

# Partnership Learning Project – Part 2

OWEB Board Presentation | June 27, 2018



Eco Logical Research, Bear Creek

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# Guiding Questions

1. What do partnerships need to be resilient and maintain a high level of performance?
2. How can OWEB improve and innovate the Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) program to support high performing, resilient partnerships that can make progress toward desired ecological outcomes?

# First FIP grants were awarded in January 2016

## Development FIP Grants

### **8 Partnerships:**

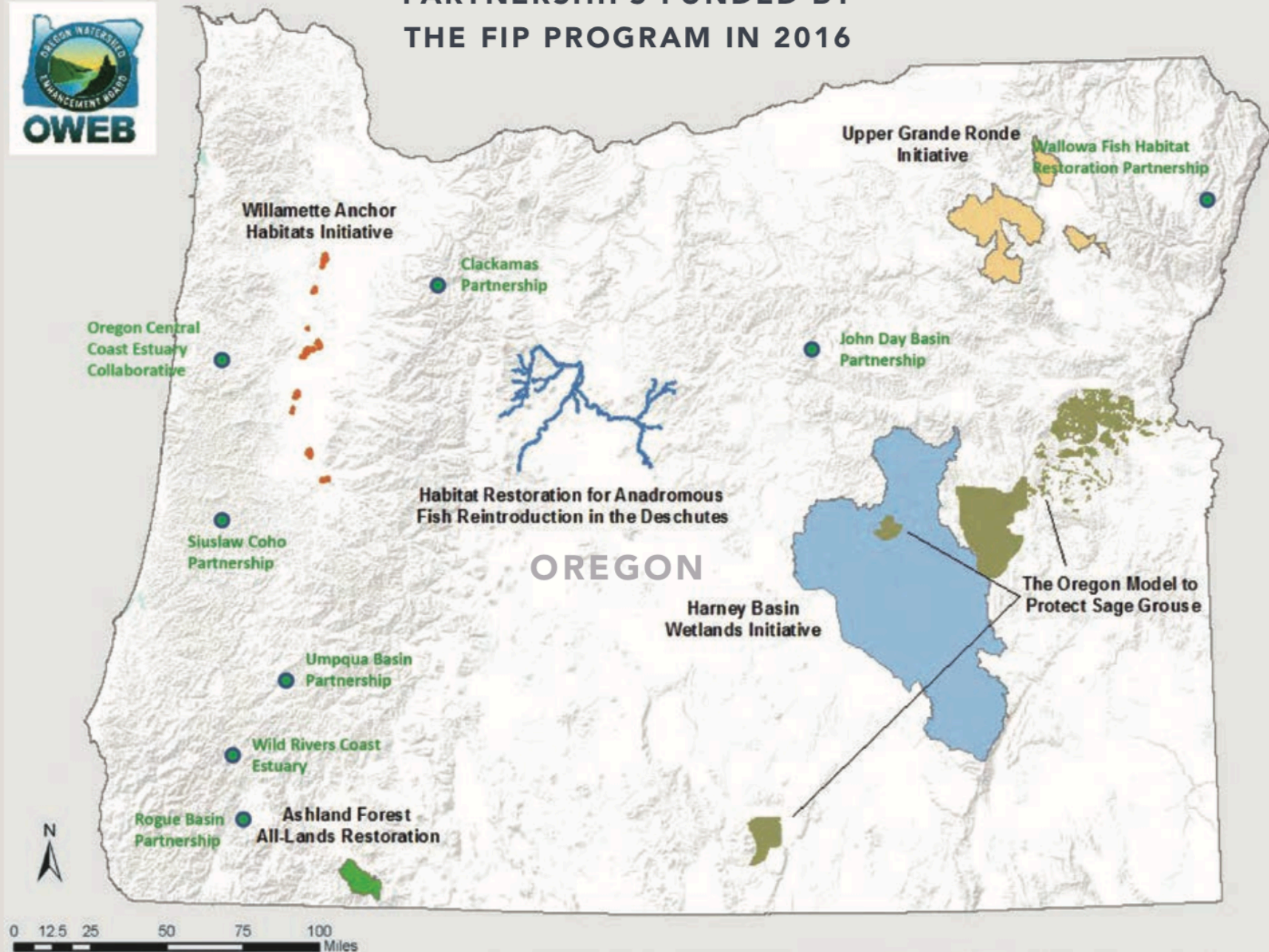
Clackamas Basin Partnership  
John Day Basin Partnership  
Oregon Central Coast Estuaries Collaborative  
Rogue Basin Partnership  
Siuslaw Coho Partnership  
Umpqua Basin Partnership  
Wallowa Habitat Restoration Partnership  
Wild Rivers Estuary Partnership

## Implementation FIP Grants

### **6 Partnerships:**

Ashland Forest All Lands Restoration Initiative  
Deschutes Partnership  
Grande Ronde Restoration Partnership  
Harney Basin Wetland Initiative  
Oregon Model to Protect Sage Grouse  
Willamette Anchor Habitat Working Group

# PARTNERSHIPS FUNDED BY THE FIP PROGRAM IN 2016



# Methods

Attended 14 partnership meetings

Conducted 47 partner interviews (ave. 3-4/partnership)

Received 137 survey responses (ave. 10/partnership)

Analyzed data using grounded theory method (Charmaz 2006)

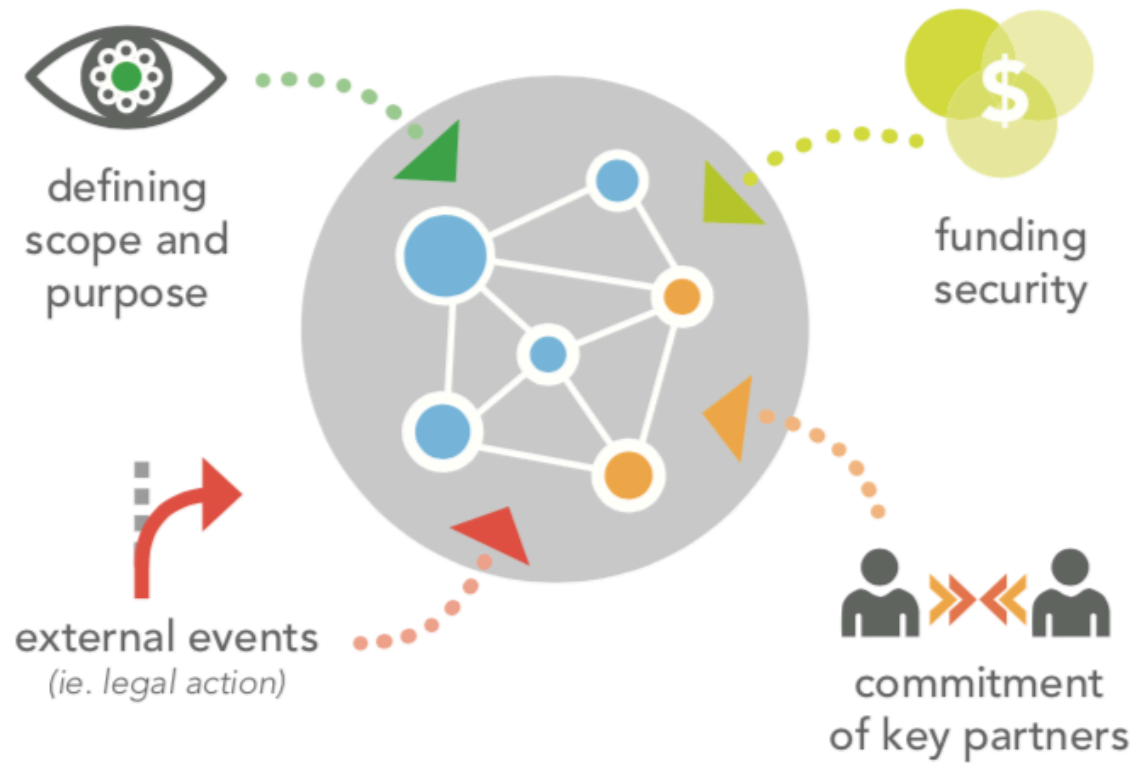


# Continuum of Partnership Types



**Partnerships** are networks of people and organizations working together to advance shared interests.





## Partnerships are dynamic.

They take on different forms over time in response to funding, commitment of key partners, external events and how the purpose and scope are defined.

# Findings



# Identifying the Value Proposition

More autonomous

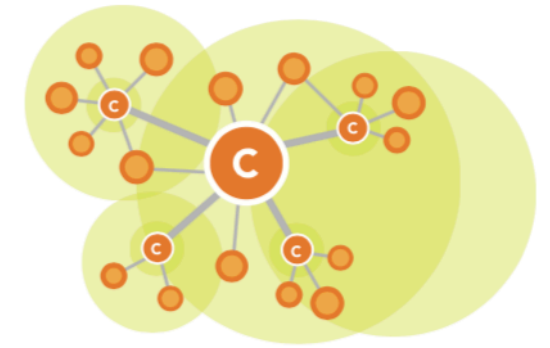
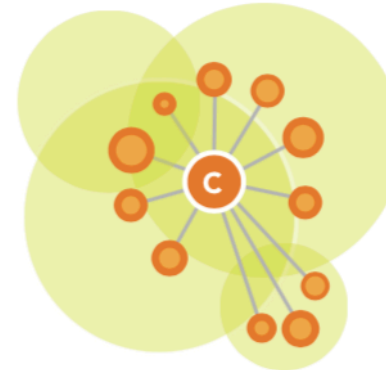
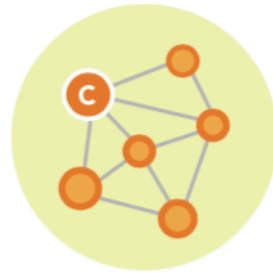
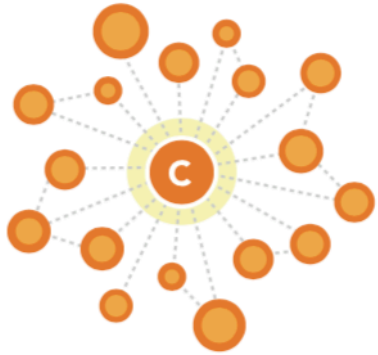
More interdependent

Learning Network

Cooperative Partnership

Coordinating Partnership

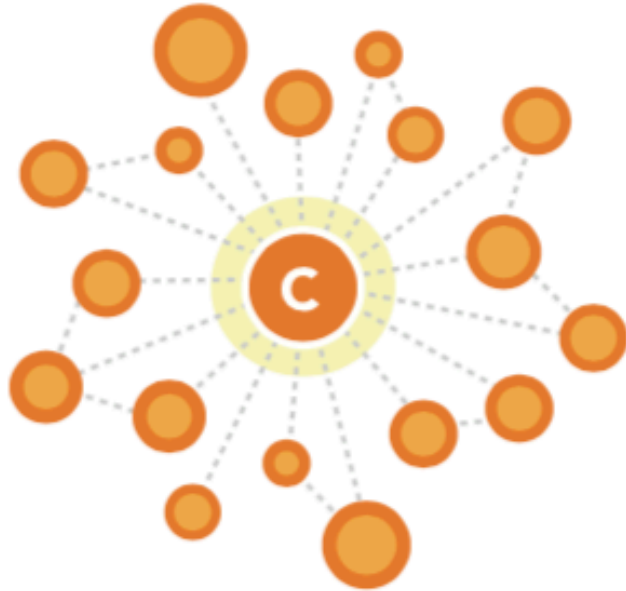
Collaborative Partnership



# Learning Network


More autonomous


## Learning Network



**Purpose:** Share information, improve on best practices and build social capital for future collaboration.


 Usually a large number of partners.

 **Coordinator** serves as an ambassador and convener.

 **A low level of investment** focused on convening, learning and communication.

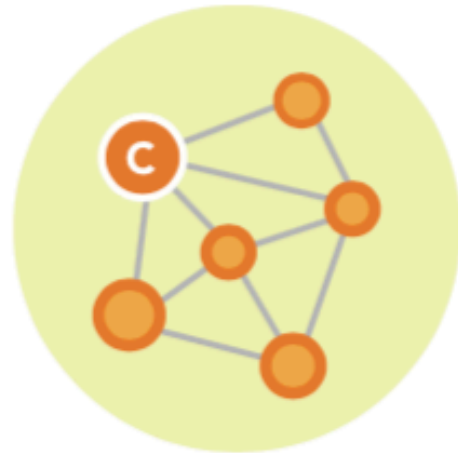
low ← ○ —————→ high  
RISK

low ← ○ —————→ high  
COMMITMENT

 Partners are **loosely committed** to high-level strategic priorities for learning and communication.

# Cooperative Partnership

## Cooperative Partnership



**Purpose:** Increase capacity to implement projects identified as a shared priority.


● Usually a small number of partners.

**C** **Coordinator** serves as a project manager, often a role taken by one of the partners, in some cases rotated among partners.

**\$** A moderate to high level of investment focused on project implementation.

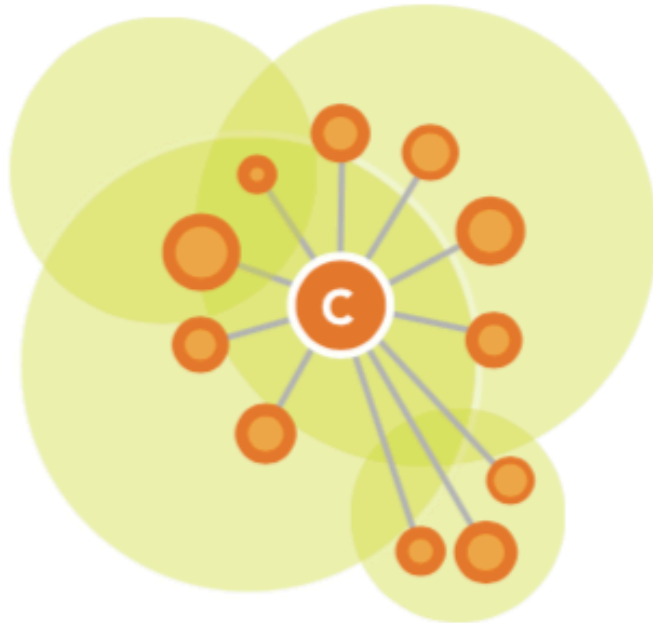
low ←-----○-----> high  
RISK

low ←-----○-----> high  
COMMITMENT

 Partners are **moderately committed** to a strategic action plan as long as there is funding for implementation.

# Coordinating Partnership

## Coordinating Partnership



**Purpose:** Align partners around shared priorities and coordinate implementation.


Usually a moderate number of partners.

**C** **Coordinator** serves as facilitator and project manager

**\$** **A high level of sustained investment**, typically multiple large funders, focused on planning and implementation with some outreach and monitoring.

low ←-----○-----→ high  
RISK

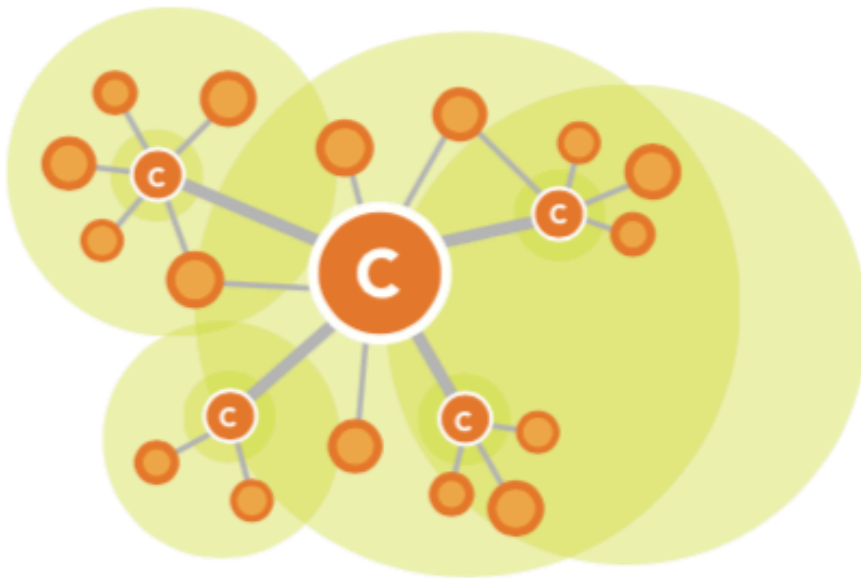
low ←-----○-----→ high  
COMMITMENT

 Partners are **moderately to strongly committed** to a strategic action plan. Their commitment is renewed with each new round of funding.

# Collaborating Partnership

More interdependent

## Collaborative Partnership



**Purpose:** Align around shared priorities, coordinate implementation and improve outcomes through science-based adaptive management.



Usually a moderate to large number of partners.



**Coordinator** serves as a facilitator, convener and ambassador. If the structure includes work groups, the coordinators of these work groups serve as project managers.



**A very high level of sustained investment**, typically multiple aligned funders, focused on planning, implementation, monitoring, outreach and adaptive management.



Partners are **strongly committed** to a strategic action plan and an adaptive management framework based on reliable long-term funding.

# Identifying the Value Proposition

- Efficiency
- Shared accountability
- Funding as a driver
- Implications of a six-year grant
- A roadmap for the larger funding landscape



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Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs

# Efficiency

## Partnership Governance

- Collaboration is a double-edged sword. More attention to process creates trust and accountability, but too much process is stifling.

*“One of the partners felt we needed a partnership document early on – an agreement of how we will work together. We said, ‘No, we know how.’ But ultimately, they were right. We needed an inter-organizational agreement to resolve issues that came up. We haven’t returned to it since, but we can go back to our agreement if something does come up.”*

*– Core partner*



# Partnership Governance Recommendation

- Provide more tools and leadership training on group dynamics and defining roles, responsibilities and decision-making rules so partnerships can “right-size” their governance documents

## **OWEB Strategic Plan**

- Priority 3 – Community capacity and strategic partnerships achieve healthy watersheds.

# Efficiency

## FIP Program

- While exceedingly grateful, partnerships described the FIP program as cumbersome and suggested ways to streamline.
- OWEB's culture of collaboration and flexibility were key to navigating the bureaucracy.

# Efficiency FIP Program

*“We’re managing six awards at once. That’s my main gripe that it should be easier to manage the award. Other than that, the amount of money dedicated is amazing. It does achieve our goal and have that larger impact.”*

*– Core partner*



# FIP Program Recommendation

- Increase efficiencies in the FIP program wherever possible.



Harney Basin Wetland Initiative, electrofishing

# Efficiency

## Large, Inclusive Partnerships

- Large, inclusive partnerships that seek alignment and shared accountability have greater costs for coordination and partner engagement.



Long Tom Watershed Council, public tour

# Efficiency

## Large, Inclusive Partnerships

*“In hindsight, there is too little money for the role of coordinating such a large partnership. I was totally naïve about that. I completely underestimated. A lot of things would be good for partners to know – reporting on funder priorities and interpreting technical review comments – but there’s not a lot of capacity for me to do that. People start cutting budgets, and you cut in those places because you want the projects on the ground.”*

*– Core partner*

# Large, Inclusive Partnerships Recommendation

- Revisit expectations in the FIP rules that partnerships should be inclusive.
- Provide additional capacity to coordinate inclusive partnerships.

## **OWEB Strategic Plan**

- Priority 3 – Community capacity and strategic partnerships achieve healthy watersheds.

# Identifying the Value Proposition

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# Shared Accountability

- Partnerships focused on implementation have made progress toward increased alignment and coordination, such as:
  - Integrated project planning
  - Collective reporting
  - Cross-organizational learning
- Yet they find shared accountability is a much higher bar to reach.

# Shared Accountability

*“The partnership and FIP grant has helped to align our groups to work more closely together toward a shared common goal. ... Several of us have taken on new projects together as a result of getting to know and trust each other more through our partnership.”*

*“People are just starting to share projects – they are not yet asking deeper questions to critique each other’s projects. They are still careful and polite and don’t want to step on toes. If I were to ask those deeper questions as the coordinator, they might stop responding to my emails.”*

# Shared Accountability Recommendation

- Consider whether there is adequate, reliable funding for partnerships to operate at a higher level of coordination and shared accountability – or whether a more modest level of strategic planning and cooperative decision-making would provide a better value.

## **OWEB Strategic Plan**

- Priority 3 – Community capacity and strategic partnerships achieve healthy watersheds.
- Priority 4 – Watershed organizations have access to diverse and stable funding portfolios.

# Identifying the Value Proposition

- Efficiency
- Shared accountability
- **Funding as a driver**
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# Funding as a Driver

*“The process for applying [for an Implementation FIP grant] although complicated does a great job of pushing partnerships to organize for successful planning, implementation and monitoring of projects.”*

*– Core partner*

# Funding as a Driver

- Aligned funders create greater commitment and shared accountability among partners, for example when funders are aligned around priorities, timelines, reporting requirements, etc.
- Aligned funders over longer timeframes create the potential for greater impact and the possibility of science-based, landscape-scale adaptive management.

# Alignment of Funders Recommendation

- Work with other funders to create alignment around funding priorities, grant duration and reporting and monitoring requirements to offer complementary partnership-focused investments.

## **OWEB Strategic Plan**

- Priority 3 – Community capacity and strategic partnerships achieve healthy watersheds.
- Priority 4 – Watershed organizations have access to diverse and stable funding portfolios.

# Identifying the Value Proposition

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# Implications of a Six-Year Grant

- For most restoration goals, it will take years to decades to complete the work and see the desired ecological outcomes.
- An ambitious six-year timeline for implementation can create some unintended consequences.



# Implications of a Six-Year Grant

*“No one was talking about social science three years ago. Now we are. Being flexible is important. I realize it’s not easy for OWEB.”*

*– Core partner*



Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Upper Mainstem John Day

# Implications of a Six-Year Grant

*“Six years seems long, but in an ecological sense, it is a blip. You can barely do site prep, planting and plant establishment on one reveg project in six years, let alone see any ecological outcomes from that work. Please remember the ecological outcomes we are working towards are many years to decades ahead of us.”*

*– Core partner*



# Identifying the Value Proposition

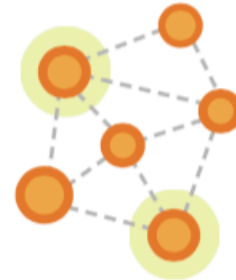
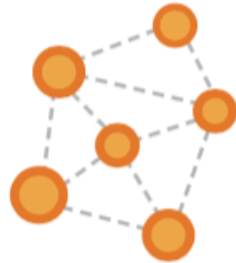
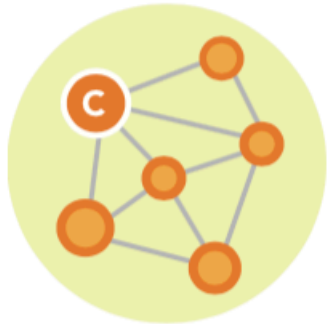
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# A Roadmap with Different Funding Scenarios

## Scenario A Investment in Accelerated Implementation



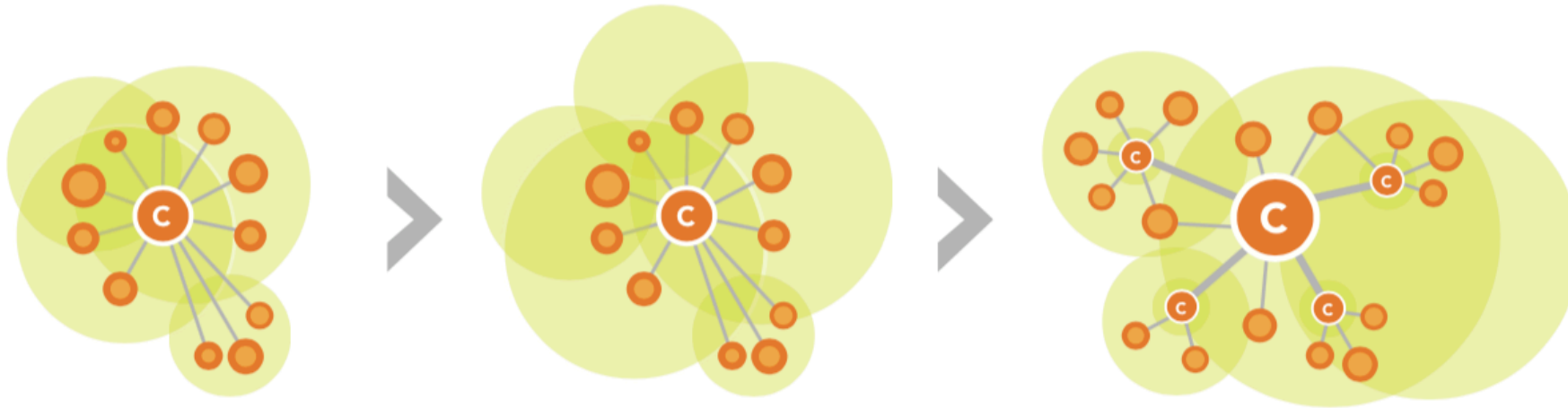
**Partners develop a focused strategic action plan and raise enough funds to complete priority actions.**

Then linkages and commitments among partners become looser or potentially the partnership is reconfigured to focus on a new geography or set of priorities.

# A Roadmap with Different Funding Scenarios

## Scenario B

Investment in Long-term Coordination and Implementation  
*with Potential for Adaptive Management*



**Partners create a long-term strategic action plan and secure adequate funding to support ongoing coordination and implementation of collaborative projects.**

With multiple aligned funders, there is a greater chance that they will develop commitment for shared reporting, monitoring and adaptive management.

# A Roadmap with Different Funding Scenarios

## Scenario C

Investment or Incentives for Long-term Coordination  
*with Risk that Implementation Funding is Not Secured*



**Partners create a long-term strategic action plan, but implementation funding is not secured for the partnership, only grants to individual projects.**

The linkages and commitments among partners become looser. The plan may still be used for general guidance as partners find it useful, but there is no capacity to coordinate joint fundraising, project planning and reporting or to update the plan based on new information and learning.

# A Roadmap with Different Funding Scenarios

## Scenario D

Investment or Incentives for Long-term Coordination  
*with Risk Mitigated by Investment in a Continued Learning Network*



**Partners create a long-term strategic action plan, but implementation funding is not secured.**

A subsequent investment in the coordination of a learning network could sustain the partnership at a lower level of coordination, while building social capital for future collaboration as funding becomes available.



# Value Proposition of a Learning Network

*“I appreciate the cultural shift even in the few years since the I-FIP grant. Connecting more frequently, sharing ideas and plans, technical knowledge and peer-to-peer sharing is great. It will help the greater movement. I hope we can keep that culture going even when the funding for implementation isn’t there.”*

*– Core partner*



# Larger Funding Landscape Recommendation

- Create funding opportunities and support to sustain partnerships as learning networks, especially in the absence of large-scale implementation funding.

## OWEB Strategic Plan

- Priority 3 – Community capacity and strategic partnerships achieve healthy watersheds.

# A Roadmap with Different Funding Scenarios

## Scenario E

Investment in Learning Networks  
*with Potential for Adaptive Management*



**Partners create a high-level strategic plan focused on key assumptions and learning objectives, for example centered around best practices and priority restoration strategies.**

Targeted investments in convenings and communications create the potential for adaptive management and learning that could yield more robust, more impactful restoration projects even if the partnership does not tightly coordinate which projects are prioritized for implementation.

# Larger Funding Landscape Recommendation

- Work with other funders to assess the funding landscape and get a sense for how many coordinated or collaborative partnerships could be sustained in the state
- Consider adjusting the duration of I-FIP grants and the requirement that applicants identify a full slate of ambitious projects for six years.
- Meet with I-FIP partnerships two years before the end of their six-year grant to assess progress and the funding landscape to continue operating as a partnership.

# Gaps Identified by Partnerships

- Reaching broader audiences
- Monitoring
- Tribal engagement and leadership



Rouge Valley Council of Governments

# Gaps Identified by Partners

*“Long-term outcomes [for the Focused Investment Partnership program] outweigh short-term challenges, but the short-term challenges are significant – especially when it comes to unfunded bodies of work that are essential to telling the conservation and restoration story (i.e. monitoring and outreach).”*

*– Core partner*

# Gaps Identified by Partners

## Recommendations

- Consider flexibility within the FIP program to fund communications and monitoring or work with other funders to address these critical gaps.
- Continue exploring creative approaches to support respectful tribal engagement and leadership.

### **OWEB Strategic Plan**

- Priority 4 – Watershed organizations have access to diverse and stable funding portfolios.

# Conclusion

Partners have greatly appreciated the opportunity to work and learn with OWEB through this study and the larger FIP program.



# Appreciation

*“I take a lot of pride in our work. It’s a great process that we’ve built as a partnership. Everyone is a great professional and really knowledgeable. I’ve grown as a person from participating.”*

*– Core partner*



Rogue Basin Partnership, Gold Beach



# Appreciation

*“I’m really grateful and thankful that our partnership has shown sustained success and growth – new partners and additional investment, national and even international attention. It is helping to transform how society is thinking about the bigger problem and, I think, cultivating the ground for a much larger increase in the pace, scale and quality of restoration. We are on the cusp of an orbital leap of what we are able to accomplish because of the success of this project.”*

*– Core partner*



# Thank you

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