**NEWS – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Awards Nearly $120,000 for Deer Creek Restoration**

*Board invests Salmon License Plate revenues in key restoration project*

 **For More Information:**

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(John Day) – The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) selected the McKenzie Watershed Council to receive a Salmon License Plate grant at their October 27-28, 2015 Board Meeting.

Salmon License Plate revenues are generated from the extra fee Oregonians pay when they purchase Salmon Plates for their vehicles.

The grant, titled “Deer Creek Floodplain Enhancement Project” totals $118,580 and will place large wood in Deer Creek to increase the stream’s complexity and reconnect the stream to the surrounding floodplain, improving habitat for Chinook Salmon and Bull Trout in Lane County.

“This project is a great investment of the state’s Salmon License Plate dollars,” says Meta Loftsgaarden, OWEB’s executive director. “This investment benefits both Chinook Salmon and Bull Trout habitat, while also supporting the local natural resource economy.”

In addition to the Deer Creek project, the OWEB Board selected three other projects to be awarded Salmon License Plate funding:

* Fivemile-Bell restoration – Siuslaw Watershed Council (Douglas County) – a $300,000 project to reconstruct stream channels to increase Coho Salmon habitat complexity;
* East Fork Millicoma Oxbow Reconnection and Habitat Restoration – Coos Watershed Association (Coos County) – a $1.26 million project to reconnect over 16 miles and restore stream functions to support Chinook Salmon, Coho Salmon and Steelhead populations;
* Oxbow Dredge Mining Restoration - Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs (Grant County) – a $525,000 project that will improve Chinook Salmon and Steelhead habitat by reconnecting the Middle Fork John Day River to its floodplain and planting streamside (riparian) vegetation.

Salmon License Plate income totaled $250,000 for the grant cycle, so each of the identified projects is only partially funded with license plate revenues. The rest comes from a combination of Lottery and federal funding.

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In total, the OWEB Board awarded 47 grants totaling $6,884,425 to local organizations statewide to support fish and wildlife habitat and water quality projects using Lottery, Salmon License Plate and federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funding at their October meeting. A listing of all awarded grants is available at: <http://www.oregon.gov/OWEB/docs/board/2015/2015_Board-funded-projects.pdf>

For additional information about OWEB’s grant programs, contact Eric Hartstein at eric.hartstein@oweb.state.or.us.

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