

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

MID JOHN DAY WATERSHED COUNCIL

The John Day River basin, including the Mid John Day watershed faced several large wildfires last summer. Approximately 13% of the basin was burned including about 265,000 acres of private lands. Responding to this large area is daunting, but partners in the basin have secured funding to create a GIS based fire recovery prioritization and toolkit and provide watershed councils and SWCDs with capacity funding to reach out to individual landowners. The resulting prioritization will enable us to target recovery funding to the most severely affected areas. On the ground work continues to be the Mid John Day Watershed Council's highest priority and fire recover will be a considerable part of our workload in the future.

On a lighter note, I'd like to invite you to attend our 2025 Annual Meeting and Open House on September 11, 2025. This event will be held at our office at 902 Willow Street in Spray beginning at 4 pm. Thank you for your interest in our watershed and our work.

Regards,
Debbi Bunch
Executive Director



Inside:

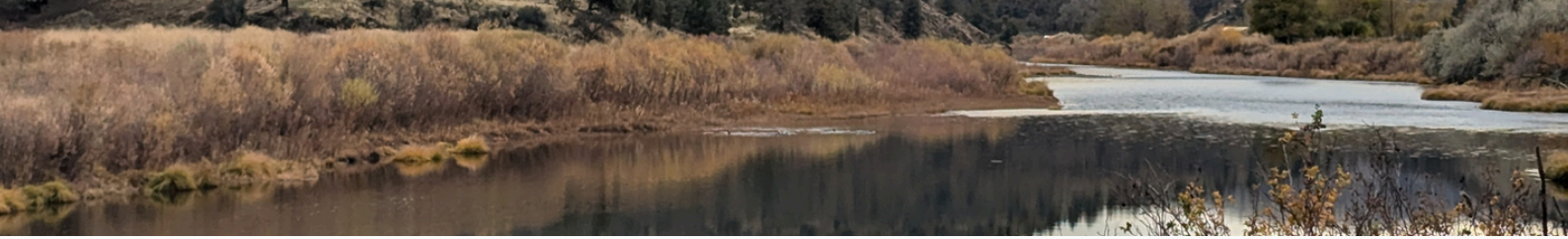
Leadership
PAGE 02

Pine Creek Watershed
Improvement 3
PAGE 03

Bear Creek Steelhead
Monitoring
PAGE 04

2024 Financial Report
PAGE 05

Watershed Council
Info
PAGE 06



Watershed Council Leadership

The Mid John Day Watershed Council is governed by a seven person Board of Directors. The Board is responsible for establishing policies, overseeing programs, appointing and supervising the Executive Director, authorizing expenditures and financial affairs, and ensuring proper management and use of its assets and properties.

Nominees for positions on the Board of Directors must have demonstrated a commitment to the mission and purposes of the Council and must have expertise in areas relevant to the needs of the Council. In order to engage a balance of interested and affected stakeholders within the watershed the Board will make every effort to ensure that the Board membership represents the diversity of geographic areas and interest groups in the watershed including, but not limited to:

- Representatives of local and regional boards, commissions, districts and agencies;
- Representatives of federally recognized Indian tribes;
- Public interest group representatives;
- Private landowners;
- Industry representatives;
- Members of academic, scientific and professional communities; and
- Representatives of state and federal agencies.

The board is a diverse team, each member bringing unique perspectives and expertise. They share a common mission: to promote the health and sustainability of the organization. This diversity enables the board to address challenges from various perspectives. This collective effort ensures sustainability and resilience for future generations. Working collaboratively, they aim to implement effective strategies and policies that:

- Protect resources
- Preserve environments
- Support communities reliant on these resources

Directors serve two-year terms, with terms staggered so that about half the Board is elected each year. By the end of 2025, three positions will be open. The Mid John Day Watershed Council is currently looking for potential new members. New members may be appointed to the board at the Annual Meeting on September 11th. Please contact Debbi or any current board member for more information.





Pine Creek Watershed Improvement 3

The Pine Creek Watershed Improvement Phase 3 project is located in the Pine Creek watershed in northwestern Wheeler County. The watershed drains to the John Day River near Clarno. Like much of Central and Eastern Oregon, this area has been inundated with western juniper and faces threats from annual grass invasions as well. Western juniper encroachment disrupts the plant and animal communities as well as the hydrologic cycle. Limiting factors in this watershed include water quantity and quality. Conservation work has been completed on Pine Creek Properties over the last five years through two previous OWEB restoration grants. Additional work is being completed on neighboring properties including the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Reservation's Pine Creek Conservation Area.

This project includes conservation practices on two properties in the Pine Creek Watershed. 235 acres of western juniper on north facing slopes were removed, 8 springs were developed for off channel watering sites, 600 feet of fence was constructed to protect the spring sources, 25 acres of disturbed ground was treated for noxious weeds and reseeded, and 15,000 feet of cross fencing were constructed for better upland management options.

The project goal is to improve the hydrologic process capabilities of the uplands in Pine Creek. These conservation practices are helping to reduce precipitation interception by juniper cover, and enable the landowners to better manage livestock grazing on the properties. Better distribution of grazing pressure will increase grass cover, limiting overland runoff and increasing infiltration which will improve water quality in Pine Creek. Elimination of juniper cover will also change the fire risk in the watershed, decreasing the chances of catastrophic wildfires.





Bear Creek Steelhead Monitoring

The Bear Creek Steelhead Monitoring project was designed to better describe how process-based restoration using beaver dam analogs influences stream and riparian processes, and impacts steelhead movement, survival, and growth. Hydraulic, hydrologic, geomorphic, and vegetative responses to BDA restoration were negligible during the study period (2018-2022). Steelhead productivity within Bear Creek also appeared to decrease during the study period as was apparent through juvenile electrofishing and adult spawner abundance surveys. The restoration treatments and monitoring data collection coincided with a period of extreme regional drought and reduced adult steelhead spawner returns to the John Day Basin. These conditions likely overshadowed the ability for BDA restoration treatments to accelerate processes that would have resulted in expansion of aquatic habitat quantity and quality and increased steelhead population productivity in Bear Creek.



The intention for this project was to complete data collection (fish and habitat) in 2020 and 2021, with data analysis being completed by early 2022. Unfortunately, several factors (COVID and drought) prevented many of the monitoring components from proceeding, according to the original schedule. Because of this, there were two amendments that shifted the juvenile fish surveys to be implemented during the Summer/Fall of 2021 and 2022.

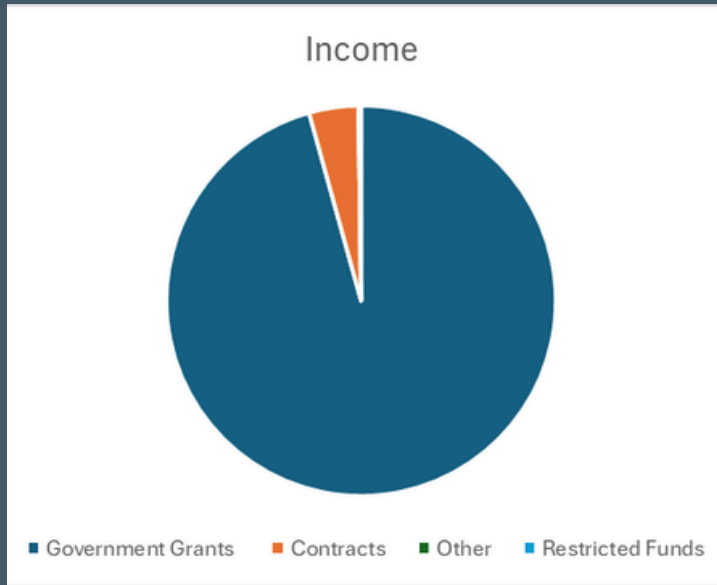
BEAR CREEK WHEELER CO. RESTORATION MONITORING REPORT

OWEB PROJECT #220-6037-17486

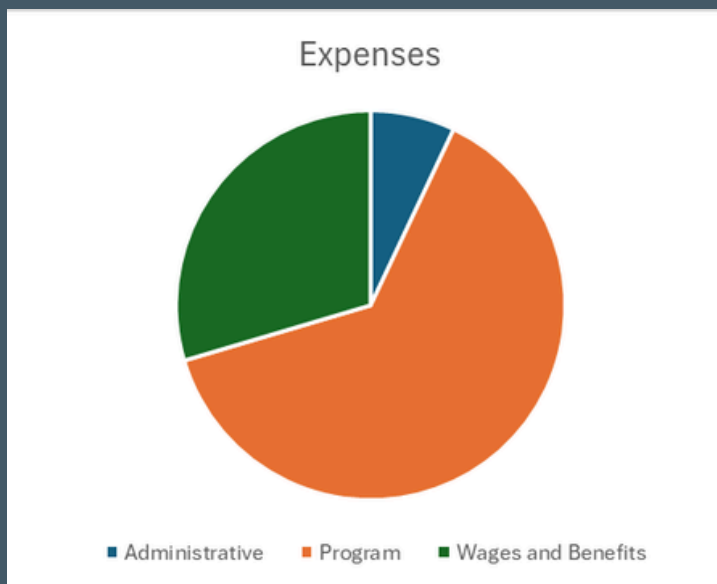




2024 Financial Report



Income	
Government Grants	\$236,479.58
Contracts	\$10,151.53
Other	\$20.00
Restricted Funds	\$500.00
Total Grants and Contracts	\$247,151.11



Expenses	
Accounting Fees	\$5,764.64
Insurance	\$3,257.72
Licenses/Permits	\$611.00
Office Supplies	\$721.85
Rent	\$6,925.00
Utilities	\$2,828.17
Total Administrative Expenses	\$20,108.38
Computer and IT	\$2,207.82
Contract Services	\$176,519.88
Program Supplies	\$59.84
Travel and Meetings	\$2,808.85
Total Program Expenses	\$181,596.39
Benefits	\$14,595.85
Officer Salary	\$63,971.07
Payroll Taxes	\$6,062.53
Total Wages and Benefits	\$84,629.45
Total Expenses	\$286,334.22
Net Income (Loss)	\$39,183.11



Mid John Day Watershed Council

The Mid John Day Watershed Council is a voluntary nonprofit organization that brings together local stakeholders from private, local, state, and federal interests in a partnership to improve a defined watershed area. The Council works to plan watershed protection and restoration strategies in a holistic way -- from ridgetop to ridgetop, and headwaters to mouth. Through this watershed partnership, council members collaborate to identify issues, promote cooperative solutions, focus resources, agree on goals for watershed protection and enhancement, and foster communication among all watershed interests.

The Mid John Day Watershed Council works to improve water quality and watershed conditions in the area by working with all interested parties. The Council's work with landowners to address upland, riparian, and instream issues such as the invasion of juniper and limited water sources for wildlife and livestock. Streamside vegetation, noxious weeds, cross fencing and riparian fencing are a few other practices that are considered when developing a project.

There are several ways to learn more and become involved with the Watershed Council. The Council holds monthly or bimonthly meetings that rotate between Fossil, Mitchell, and Spray. These meetings may also be attended virtually. Please let us know if you'd like to be added to our email notification list. Information on the Council can be found on our website, midjohndaywatershed.org, or our Facebook page, [Facebook.com/MidJohnDayWC](https://www.facebook.com/MidJohnDayWC). If you'd like to talk with staff, please reach out to Debbi Bunch by phone at 541-420-4479, or by email at debbi@midjohndaywatershed.org.

