

Leveraging Resources to Achieve Collaborative Management Objectives

Sprague River Valley ♦ Beatty and Bly, Oregon

"From our experience in the Klamath Basin, [the Creeks and Communities Strategy] the PFC methodology and cadre system provide an excellent framework for assessing the condition of riparian-wetland areas, creating a common vocabulary between different interest groups that allow for objective discussion of desired function, and a simple, science-based framework for guiding restoration, and monitoring and evaluating the impact of management changes. [This strategy and] PFC stands out because it places the science in the hands of the average person, getting over the enormous hurdle of power and distrust that often come with restoration intentions and projects. The other values it provides are a relatively cost effective way to assess where the highest ecosystem value can be had from investing limited restoration dollars, and how to move toward watershed-scale restoration with limited dollars."

James Honey (2005)
Sustainable Northwest



Background

The Klamath Basin is an ecological jewel. Nearly 80 percent of the waterfowl on the Pacific flyway overwinter there, and the river was once the third most productive salmon system in the U.S. The Sprague River, a major tributary in the upper basin, provides habitat for the endangered Lost River and shortnose sucker fish, as well as threatened cutthroat trout (and historically, Chinook salmon and steelhead). The listing of suckers and salmon under ESA has strained relationships among tribes, fishermen, and agricultural operators.

The situation has been tenuous as to how to keep water in the streams and lakes to protect the fish while also allowing farmers and ranchers access to their irrigation water. Like many other places in the

western U.S., the water rights in this area have not been adjudicated, and as a result, there is significant, recurring insecurity for both agricultural operators (who fear water shutoffs such as those that occurred in 2001) and fish managers (who feel that low flows correlate to massive fish kills such as those that occurred in 2002).

Although the situation in the Klamath Basin is typically conveyed as a straight "fish versus farmer" conflict in the media, the issues are much more complicated than that:

- This is an area where forestry, agriculture, and commercial fishing have all been heavily impacted by the competition for water and the condition of the river and tributaries. Rising land values and low

commodity prices continue to imperil agriculture. Power rates were widely predicted to rise much higher as a result of the ongoing relicensing process on the Klamath dams, further exacerbating the economic difficulties faced by farmers. Farmers had historically paid very low rates for electricity due to negotiations during the early days of the Klamath Irrigation Project and associated Klamath Hydropower Project (owned by PacifiCorp).

- There is a cultural conflict stemming from the loss of tribal lands and termination of federal recognition status in the 1960s and loss of treaty rights in terms of abundant fish and wildlife populations. The tribes hold a strong interest in the management of their former reservation lands now primarily public land managed by the FS, and have an express mission to rebuild their land base. They also hold a senior water right in the unadjudicated basin.
- Tension and conflicts exist among groups of scientists and competing science, among government agencies and private consultants trying to “sell” their programs to private landowners, among the different tribes that make up the Klamath Tribes, among project irrigators and off-project irrigators, among farmers/ranchers and commercial fisheries, and among environmental organizations and agriculturalists. All of these conflicts have resulted in years of expensive lawsuits.

In 2001, the Department of the Interior shut off water to the Klamath Irrigation Project in mid-growing season to protect both the coho salmon and sucker fish. The height of the conflict over the loss of irrigation water occurred in September 2001. Opposing forces from all sides, including many outside supporters, were gathered at the headgates; tensions were very high and strong and there was concern that violence was near to the surface. An unconnected event, the attack on the

New York towers, occurred, and after that, the civil disobedience and tension diminished according to some of the people who participated in discussions. Then in 2002, a large salmon kill (over 35,000) further escalated conflicts. As often is the case, these crises created the impetus for people to begin to think about ways to do things differently in the basin and to harness the energy brought about toward something positive. (Note that in 2006, much of the Pacific salmon fishery was closed almost the entire season, from northern California to Washington, in order to protect returning Klamath salmon, whose numbers had been so impacted by the 2002 kill.)

Process Steps and Timeline

The NRST has worked in the Sprague River Valley for a number of years. To clearly communicate this involvement, a review of the process steps and timeline is presented below. Because of the complexity of this case, a discussion of partners; results, recommendations, and next steps; lessons learned; and where they are now will be incorporated into each process step as appropriate. While this timeline outlines NRST involvement in the Sprague, it represents only a portion of the various activities undertaken by multiple individuals and organizations across the larger Klamath River Basin, from the headwaters to the Pacific, in an effort to create collaborative solutions to these complex problems. All of these efforts helped foster the positive contributions of the NRST work in the Sprague River Valley.

Klamath Tribes Water Resources Task Force Meeting and Water Workshop:

April 2003 – Team members participated in this meeting and provided an introduction to the Creeks and Communities strategy. At this time, the tribes were facing significant choices relating to watershed management and the successful restoration of functional aquatic ecosystems. The purpose of this meeting was to provide some fundamental information to build on in future sessions to help with management and restoration. In addition

to providing an introduction to stream processes, functions, and restoration options, team members also explained the approach used to bring together people who are most affected by the consequences of changes to management and restoration. The team laid out some potential steps for moving forward: 1) a series of stakeholder discussions and the creation of an environment conducive to bringing people together, 2) a workshop where people learn about how streams function and the relationship of those functions to restoration choices, 3) site-specific consultations with landowners and/or groups of citizens to evaluate conditions and begin formulating possible activities, and 4) assistance with developing specific plans and determining financial resource needs and availability.

May 2003 – The NRST participated in a workshop sponsored by the Klamath Tribes. Inter-Fluve, Inc., an engineering restoration firm, provided 3 days of training to various technical experts and scientists. The remainder of the time was devoted to group interaction aimed at bringing better focus and common terminology to restoration work within the basin. The team's role in this workshop was to expand the discussion regarding restoration options. The team provided information on how to foster riparian recovery by working with natural processes and removing or managing human-induced stressors before planning and implementing more invasive interventions, such as stream channel reconstruction. The importance of understanding the functioning condition of riparian systems was a key component of this conversation.

Yainix Ranch Request to NRST:

June 2003 – The NRST received a request from Sustainable Northwest to work on the Yainix Ranch Project at the confluence of the Sprague and Sycan Rivers in the Upper Klamath Basin. This request was a result of Sustainable Northwest's interaction with team members in several settings: the Consensus Institute and the Klamath Tribes' water workshops, in addition to the landowners' familiarity and past experience working with Wayne Elmore, recently retired from leading the NRST. The request

was twofold: 1) provide technical expertise in the development of a new and innovative working lands conservation easement, and 2) sponsor a Creeks and Communities workshop to further community dialogue on restoration obstacles and opportunities.

Background: The Yainix Ranch was purchased in 2002 by Taylor and Becky Hyde, a husband and wife team who both come from long-time ranching and conservation-minded families in Oregon and who were deeply affected by the ongoing polarization within the Klamath community following the shutdown of water in 2001. In an attempt to demonstrate that sustainable cattle ranching and systematic land restoration could be combined with and successfully pursued in the context of a broadly conceived partnership, the Hydes purchased one of the most visibly degraded properties in the Sprague River Valley as the setting for this experiment. What was once a flourishing wet meadow had become, by 2002, a desiccated floodplain with denuded and collapsing banks, as a result of decades of poor land management. The property provides telling evidence as to why the Sprague and Sycan Rivers—once teeming with redband trout, salmon, and the listed shortnose and Lost River suckers—were now contributors of silt, nutrients, and warm water into the larger Klamath system. In the Hydes' eyes, the ranch was a surrogate for all the reasons why the fish, the greater landscape of the basin, and their community were imperiled. They believed that if they could fix the ranch—and involve diverse community members in the effort—the basin itself and all of its residents could benefit from the lessons learned.

Partners: In an effort to make this a reality and demonstrate the options for the sustainability of agriculture and ecological function in the basin, the Hydes brought together numerous partners: Sustainable Northwest (SNW), the Klamath Tribes (government and biologists and individual tribal leaders), Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), FWS, NRCS,

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), Klamath Basin Ecosystem Foundation (KBEF), Oregon Wetlands Conservancy, WaterWatch, Farm Credit Services, Oregon Department of Water Resources, Water for Life, Bancroft Appraisal, Trust for Public Land, Deschutes Basin Land Trust, individual neighboring landowners, and a host of private conservation organizations.

Other critical partners included conservation investors (or stewardship investors), a group of urban investors who made financial contributions to leverage the Yainix conservation easement in order to lower stocking rates and restore the area while still making the necessary ranch payments. These investors helped complete the Yainix purchase, but with the full understanding that the management of the ranch would remain with the Hydes. Private foundations played a role in providing assistance for staffing the overall process, from convening meetings to followup conversations and planning with partners to the legal design of conservation easement and investment vehicles.

Working Lands Conservation Easement: July 2003 - October 2004 – As a result of numerous consensus-based meetings and field trips, the various partners agreed upon an innovative “affirmative obligations” perpetual conservation easement that was financed through NRCS and OWEB. This easement set history in the basin for two reasons. First, the Hydes decided that the best repository for the easement was with the Klamath Tribes, which signaled a significant role reversal with the tribes holding in conservation trust the lands of non-Native Americans. (This land had originally been part of the Klamath reservation, divided into Indian allotments, and subsequently sold to nontribal members. Hence the tribes retain a very close cultural connection to these lands.)

Second, the easement established an outcome-based plan for the restoration of the Yainix

Ranch. Rather than prescribe how the Hydes should manage the ranch, the plan set forth a description of what the various partners wanted the ranch to look like in the future and gave the Hydes a free hand in managing the ranch so long as they managed it for the collaboratively set outcome. The NRST helped in the technical design of the plan and easement and provided the collaborative and scientific framework in which the Hydes and their partners could come together in mutual understanding and purpose. In the end, the partners agreed to a multiparty management and monitoring strategy designed to restore the river to a minimum of PFC.

The strong relationships developed among the Yainix Ranch partners have facilitated solutions elsewhere. The trust built between the Hydes and the Klamath Tribes has resulted in the first full water settlement in the basin’s recent adjudication, which was achieved outside of the court system. At Yamsi Ranch on the Williamson River, the Hyde family reached an agreement on water rights with the Klamath Tribes that ensures the ranch has perpetual access to water in exchange for their commitment to collaboratively manage and sustain a wetland corridor along the river’s headwaters. Additionally, the tribes and other landowners are embracing PFC as a minimum ecological condition and communication tool when dealing with water allocation and river restoration issues within the basin.

Creeks and Communities Workshop: The second part of the Yainix Ranch request was to host a Creeks and Communities workshop in the Sprague River Valley to further community dialogue on restoration obstacles and opportunities. The first objective was to involve Sprague Valley landowners in a forum in which they could learn about the state of the watershed and engage in dialogue with other interests about options for restoration. The second was to receive feedback from the wider landowner community on the various tools and restoration

techniques being implemented at the Yainix Ranch.

October 2003 – Pre-session discussions were conducted both by phone and in person in order to get a better understanding of the situation in the Sprague River Valley, identify key players, and create interest in workshop participation.

November 2003 – A Creeks and Communities workshop was held. Initially, participants included about 40 landowners, Beatty community members, NRCS, FWS, SNW, tribal council members, and tribal agencies. However, within the first few minutes of introductions, during which individuals were describing their view of the situation in the Sprague River Valley and how it came to be that way, about half of the participants (primarily tribal members and landowners) left the workshop because the tensions were too high for them to engage in frank conversation at that time. The workshop progressed with the remaining individuals and helped build a common understanding of riparian function, PFC, and the Creeks and Communities approach among participants.

While the group felt that this type of approach was appropriate, they noted that innovative ways to bring people together needed to be crafted. In their words, landowners in the basin were overwhelmed with meetings, information, competing science, and agency programs. To be effective, the group felt it was necessary to:

- Begin to bring landowners together through a “living room to living room” approach. Rather than trying to pull together a large meeting with many diverse interests, the feeling was that it would be best to work with people on their terms and schedules.
- Provide landowners with opportunities for private assistance because they often do not want to work with government entities.

- Help landowners develop a common understanding of the fundamental sciences related to riparian-wetland function and restoration to help them sort through the myriad of conflicting information.

Once relationships were developed using this type of an approach, it would be appropriate to work with the tribe, agencies, and landowners to reconvene a second workshop. This second workshop was held in May 2005.

Living Room to Living Room

Listening Sessions:

2004-2006 – Following up on recommendations from the November workshop, a series of meetings were convened over a period of time in individual landowner living rooms or on their portions of the river or in a place they considered their turf (e.g., the Bly Senior Center). Participation ranged from a single rancher to multiple families coming together in a nonthreatening environment. These were basically listening sessions where landowners talked about their needs, issues, and concerns. Normally arranged by individuals or by KBEF, dialog was informal with an occasional PowerPoint presentation used to demonstrate how streams can change. The team learned about opportunities to clarify or explore problems, which became the basis for further visits to individual properties due to improved relationships and credibility.

The purpose of these dialogue sessions was to listen so that the team could become grounded in landowner needs, help design outreach and assistance, connect with people who would not normally attend a community meeting, and discover ideas for collaboration where trust was lacking or among perceived adversaries. These sessions were critical to dispelling myths, revealing opportunities, increasing access to resources, and ultimately, increasing landowners’ interest in contributing to watershed-scale restoration efforts. By connecting many of these sessions to representatives of local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the team helped broker improved relationships and trust

among landowners and the nonprofit organization staff who could help navigate federal and state programs to put together effective restoration assistance.

**Klamath Watershed Conference:
Communities, Resources, and Restoration**

February 2004 – Team members hosted a mini workshop during this conference as an introduction to the Creeks and Communities strategy. The twofold purpose of this session was to discuss how streams function and the importance of groups and communities working together to implement successful watershed improvements and solutions.

Creation of the Working Landscapes Alliance:

January 2005 – Following the working partnership that was created among SNW, the NRST, and select private contractors during the Yainix Ranch Project, a more formalized partnership was developed to provide opportunities for dialogue on other activities and programs that could help catalyze and support greater range and rangeland restoration across the Western U.S. Given the diverse disciplinary and organizational makeup of the Working Landscapes Alliance³ (WLA), the group is able to gain entry into communities that might otherwise be denied to a strictly government entity. Additionally, the alliance is able to share in leveraging resources in ways that enable them to provide long-term (3-5 years) investments in specific places.

The WLA is an interdisciplinary team and growing learning alliance of individuals from government, the nonprofit and private sectors, and ranching interests, united by longstanding relationships; shared values; a focus on practical, voluntary solutions; and a shared purpose to:

Support the emergence of sustainable working ranches and landscapes through restoration and conservation of ecological health, creation of dynamic local and regional economic opportunities, and honoring and

engaging the full diversity of people and cultures that share the Western landscape.

The WLA endeavors to address whole landscapes, working across the boundaries of institutions, ownerships, and technical disciplines to reveal the ecological, economic, and social connectivity of a functioning system. The core approach focuses on growing the capacity of the landscape, the community, and the individual to provide sustainable futures. Tools and services are focused on dealing with the conflict and polarization, ecological conditions, and economic uncertainty that many Western communities are facing. The following strategies are used:

- **Addressing conflict and polarization:** At the heart of this strategy is the realization that fundamental issues are frequently neither technical nor economic, but are about people's ability to identify problems correctly, mobilize the resources to address them, and agree on a common purpose. Thus, the focus is on working constructively with diverse stakeholders and fostering dialogue and trust as the basis for innovations that meet the needs of all. Key to the success of this strategy is spending time together on the ground.
- **Addressing ecological conditions:** This strategy is focused on creating a common vocabulary with land managers about ecosystem function and adaptive management plans that restore proper function and sustain natural values. Experience has proven that one of the most important steps to improving ranch management for natural watershed function and fisheries is to level the playing field by developing a common understanding of how riparian areas and entire watersheds function and by providing the tools to assess, plan, implement, and monitor management changes and restoration activities. This approach, which focuses

³ For more information on the WLA, visit <http://www.sustainablenorthwest.org/rangelands/WLA-summary.pdf>.

on bringing about understanding rather than demanding changes, forms the core framework for establishing ecological goals, conducting individual assessments, and providing followup assistance.

- **Addressing economic uncertainty:** This strategy is based on the recognition that the biggest barrier for many programs is that they do not take into account various economic drivers such as the fact that people who are in tight commodity markets (like ranching and agriculture) often cannot afford the real or opportunity costs associated with restoration practices. The bottom line is that, in the face of these pressures, it is unrealistic to expect change if there isn't some form of reciprocity. The WLA works to address this through developing ways to: 1) add value to traditional ranch products and diversify the economic uses of working landscapes, and 2) address the growing disconnect between high real estate values and low agricultural income, such as identifying capital to invest in sustainable ranch systems.

Klamath Basin Ecosystem Foundation

Request to WLA:

December 2004 and 2005 – KBEF submitted two requests asking that WLA lead the community outreach component of their OWEB-funded Upper Sprague watershed assessment project. The purpose was to educate landowners in basic watershed function and opportunities for compatible river restoration and to share the model with other communities. This same request was resubmitted in 2006 for the Lower Sprague-Lower Williamson watershed assessment.

Background: The Upper Sprague and Lower Sprague-Lower Williamson watershed assessments were part of an effort to complete community-based assessments on the seven subregions of the Upper Sprague Basin. The assessment process was a collaborative effort

implemented by KBEF, in partnership with the Klamath Watershed Council (KWC).⁴ The objective was to involve local communities in a pragmatic and scientifically rigorous planning process to help resolve conflicts over the basin's resources by prioritizing restoration. The threefold goal of this effort was to:

1. Develop rigorous and broadly supported understanding of watershed conditions and functions that can serve as a basis for restoration and stewardship activities.
2. Conduct assessments in such a way that the results, whether understandings or activities, are genuinely "owned" by local communities and resource management entities.
3. Increase landowner interest and willingness to engage in restoration efforts so that watershed assessment "outreach" would not simply produce a document, but increase restoration activity and interest.

KBEF completed the first in this series of watershed assessments in 2004 on the Upper Williamson River. The assessment process went well, but the feeling was that the true value was in the community field days and the opportunities for interaction, relationship building, and learning (rather than the technical assessment process itself). In addition, the relationship between on-the-ground conversations that occurred during those field days and the larger assessment process was inadequate.

Seeking to improve the community outreach component of the effort in 2005 and 2006, KBEF decided to incorporate the principles and practices espoused by the WLA (including consensus-building, PFC, and an upland discussion guide) as a conceptual bridge between the technical and community outreach

⁴ These two entities have now merged to become the Klamath Watershed Partnership.

components of the assessment process. Specific objectives for WLA involvement included:

- Establish a common language for talking about watershed function.
- Generate and facilitate conversation about general ecological processes in terms of specific sites and issues.
- Assist in bridging the gap between the ecological dynamics of watershed function and the social dynamics of interested communities.

Partners: Sprague River landowners, Klamath tribes, FWS, NRCS, Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), FS, BLM, TNC, NFWF, Lake County Watershed Council, Timber Resource Services, KBEF, Yainix Partnership, KWC–OSU Extension, OWEB, E&S Environmental Chemistry (consultants for assessment), and SNW.

Creeks and Communities Workshops, Watershed Assessment Field Days, and Landowner Visits:

May 2005 – A Creeks and Communities workshop was held to accommodate both the KBEF request for assistance in regard to the watershed assessment and the tribe, agency, and Beatty landowner request for a followup workshop from 2003. On day 1, a meeting was held in Bly to kick off the watershed assessment process. The meeting was geared toward providing landowners in the Upper Sprague Basin with a basic understanding of riparian function and an introduction to the watershed assessment process and the WLA. Approximately 15 people attended. On day 2, a separate workshop was held in Beatty in an effort to engage the tribes, federal agencies, NGOs, and select Lower Sprague-Lower Williamson landowners as a followup to the 2003 session. Approximately 20 people attended. On day 3, participants from both workshops spent the day in the field.

June, July, August 2005 – One day each month, a public field day was held to discuss different topics, such as the Sycan Marsh, PFC, watershed function and the tie between uplands and riparian areas. These field days were all well attended, with attendance ranging from 20 to 60 or more people, including 40 landowners plus another 35 NGO, agency, tribal, or restoration professionals. The Sycan Marsh field day was a particularly significant event, because TNC was frequently held up as one of the groups that had come in and impounded water on the Sycan, which had previously flowed all summer. TNC was also viewed as hostile to having local people visit the marshes. Many bad feelings went away during this session, as the public was able to actually see the marshes and gain a much better understanding of how they were managed.

Following each public field day, a series of landowner visits (six total) were completed, during which WLA members walked stream segments on private property at the invitation of the landowner to discuss the condition of their riparian or upland areas and some options for management, restoration, and monitoring. Each landowner received a written report for their property. Often, a landowner would invite neighboring landowners or other members of the public to participate as well.

May 2006 – Following the same approach as the previous year, a Creeks and Communities Workshop was held to kick off the Lower Sprague-Lower Williamson watershed assessment. On day 1, an indoor session, which was designed to provide a basic understanding of riparian function and an introduction to the watershed assessment process and the WLA, was held. The group spent day 2 in the field.

July, August, September 2006 – Again, following the same approach as the previous year, a public field day was held each month,

followed by a series of landowner visits (four total). The public field days focused on Chiloquin Dam removal, examples of engineered restoration projects (meander cutoffs) and headcut repairs, and assessing PFC on the intermittent reach through Wright Meadow.

Fall/Winter 2006-2007 – Following the outreach portion of the watershed assessment efforts, NRST members were significantly involved in facilitating effective dialogue among conflicting stakeholders to come to an agreement on a format and approach for the resulting Upper Sprague watershed assessment. A separate contractor (E&S Environmental Chemistry) had been retained by KBEF to gather data and produce the base “draft” for the Upper Sprague assessment. When this document was unveiled to an advisory group that included landowners, state and federal agency personnel, and NRST members, there was enormous discontent over the fact that it had very little relation to the “approach” (focusing on riparian function) that had been associated with the previous field seasons and outreach.

NRST staff and WLA contractors provided key leadership to guide the advisory team to entirely restructure the assessment draft. They were also involved in heavily editing and adding new information to the base draft developed by E&S. While not a traditional use of NRST staff time, in this case the effort was deemed important for two reasons: first, it created a cohesive group of diverse stakeholders who have now been able to work together to move onto other watershed assessments (Lower Sprague), and second, it established a watershed assessment that could link up to the fundamental actions that NRST and WLA have been promoting as a foundation for restoration at watershed scale. Otherwise, there would have been a complete disconnect between the assessment document and the

growing consensus on vegetation recovery and management as a first step in river restoration.

Outcomes: Most of the outcomes relate directly to the use of the PFC methodology as a way to teach, discuss, and document basic ecological principles; to create a shared understanding of restoration needs among landowners and others; and to relate ecosystem function to values such as endangered species habitat, cattle forage production, water quality and quantity, and other desired results of active management. This methodology, used within a context of collaboration and dialogue that brings together all affected interests to review ecosystem conditions, discuss driving forces, and strategize solutions, has helped move landowners from high levels of mistrust to fairly enthusiastic engagement, creating significant opportunities for restoration and project implementation with local agencies and NGOs.

Specific outcomes of the 2005 field season include:

- KBEF, KWC, and federal agencies implemented numerous (6-10) restoration projects with landowners visited during the field season.
- Significant dialogue and coordination occurred in project selection, design, and funding among federal agency staff, NGOs, and the Klamath Tribes.
- Area landowners sought innovative ways to strengthen their ranching operations through restoration and explored collaborative pathways for their long-term sustainability that would have been unheard of in previous years.
- Agency, tribal, and NGO personnel have moved an agreement through the Hatfield Science Team (a subgroup of the Hatfield

Upper Klamath Basin Working Group) that the number one priority for restoration in the Sprague Basin was making a change in cattle management because cattle grazing has been the driving factor behind habitat degradation and can be addressed relatively inexpensively, while truly achieving watershed-scale improvements.

Specific outcomes of the 2006 field season include:

- Restoration consultations and recommendations were provided for additional landowners.
- Additional restoration projects were initiated.
- The Upper Sprague watershed assessment contents and format were reoriented to focus on relevant data and connect with the PFC approach, which had grown to be widely accepted by local NGOs, landowners, some agencies, and Klamath Tribes.

Multiparty Monitoring:

June 2005 – A training session for riparian vegetation monitoring was conducted in Beatty to raise awareness about the Winward (2000) monitoring methods (greenline composition, vegetation cross-section composition, woody species regeneration), which were the methods that had been selected by the tribe to quantitatively determine progress under the Yainix easement and to supplement PFC assessments. Participants included the Klamath Tribe, local landowners, NRCS, private consultants, and TNC. The objective was to explore this approach as a common monitoring system that could be used to gauge the health of the watershed by groups that have traditionally mistrusted each others' science and management prescriptions. Team members worked with the Yainix Partnership to install riparian vegetation monitoring transects on the Sycan River at Yainix Ranch.

2006-2008 – Through NRCS funding, followed by a BOR grant to the tribe, members of the WLA and

OSU are setting up riparian vegetation monitoring (Winward 2000) as part of a long-term monitoring program for restoration efforts. The following steps describe the scope of work:

- Identify Sprague Valley plant community types and establish greenline stability class ranking.
- Lay out a network of riparian vegetation transects in Sprague Valley and within the Wood River system.
- Create a product with plant descriptions and photos for landowners; identify common stabilizers and include rankings for bank stability.
- Document findings.

Current Situation (Spring of 2008):

From 2006 forward, a set of negotiations have taken place in the context of the relicensing of PacifiCorp's hydropower operations in the main stem Klamath River. These negotiations have brought together most of the critical basin stakeholders, including four federally-recognized tribes, agricultural communities (project and off-project), federal and state agencies, and conservation groups. In January 2008, a proposed Klamath Basin restoration agreement was released with the endorsement of the great majority of these parties. The agreement lays out an integrated set of actions including dam removal, increased flows for fish, significant increases in restoration investment, as well as economic development investments to diversify revenue for the agricultural and tribal communities. The goal of the agreement is to deliver sustainability, both of threatened species and of rural communities (tribal and agricultural), that has been plagued by chronic instability and economic challenges.

The Klamath Basin restoration agreement leaves open a door for settlement of adjudication issues among the Klamath Tribes and off-project irrigators—something that was not successfully accomplished during the negotiations. At present, there is widespread discussion about options to accomplish this settlement, which appears to

hinge, in part, on monitoring and quantifying restoration across the off-project areas, including the Sprague River Valley. Seminal work accomplished by the NRST and WLA in building interest in restoration, guiding local agencies and tribes toward methodologies and approaches that focus on function (PFC) as something of a “foundation” for restoration, and helping to create agreements among landowners and the tribes over riparian management may play an important role in the resolution of this critical issue.

