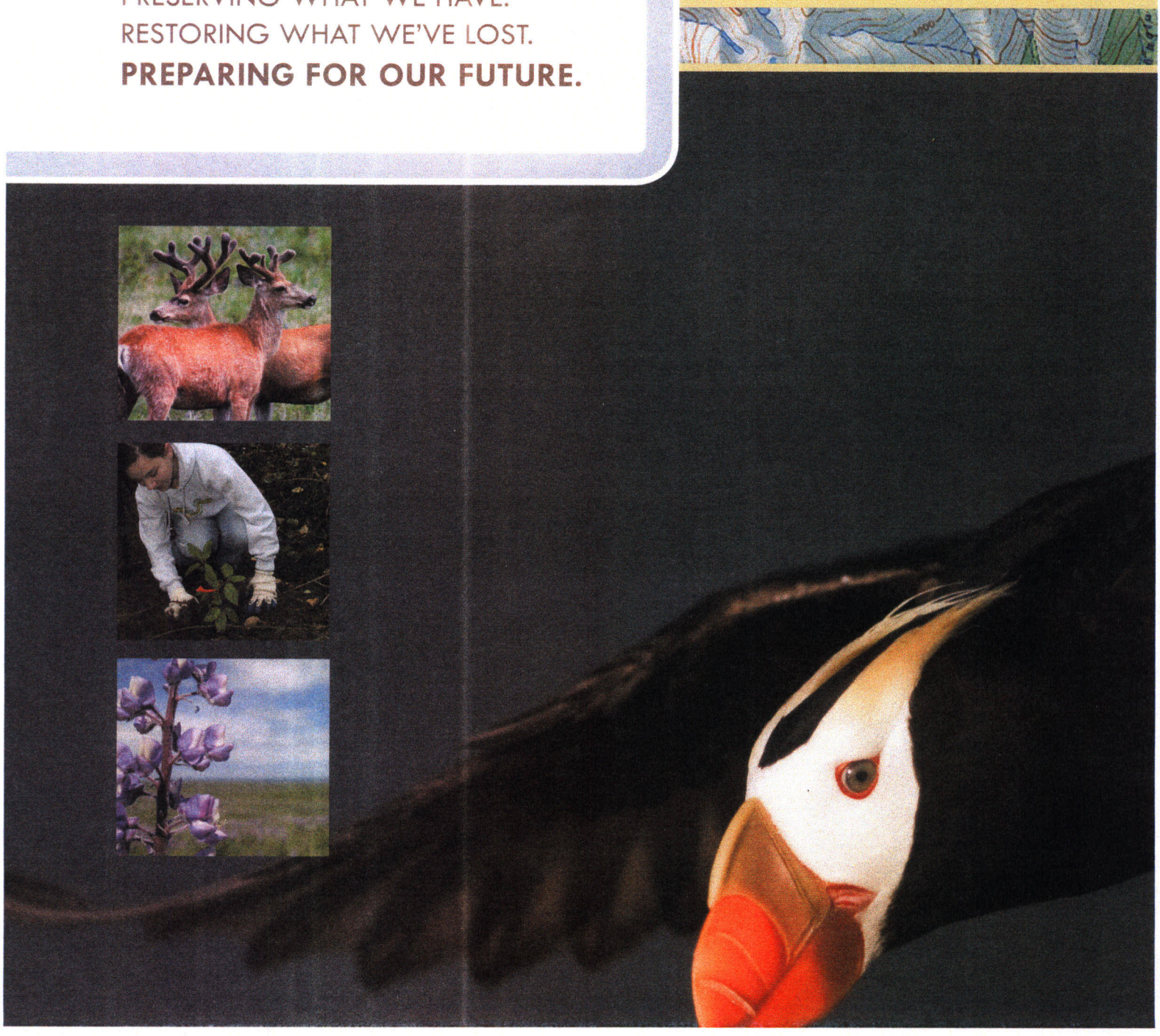
the

OREGON CONSERVATION STRATEGY
in action

PRESERVING WHAT WE HAVE.
RESTORING WHAT WE'VE LOST.
PREPARING FOR OUR FUTURE.



OREGON'S CONSERVATION BLUEPRINT

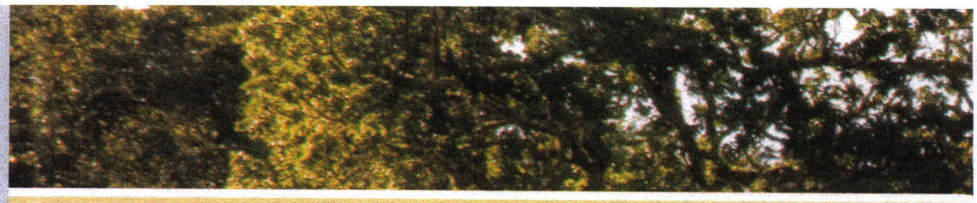
The **Oregon Conservation Strategy** was developed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, but it belongs to all of us. Every citizen, landowner, land manager, agency and organization can use it to help maintain and restore our state's unique natural heritage.

Science and local knowledge guide an action plan that:

- Identifies specific habitats and wildlife species that are at the greatest risk of decline.
- Addresses emerging issues, including global warming, invasive species, population growth and increased demands for water and other resources.
- Provides organizations and individuals with a shared framework for prioritizing investments in conservation.
- Promotes collaborative efforts across agencies, interest groups and ownership boundaries.
- Empowers Oregonians to leverage state funds with public-private partnerships, federal grants, interagency agreements and citizen volunteerism.
- Identifies voluntary actions Oregonians can take to improve habitat by working on their own land, in their watershed and across the state.

BENEFITTING OREGON'S ECONOMY

- State residents and non-residents spend approximately $2 billion annually on fish and wildlife recreation activities in Oregon.
- Over 1.8 million people fish, hunt or watch wildlife in Oregon each year.
- State investments in conservation are multiplied many times over by matching federal funds and investments of time and money from caring Oregonians.



HELPING OREGON'S STATE BIRD SING AGAIN

The western meadowlark's distinctive melody is rarely heard in the Willamette Valley these days. Changes in land use have reduced native prairies and wetlands—habitat crucial to the meadowlark and other songbirds.

Biologist AnneMary Myers is keenly focused on increasing western meadowlarks in the valley. Her position in the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife was funded through a special legislative allocation for the Oregon Conservation Strategy in 2007.

Today, conservation groups, landowners, watershed councils, conservation districts and citizen volunteers help AnneMary conduct surveys and restore native prairie habitat for Oregon's state symbol. "People love the meadowlark," AnneMary said. "It's a big project, but I am hopeful."

the OREGON CONSERVATION STRATEGY in a

RESTORING ASPEN GROVES

"Aspen groves are great habitat for big game and all kinds of wildlife, and we want to protect them," said Rod Adams of the Oregon Hunters Association Bend Chapter.

Unmanaged grazing, competing tree species and hotter, drier summers have shrunk aspen groves to a small fraction of their historic range. Aspen are important habitat for nesting birds like hawks and songbirds, and provide cover for deer and elk.

The Oregon Conservation Strategy helps hunters, foresters and state biologists identify opportunities to work together to restore aspen groves. Partners are planting

PROTECTING L

"Each acre we prot quality and fish and region," said Metro Bragdon.

With voter-approve area acquisition, M of wetlands along t including Crabappl northern red-legge species. Metro uses Strategy to help pr

Ecologists are restc with prime habitat Volunteers have co

on: creating healthy habitats for wildlife and people

N WETLANDS

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Oregon Conservation
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d extensive data

CONSERVING A FAMILY RANCH

The Noble family has raised livestock on their ranch near Philomath for nearly 50 years.

Developments have reduced wildlife habitat in the area, but a conservation easement—one of the vital voluntary actions identified in the Strategy—is helping the Nobles protect sensitive habitat while continuing the family's ranching tradition.

"The conservation easement allows us to ranch the way we always have," said Jack Noble, youngest of Lee and Pat Noble's five sons. "There are 80 of our 200 acres that have been identified as especially sensitive, so we graze those acres at different times of

SAFEGUARDING THE SAGE GROUSE

The sage grouse has many admirers. Those lucky enough to witness the mating rituals of these magnificent birds tend to become protective.

Damian Fagan, a volunteer with the Central Oregon Audubon Society, has spent numerous cold dawns observing and recording sage grouse behavior in remote parts of eastern Oregon. State wildlife biologists (like Brandon Reischus, above) oversee the work of volunteers.

"Volunteers help biologists fill in the data gaps and better inform conservation actions. It would be cost-prohibitive for

For more information:
www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy

RENEWING HABITATS FOR FISH

For the first time in 40 years, tidal waters from the Alsea Bay estuary are feeding a marshland habitat.

"This is a milestone in our project to restore Lint Slough to as near a natural state as we can," said John Spangler, watershed council liaison for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Project partners removed concrete structures to renew natural mud flats and marshes in the bay. A rich ecosystem invites the return of birds, fish and shellfish and benefits local economies through increased recreational and commercial fishing activities.

A PLAN FOR OREGON, CREATED BY OREGONIANS

Successful implementation of the Oregon Conservation Strategy relies on the involvement and support of a diverse coalition of conservation partners. With technical support from Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and funding for on-the-ground programs, Oregonians can help restore and preserve our state's unique natural heritage for future generations.

We endorse the Oregon Conservation Strategy:

- Oregon Hunters Association
- Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association
- The Nature Conservancy
- Native Fish Society
- Willamette Riverkeeper
- Columbia Land Trust
- 1000 Friends of Oregon
- Backyard Bird Shop
- Defenders of Wildlife
- Oregon Anglers
- Greenbelt Land Trust
- Oregon Council Trout Unlimited
- Oregon Habitat Joint Venture
- Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation
- Audubon Society of Portland
- Ducks Unlimited
- Deschutes Land Trust
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- The Wetlands Conservancy
- The Wildlife Society, Oregon Chapter
- Trust for Public Lands
- McKenzie River Trust

and a diverse network of other organizations and individuals

This publication was funded through a grant from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation in support of the conservation of essential wildlife habitat as identified in state wildlife action plans, including the Oregon Conservation Strategy.

WARREN W. ANEY

2 February 2009

Sue Hayes
Wild Bird Feeding Industry
1305 N Tahoe Trail
Sioux Falls, SD 57110

Thank you, Sue, for returning my call and listening so patiently while I explained the background and proposed actions regarding our efforts to obtain funding for watchable wildlife conservation.

As I said over the phone, there is a particular need to fund full implementation of the Oregon Conservation Strategy. This was developed as part of a nation-wide, federally funded effort to develop "a comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy" for each state and territory.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife chose to develop a plan that would ". . .use the best available science to create a broad vision and conceptual framework for long-term conservation of Oregon's native fish and wildlife, as well as various invertebrates and native plants." (Quote is from the OCS Foreword.) Because of this effort, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service not only approved the final document; it has been recognized by outside reviewers as one of the top plans nation-wide. However, ODFW staff is quick to emphasize that it is really a strategy, not a plan. Its purpose is to help Oregonians take strategic actions that will effectively invest time and resources in wildlife conservation.

A team of 38 conservation and sports group leaders is currently working together to obtain funding that will fully implement the Oregon Conservation Strategy. I can assure you the agency, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission, and a wide variety of state agencies and conservation groups (including angling and hunting groups) are committed to fully implementing this strategy. And fully implementing this strategy means obtaining adequate funding to put people, programs and projects to work on the ground. This has been the focus of our team's effort.

We considered a number of funding alternatives and decided initially to seek an allocation from the state General Fund. However, with the current economic situation that is no longer a viable source of funding. So we looked at a wide range of alternatives, including a number being employed by other states, and came up with two sources that could provide a degree of timely support for OCS implementation. These are a specialty license plate fee and an excise fee on wild bird feed. More recently we decided to also consider fees relating to wind energy developments. I'm enclosing information on all these, as well as the Oregon Conservation Strategy.

Please contact me with your questions and concerns. We may not get the enthusiastic support from the wild bird feed industry that the sporting equipment industry once provided for the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson excise tax programs. We do hope to at least get some tacit acknowledgement that this might be a way for wildlife enthusiasts to financially support an effective program benefiting all of wildlife, not just the hunted and fished for species.

Regards,

Warren W. Aney, Government Affairs
Oregon Chapter, The Wildlife Society

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Bird seed tax

Provide funding for conservation of Oregon's native wildlife. The bill is focused on providing and enhancing enjoyment of wildlife through viewing opportunities. This bill increases economic development opportunities in urban and rural areas, and can increase tourism revenues at the county and community level. All funds will be allocated to habitats and species identified as priorities in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, and occur within Conservation Opportunity Areas also identified in the OCS.

Promote wildlife viewing opportunities and ecotourism through partnerships and funding for conservation groups, retailers, and tourism through education, outreach and marketing.

Provide funding for restoration of habitats for native songbirds and other watchable wildlife, urban and rural wildlife habitat restoration, and restoring and enhancing neighborhood habitats within residential areas and within rural areas.

A 10 percent fee collected at the distributor/wholesale level. Sunset in 5 years.

Wildlife watching

- Nearly 1.5 million people participate in wildlife watching in Oregon. There are 300,000 hunters and 600,000 anglers in Oregon, so wildlife watching now exceeds both hunting and fishing as the number one fish and wildlife related activity.
- Wildlife watchers in Oregon spend an estimated $1.4 billion per year on the activity.

The Oregon Conservation Strategy

- The Oregon Conservation Strategy is a science-based overall blueprint for the conservation of all of Oregon's fish and wildlife. Outside reviewers have ranked it as one of the nation's best state wildlife plans.
- A wide range of interests, including hunting, fishing, environmental, agriculture, and forestry organizations, have endorsed the Strategy. A large number of state and federal agencies use the Strategy when engaged in activities that affect wildlife or wildlife habitat.
- The Oregon Conservation Strategy focuses on specific habitats and species in greatest need of conservation attention including 62 birds such as the White-Headed Woodpecker, Western Bluebird, and Western Meadowlark.
- The Western Meadowlark, our state bird, is becoming increasingly rare in the Willamette Valley. Changes in land use have reduced native prairie, habitat crucial to the Meadowlark. This problem is recognized by the Oregon Conservation Strategy, which lays out a blueprint to reverse this trend. This blueprint has already been used to obtain funds for projects intended to benefit the Meadowlark in western Oregon.

Funding the Oregon Conservation Strategy

- Some of the funding to implement the Oregon Conservation Strategy will come from a variety of state, federal and private sources.
- The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife needs additional resources to support the public-private partnerships and leverage outside funding that will be critical to the Strategy's success. This additional funding will be used to assist landowners, provide technical support, ensure scientific credibility, evaluate effectiveness, and to update and adapt the Strategy to deal with emerging issues
- Oregon's hunters and anglers provide about $80 million per biennium in license and tag fee revenues to support their interest, but these revenues cannot be used for non-game wildlife purposes.
- The 1.5 million who appreciate and value wildlife for other reasons do not have a similar way to support their interests, but they generally want to do so.

Wild bird feed excise tax

- Oregonians spend about $96 million per biennium on commercially prepared and packaged wild bird feed. A 10% excise tax would generate about $4 to $9 million per biennium depending the level at which it is imposed.
- This proposal has been brought before the Audubon Society of Portland's Conservation Committee, its Board, as well as Audubon chapters statewide. They all strongly support moving forward on this excise tax.

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Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson

In 1937 Congress extended the life of an existing 10 percent tax on ammunition and firearms used for sport hunting, and earmarked the proceeds to be distributed to the States for wildlife restoration. The result was called the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration act, better known as the Pittman-Robertson (or "P-R") Act after its principal sponsors, Senator Key Pittman of Nevada, and Representative A. Willis Robertson of Virginia.

Federal Funding from P-R pays for up to 75 percent of project costs, with the States putting up at least 25 percent. The assurance of a steady source of earmarked funds has enabled the program's administrators, both State and Federal, to plan projects that take years to complete, as short-term strategies seldom come up with lasting solutions where living creatures are involved.

In the more than 70 years since P-R began, over $5 billion in Federal excise taxes has been matched by more than $1.25 billion in State funds (chiefly from hunting license fees) for wildlife restoration. Benefits to the economy have been equally impressive. National surveys show that hunters now spend some $10 billion every year on equipment and trips. Non-hunting nature lovers spend even larger sums to enjoy wildlife, on travel and on items that range from bird food to binoculars, from special footwear to camera equipment. Areas famous for their wildlife have directly benefited from this spending, but so have sporting goods and outdoor equipment manufacturers, distributors and dealers. Thousands of jobs have been created.

Of the P-R funds available to the States, more than 62 percent is used to buy, develop, maintain, and operate wildlife management areas. About 26 percent of P-R funding to the States is used for surveys and research. Congress in the early 1970's expanded the P-R revenue base to include handguns and archery equipment, and authorized States to spend up to half those revenues on hunter education and target ranges.

From this account, in 2008 Oregon was apportioned $6,000,987 plus $1,070,007 for hunter education.

http://www.fws.gov/ southeast/federalaid/pittmanrobertson.html

Provisions of the Dingell-Johnson Act (passed in 1950) are funded through the Sport Fish Restoration Account, which is part of the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund created by the Wallop-Breaux amendments in 1984. The Account consists of a 10% excise tax on sport fishing equipment (including fishing rods, reels, lines, hooks; artificial lures, baits and flies; and fishing supplies and accessories), electric outboard motors and sonar fish-finding devices, and import duties on fishing tackle and yachts and pleasure craft, plus a portion of the tax on fuels used for boats.

The account pays up to 75 percent of the cost of fish restoration and management projects and public access facilities including related land acquisition and construction, and aquatic resource education and outreach.

Oregon was apportioned $9,103,974 from this account in 2008.

http://wildlifelaw.unm.edu/fedbook/djact.html

26 January 2009 Warren W. Aney

Wildlife Can't Wait

Most Oregonians agree we need to become environmentally more responsible and sustainable. However, some are now saying we really cannot afford to do this under current economic conditions – we need to wait until things get better.

For perspective, let's consider what went on after our country fell into the Great Depression eighty years ago. Things became much worse then than they are now; there was a disastrous stock market crash, banks and businesses closed, agricultural prices fell, factories shut down, and unemployment eventually reached twenty percent.

That depression lasted for over ten years. Yet during this time Americans and Oregonians made some of the century's greatest conservation strides. Starting in 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps put thousands of young men to work in forests, parks, reservations, refuges and rangelands. A 1934 Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act required annual stamp purchases by waterfowl hunters – sales of these stamps now bring in $22.5 million each year for wetland protection by the states.

In 1937 Congress placed a ten percent excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition, a tax enthusiastically endorsed by the hunting community and firearms industry. Since its passage this Pittman-Robertson Act has provided over five billion dollars to the states for game wildlife conservation.

In 1938 the Oregon Fish Commission established a Department of Research. In 1941 the Oregon Game Commission started installing and operating or requiring fish screens on irrigation ditches. That same year the agency launched a stream and lake survey program, with biologists in charge.

From my perspective as a wildlife ecologist, we now face a new list of challenges. Three of the most pressing are global warming, invasive species, and energy developments.

Under global warming we can expect to see reduced water supplies, growing deserts, debilitated forests and drowned estuaries. Stressed wildlife species could be displaced or lost.

Invasive species are already a problem. We have noxious weeds crowding out native plant systems, feral swine rooting up forest floors, and non-native bullfrogs destroying native frogs and turtles. We may face huge problems if our waters are invaded and clogged by quagga and zebra mussels.

Energy developments affect our air and water quality as well as our land resources. Even "green" energy developments have their consequences. Windfarms change wildlife habitat and can drive out or even directly kill some wildlife. Wave energy has foreseeable adverse effects on marine life. Power and pipeline corridors also affect wildlife habitat.

We need to address these challenges. This means strategic and sustained investments in conservation: investments in the science needed to guide and evaluate our efforts, investments in support of the many landowners and resource managers who are ready and willing to take on the challenges ahead. All this will take people and leadership – and money.

In this time of economic challenges, we should be as bold and action motivated as our predecessors were in the 1930s. The longer we wait the more costly this becomes. We cannot afford to wait.

Oregon's Conservation Strategy in Action

Wildlife watching has become a major leisure time activity. A new report recently released by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service shows that wildlife watching now far exceeds both hunting and fishing as the number one fish and wildlife related activity. In 2006 over $45 billion was spent by participants, equivalent to the revenues generated from all spectator sports, amusement parks and arcades, non-hotel casinos, bowling centers and skiing facilities combined. Here in Oregon nearly 1.5 million people participate in wildlife watching, spending an estimated $1.4 billion per year on the activity. Most of these people participate in bird watching, spending most of the $1.4 billion on their activities.

The growth in wildlife watching comes with challenges such as finding funding for habitat and species management and conservation. Unlike game species that benefit from revenues generated by license and tag sales and federal fish and wildlife restoration funds, there is little funding available for conservation of watchable wildlife. Our state now has an excellent and well-recognized implementation strategy in place for all forms of native wildlife and their habitats. Although this Oregon Conservation Strategy does not directly provide funding it does establish a blueprint for the conservation of watchable wildlife when funding is available; increasing the motivation for developing funding and funding sources.

The Oregon Conservation Strategy is a science-based overall blueprint for the conservation of all of Oregon's fish and wildlife. Its big-picture perspective provides clear priorities and a comprehensive approach to conservation. The Strategy promotes voluntary, collaborative actions across agencies, interest groups, and ownership boundaries. A wide range of interests, including hunting, fishing, environmental, agriculture, and forestry organizations, have endorsed the Strategy.

The Oregon Conservation Strategy focuses on specific habitats and species in greatest need of conservation attention including 62 birds such as the White-Headed Woodpecker, Western Bluebird, and Western Meadowlark. The Western Meadowlark, our state bird, is becoming increasingly rare in the Willamette Valley. Changes in land use have reduced native prairie, habitat crucial to the Meadowlark. This problem is recognized by the Conservation Strategy, which also lays out a blueprint to reverse this trend. This blueprint has already been used to obtain funds for projects intended to benefit the Meadowlark.

For more information on Oregon's conservation Strategy or the Meadowlark project, go to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife web page: http://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/.

By: Bruce H. Campbell, (541) 221-8042, linbrucamp@yahoo.com

Wildlife Watching in Oregon

Estimates from:

"Wildlife Watching in the U.S.: The Economic Impacts on National and State Economies in 2006" U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Report 2006-1, by Jerry Leonard, July 2008
"2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, Oregon" FHW/06OR, April 2008.

In Oregon in 2006:

There were 1,484,000 wildlife-watching participants 16 years and older.

These participants' wildlife-watching expenditures in retail sales were $776,414,000 (with a total multiplier effect of $1,356,918,545; providing 16,185 jobs; and state and local tax revenues of $123,668,107).

Wildlife watching expenditures in Oregon (by state residents and nonresidents combined):

$262,425,000 trip-related (food, lodging, transportation, guide trips, heating/cooking fuel, etc.)
$142,603,000 for wildlife-watching equipment
- $15,734,000 for binoculars and spotting scopes
- $37,354,000 for photographic equipment
- $9,481,000 for film and developing
- $48,474,000 for bird food
- $3,618,000 for feed for other wildlife
- $11,077,000 for nest boxes, bird houses, feeders, baths
- $12,991,000 for day packs, carrying cases, and special clothing
- $3,873,000 for other wildlife watching equipment such as field guides and maps

$29,407,000 for auxiliary equipment (tents, backpacks, other camping equipment, etc.)
$208,855,000[1] for special equipment (travel trailers, vehicles, boats, etc.)
$163,047,000[1] for other items (publications, memberships, land leasing, plantings, etc.)

[1] Estimate based on national percentage applied to Oregon's total retail sales.

Conservation during a depression

The Great Depression started in October 1929 with a disastrous stock market collapse brought on by easy credit, widespread stock speculation, domestic overproduction and reduced foreign trade. This depression lasted over the next decade with high unemployment (up to 20%), failing businesses, bank closures and falling agricultural prices.

Yet, during this time of severe recession we created two of our most meaningful funding programs for wildlife conservation. First there was the 1934 Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act, which requires an annual stamp purchase by all hunters over the age of sixteen. The stamps play an important role in habitat conservation because 98% of all funds generated by their sale go directly toward the purchase or lease of wetland habitat. Currently some 1.5 million stamps are sold each year at $15 apiece, bringing in $22.5 million. Although most of these stamps are bought by hunters, stamp collectors and non-hunters also buy them.

Three years later there came a proposal to collect an 11% excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition for game management. The hunting community and the firearms industry enthusiastically endorsed this concept. Since its passage in 1938, the Pittman-Robertson Act has provided over $5 billion for wildlife conservation - money that is collected by the federal government but apportioned almost entirely to the states. This money is dedicated to research, habitat and education programs. These programs benefit all wildlife, not just game wildlife.

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23 October 20008