



COLLABORATIVE CAPACITY FOR ACCELERATED RESTORATION

FACT SHEET 7 • WINTER 2015

Forest collaborative groups that seek ecological, economic, and social outcomes have become common in eastern and southern Oregon. These multi-stakeholder groups work together to develop agreement on local public forest management, often in association with the federal environmental planning process. In 2014-2015, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) provided grants to nine of the region's collaboratives through the Federal Forest Health Collaborative Capacity Assistance Program.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

OWEB has awarded **\$552,623** to nine collaboratives in eastern and southern Oregon through two grant cycles (Figure 1). Additional matching funding from collaborative participants and agencies makes the **total investment** approximately **\$1.3 million**. This funding is supporting collaboratives in planning and some implementation on projects covering approximately **1 million total acres of federal land**.

Collaborative groups in Oregon provide substantial input to planned forest restoration projects through dialogue and development of shared agreement. But results on the ground also depend on land management agencies, which officially plan and implement the projects. Therefore, an appropriate measure of collaborative success is **the capacity to achieve agreement** that increases the pace and scale of restoration. We define accelerated restoration as working:

- At larger spatial scales (both planning and treatment acres)
- On faster timelines (both planning and implementation), and
- On more socially and/or ecologically complex issues.

INITIAL GRANT IMPACTS FROM ROUND 1

Since all grants are still underway, we provide progress on the first of two rounds of grants only as of February 2015, rather than a final and comprehensive program assessment. Collaboratives on the Wallowa-Whitman, Umatilla, Malheur, Deschutes, and Rogue River-Siskiyou

Federal Forest Health Collaborative Capacity Assistance Grants can support:

- Meeting organization and facilitation for specific forest restoration projects and issues, including field tours, supplies, and travel
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Communication activities and materials

Grants are not available for on-the-ground implementation of treatments

national forests were funded during the first round. These collaboratives are building their capacity to achieve landscape-scale and more integrated outcomes, which includes planning more acres more efficiently when possible, and addressing socially and/or ecologically complex issues that previously may have been "off the table." Some of their approaches include:

- **Developing or expanding agreement:** Collaboratives typically attempt to find and document areas of agreement for forest types and/or management issues that recur across planning areas. If these agreements are clearly articulated and there is adequate trust among members and with the Forest Service or BLM, they may save time in future collaborative processes. This may increase the number of acres planned and rapidity of planning timelines; however, it can also



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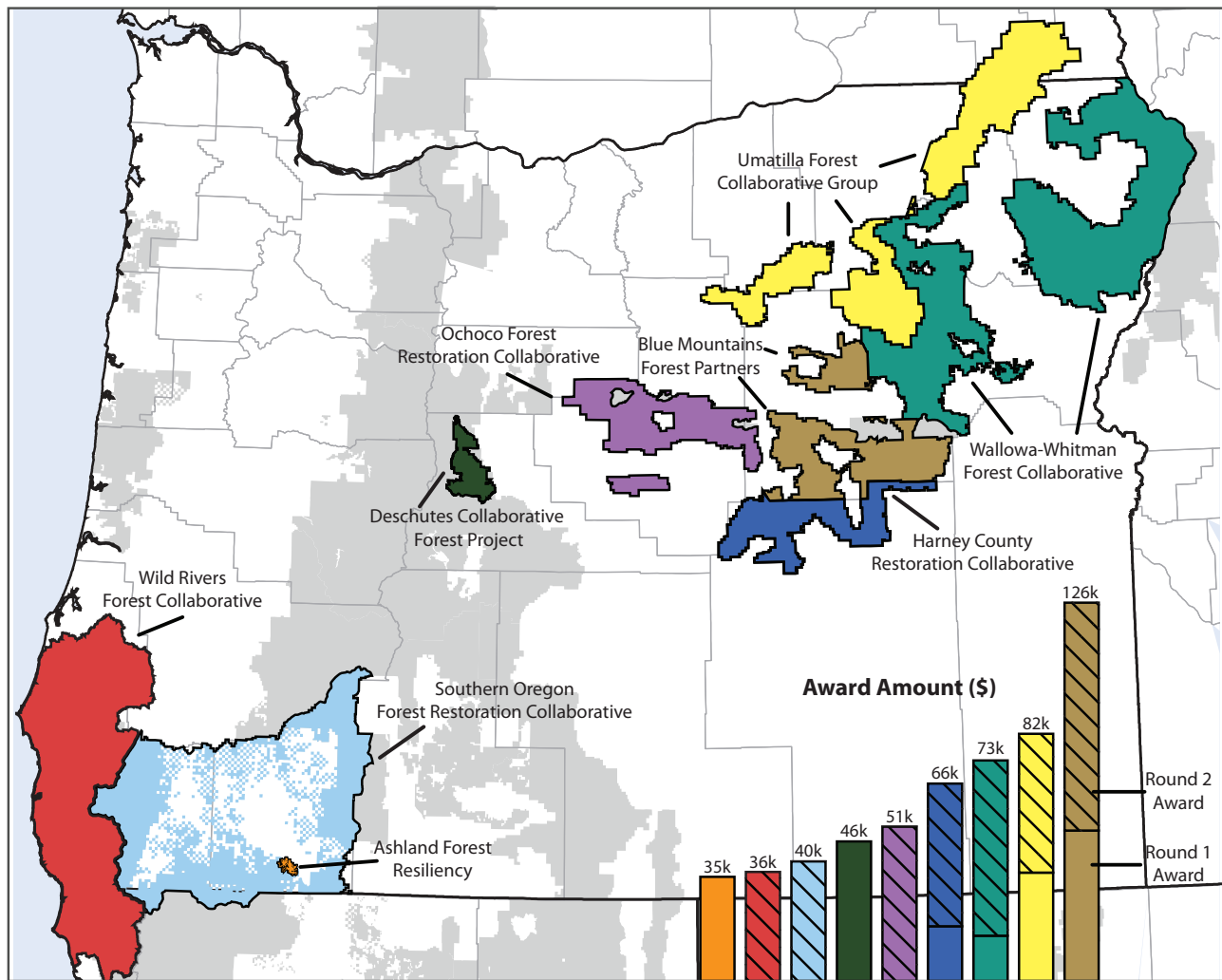


Figure 1 Collaboratives receiving Federal Forest Health Collaborative Capacity Assistance grants

challenge collaborative knowledge and relationships. Further, many factors that affect pace and scale remain with the agencies. “Younger” collaboratives are using their grants to develop their first agreements, while others are trying to expand agreement scope and innovate in their processes.

- **Utilizing current science:** All funded collaboratives are currently utilizing scientific information to help reach agreement on complex issues by inviting scientists to field tours and meetings, and holding or attending science forums. Their success will depend on their ability to reach scientists but also to learn and incorporate new knowledge.
- **Monitoring and piloting:** Several funded collaboratives are monitoring project implementation to learn if and how their input helped produce desired outcomes

on the ground. Monitoring can assist with trust building, increased knowledge, and development/expansion of agreement. Others are piloting new processes for planning over larger spatial areas or engaging at the public-private interface. Monitoring and piloting require the capacity to undertake data collection, shared learning, and adaptation.

- **Outreach and communications:** All funded collaboratives identified a need to better communicate their work to local communities. Activities include public meetings and presentations, outreach materials, and evaluation of public opinion. For most collaboratives, engaging the broader public is a new endeavor that requires them to build and/or contract communications capacity.

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