

APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST FORM OREGON HOUSE DELEGATION FISCAL YEAR 2010

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: FEBRUARY 20, 2009

PLEASE NOTE: As required by the House Appropriations Committee, all requests will be made public on the requesting Member's website.

1. Project Title: Legacy Roads and Trails Remediation Program (LRRI)- U.S. Forest Service

2. Organization Name and address:

Pacific Rivers Council (PRC)
Portland Office
917 SW Oak Street, Suite 403
Portland, OR 97231
Ste A

Bark
PO Box 12065
Portland, OR 97202
503-331-0374

3. Primary Contact name, phone number, mobile phone number, fax number and email:

4. Project Location Address (if different from Organization):

National Forest roads in the 5th Congressional District, across Oregon and nationwide.

5. Please describe the requesting organization's main activities, and whether it is a public, private non-profit, or private for-profit entity.

Pacific Rivers Council (PRC) is an Oregon non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the development and implementation of science-based public policies that protect and restore aquatic ecosystems and the species that depend on them. PRC has over 750 members throughout the US and Canada who participate in recreational activities, such as hiking, backpacking, cross-country skiing, nature photography, and river and lake boating and who, where possible, observe and benefit from wild fish such as salmon and steelhead. Many of PRC's members, board members, and staff reside in Oregon, and they cherish, recreate on, and in some cases earn their livelihood from the quality of rivers and streams that are affected by the management of federal public lands. Throughout PRC's 20-year history we have worked with agencies, scientists, local citizens groups, and political leaders to ensure that public land management is consistent with the conservation of rivers, freshwater ecosystems aquatic life. PRC believes that fairness, efficiency and effectiveness in management stem in large part from ensuring that planning is grounded by goals consistent with our society's long-held expectation that rivers will remain, or become, clean, healthy, and productive abodes for native fish and wildlife, and will continue to sustain many human uses.

Bark's mission is to bring about a transformation of Mt. Hood National Forest into a place where natural processes prevail, where wildlife thrives and where local communities have a social, cultural, and

economic investment in its restoration and preservation. Bark educates Oregonians on issues that effect federal forestlands through its community organizing, monthly hikes, door-to-door canvass, and award winning public access television show. Recently Bark's work as a founding member of the Clackamas Stewardship Partners led to winning the Two Chiefs Award, a national honor presented by the Chiefs of the Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

6. Briefly describe the activity or project for which funding is requested (please keep to 500 words or less.)

The problem this request addresses is the existing over-sized, crumbling national forest road system, which dumps sediment-laden runoff into forest streams degrading habitat for salmon and other aquatic species and fouling drinking water for the 60 million Americans who rely on national forests as water sources.

The Forest Service Legacy Road Remediation Initiative (LRR) accomplishes road- and trail-related watershed protection and restoration while creating family-wage jobs in rural communities. Funds appropriated to the LRR will be used for planning, construction and monitoring of projects that reduce and prevent water quality degradation and other harmful ecological impacts from the existing National Forest road system. This need is acute given the increased storm severity expected from weather patterns altered by climate change.

This investment will create quality jobs for hard-hit communities across Oregon, and it will protect and restore habitat for salmon, steelhead and other native aquatic and terrestrial species. In addition, it will protect drinking water quality for the hundreds of thousands of Oregonians whose water supply depends on the integrity of national forest watersheds. This program must also create some permanent Forest Service jobs, particularly in planning, engineering and contract administration, but most funds will go to jobs created through service contracts with small firms and individuals specializing in precision excavation, grading and associated activities.

7. Has this project received federal appropriations funding in past fiscal years?

Yes.

7a. If yes, please provide fiscal year, Department, Account, and funding amount of any previous funding.

Fiscal Year: 2008 USDA Forest Service, Capital Improvement and Maintenance, Legacy Road and Trails Remediation, \$40 million (less 1.56% for Rescissions)

Fiscal Year: 2009 -- appropriation noted above extended in part via Continuing Resolution with a \$70 million house mark; no number available from the Interior Appropriations portion of the Omnibus bill yet.

Prior years: Equivalent activities funded on an ongoing basis in prior years under various line items, including road construction, road maintenance, ecosystem restoration, watershed restoration, threatened and endangered species, etc.

8. Federal agency and account from which funds are requested (Please be specific –e.g. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Economic Development Initiatives account):

Interior and Related Agencies, USDA Forest Service, Capital Improvement and Maintenance, Legacy Roads and Trails Remediation.

9. What is the purpose of the project? Why is it a valuable use of taxpayer funds? How will the project support efforts to improve the economy and create jobs in Oregon?

Project Purpose: To fund the Forest Service to reduce water quality, fish and wildlife impacts from its road system by removing unneeded roads and remediating those that remain to minimize maintenance costs and environmental impacts. The current system is at least 25-40% larger than what is needed to provide resource management and recreational access; we already know that at least 186,000 miles need to be removed. (Source: Forest Service).

The current backlog of maintenance needs is estimated at \$900M for Oregon and approximately \$10B for the nation. Sustained long-term funding of Legacy Roads is necessary for Oregon to restore its federal forests and to comply with Federal and state Clean Water Act requirements.

This expenditure has value to taxpayers because: Millions of taxpayer dollars can be saved over the long-term by ensuring that only those roads that are truly needed are permitted to remain on the landscape. If the forest road system remains inadequately addressed, taxpayers will continue to incur fiscal liability for its maintenance, while water quality, fish and wildlife are harmed in violation of existing legal obligations. Reducing the road system and treating the remaining roads to withstand extreme storm events with minimal risk to aquatic resources is the only fiscally responsible course of action.

This expenditure will support the economy and create jobs because: The kind of work required to decommission and improve forest roads employs skilled labor at relatively high wages and is likely to benefit businesses and individuals in rural communities still largely unrecovered from long-term structural changes in the timber and agricultural economies and where resilience to economic transitions often is low. Because the need for this work is so great, its funding has the potential to create long-term employment opportunities and to leverage public-private partnerships.

\$100M in FY10 would provide 1450 direct jobs in areas where road reclamation and remediation is implemented, as well as produce additional jobs in the communities engaging in these efforts. This estimate is based on economists' calculations that road reclamation work, for example, is capable of providing 14.5 direct jobs per million dollars expended. Such a road reclamation and remediation program can provide the same type of high-wage, high-skill jobs as road construction or timber extraction in rural communities. These jobs require the very same heavy equipment needed to build roads, and since that machinery is expensive to transport, the jobs will remain local. Local workers will spend the bulk of their paychecks directly in their own communities, multiplying the impact of the jobs created and further stimulating local economies.

10. Have you requested funding for this project from other Members of Congress? If so, who?

PRC and Bark are requesting funding for this project with Senators Merkley and Wyden, Representatives Schrader, Blumenauer, Wu, Walden, and DeFazio. Other Coalition partners are making similar requests of legislators in Washington and California.

11. Funding Details:

a. Total project cost (all funding sources and all years):

An estimated \$900 million is needed to address road-related threats to water quality, habitat and drinking water in Oregon's national forests. (Source: Forest Service)

b. Amount being requested for this project in Fiscal Year 2010:

\$100 million nationally, with the proportion allocated to Oregon being at least \$15 million – which approximates and slightly exceeds the proportion of funding that went to Oregon forests in FY2008.

We request the following appropriations language:

“Provided, That \$100,000,000 shall be designated for road decommissioning, removal of barriers to passage of fish and other aquatic organisms, and urgently needed road and trail upgrades and repairs in areas where Forest Service roads may be contributing to water quality problems in streams and water bodies which support threatened, endangered or sensitive species or community water sources and where roads adversely affect terrestrial wildlife: Provided further, That each forest will identify a preliminary list of roads to be decommissioned to establish a fiscally and ecologically sustainable road system: Provided further, That expenditures will be prioritized to activities that further the elimination of unneeded roads ; Provided further, That up to \$100,000,000 of the funds provided herein for road maintenance shall be available for the decommissioning of roads, including unauthorized roads not part of the transportation system, which are no longer needed: Provided further, That, no funds shall be expended to decommission any system road until notice and an opportunity for public comment has been provided on each decommissioning project: Provided further, That the decommissioning of unauthorized roads not part of the official transportation system shall be expedited in response to threats to public safety, water quality or natural resources.”

c. What other funding sources (local, regional, state) are contributing to this project or activity? (Please provide specific dollar amount or percentage.)

State and private funding is available in many places to leverage federal investment, including the State of Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and private timberland owner investment in road upgrades under the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds. For example, in Region 6 of the Forest Service (Oregon and Washington) the agency commonly uses non-federal monetary and in-kind matching contributions. Recent partner investment contribution in Region 6 for Watershed and Aquatic Restoration total at least \$7.5 million (Forest Service Source, available on request). We expect that these funds will facilitate increased partnerships between the Forest Service and other organizations and entities. Examples of diverse partners include Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), National Forest Foundation (NFF), Oregon Trout, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

d. Do you expect to request federal funding in future years for this project?

Yes, future request amounts will be tiered to the FY10 appropriation amount and continued future projected costs.

e. Breakdown/budget of the amount you are requesting for this project in FY 2010. (e.g. salary \$40,000; computer \$3,000):

The main activity categories are planning, construction, and monitoring but exact breakdowns cannot be provided here because reports about FY 2008 program accomplishments are still in preparation. Furthermore, the Forest Service needs some discretion in budget allocation, except that at least 2-3% of the funding should be made available for monitoring, and there should be no up front restrictions placed on amounts available for road decommissioning. Allocation can be constrained by the language of the Interior Appropriations Bill and Report Language. The proportion of funds actually allocated to national forests in Oregon or to Congressman Schrader’s district will be determined in part by the Chief’s office, the Regional office, and individual Forests.

Planning dollars will be used to identify priority problem sites, design projects to address these problems through road removal or remediation, and to comply with National Environmental Policy Act requirements. Planning will be integrated with existing and ongoing watershed restoration plans, road analyses and travel planning processes underway in individual national forests.

Construction dollars will be used for road removal, improved drainage design and provision or improvement of passage for aquatic organisms. This work will prevent or reduce the need to make multi-million dollar repairs of forest road, such as those necessitated by winter storm damage over the last few years.

Monitoring dollars will ensure that projects are implemented as intended, and that the Forest Service is accountable to Congress and the public for effective expenditure of these funds.

f. Please list public or private organizations that have supported/endorsed this project:

CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT: The type of work targeted by this request has recently been supported on the basis of its ecological and economic benefits by many members of the House and Senate during discussions over the Stimulus Package. *See* the attached letters from members of the House and Senate during December, 2008 in support of public lands programs under "Forest Service." (supporting funds for maintenance backlog and decommissioning of unused and obsolete roads).

STATE SUPPORT: The Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire has actively supported this appropriation directly and through her Departments of Ecology, and Fish and Wildlife, who are members of the coalition noted below.

In Oregon, the need for this work has been specifically noted by the Federal Forests Advisory Committee to the Oregon Department of Forestry, as evidenced by its finding that "funding, incentives and structural support are needed to prepare and execute a strategic effort to comprehensively address the negative environmental impacts from the transportation system on federal forests. The legacy road network which includes failing culverts, inadequate stream crossings is improperly designed roads, is aging and in need of attention. A new system is needed to fund a permanent, all-weather road system." The committee specifically recommended as a solution: "Increase Forest Service and BLM appropriations" and otherwise address water quality and fish passage problems from legacy roads, decommissioning unneeded roads, and creating a permanent, all-weather road system for needed uses. Oregon Federal Forestlands Advisory Committee, Oregon's Vision for Federal Forestlands, Final Draft Guidance Document w/edits, Nov. 26, 2008, at 41-42 (available at http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/BOARD/docs/January_2009/3_Att_1.pdf)

BROAD COALITION IN SUPPORT:

Washington State Department of Ecology
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Olympic Forest Coalition
Pacific Rivers Council
American Whitewater
The Wilderness Society
Gifford Pinchot Task Force
Cascade Chapter Sierra Club
Alpine Lakes Protection Society
North Cascade Conservation Council
Pilchuck Audubon Society
Washington Wilderness Coalition
The Mountaineers
American Rivers
American Whitewater
Audubon Society of Portland
Bark
Center for Biological Diversity

Central Oregon LandWatch
Clackamas River Basin Council
Clackamas Stewardship Partners
Coast Range Association
Columbia Gorge Institute
Conservation Northwest
Lower Columbia Canoe Club
Native Fish Society
Northwest Environmental Defense Center
Oregon Council Trout Unlimited
Oregon Kayak and Canoe Club
Oregon Trout
Oregon Wild
Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman's Associations
Pacific Rivers Council
Siskiyou Project
Wild Fish Conservancy
Wild Salmon Center

g. Is this project scalable? (i.e. if partial funding is awarded, will the organization be able to use the funds in FY 2010?):

Yes.