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March 2014

Spring conversations are all over the map.

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NEW ONLINE MAPPING TOOLS SHOWS CRUCIAL FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

ODFW recently debuted Compass, an interactive GIS-based map of Oregon's crucial fish and wildlife habitats. Crucial habitats are places on the landscape that provide the natural resources critical to fish and wildlife species.

The map and associated tools are designed to help users make informed land use decisions as they plan energy, transportation, industrial, habitat and other projects.

"You can now see deer and elk wintering areas; high-value wetlands; threatened and endangered species; highways and railroads; sage-grouse core areas and much more," said Holly Michael, ODFW Conservation Policy Coordinator. "And, you can see it at the beginning of a project, saving time and money."

Arty Rodriguez, Conservation Strategy GIS Analyst, sees a lot of enthusiasm among partners who contributed data to the map as well as potential users. "Everyone is excited to have this information centralized—we now have a repository and a distribution system for fish and wildlife crucial habitat data. It's really a work in progress. We will continue to add and update information."

Beta users included the state departments of energy and transportation.

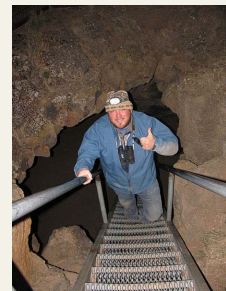
"The habitat data in Compass will allow large-scale energy developers to evaluate the proposed location of their facility before expending a lot of resources," said Todd Cornett, Oregon Department of Energy Siting Division Administrator.

Susan Haupt, ODOT, Chief Environmental Officer and Environmental Section Manager, is also an advocate of Compass. "We're excited about test driving this new tool. It's definitely a step in the right direction as we are always looking to improve our planning and project development processes to better align decisions with ecological values."

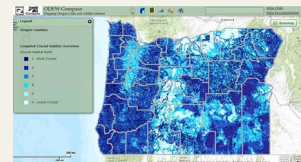
The data and analyses within Compass are based on best available information at the time and will be updated regularly.

Compass is available in the Map section of ODFW's website

The mapping system incorporates data sets from a number of partners and was developed in cooperation with the Western Governors' Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool (CHAT).



Arty Rodriguez, Conservation Strategy GIS Analyst, exiting a cave in central Oregon after a survey to see if bats were using the cave.



Compass gives project planners the GIS data they need at the beginning of a project.

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM ITS FRIENDS: THE OREGON CHUB RECOVERS

The Oregon chub has had its share of the spotlight since the USFWS proposed it be delisted after 22 years on the Endangered Species list. Those involved in recovery believe it will happen, because by all reports, the Oregon chub is thriving. The numbers tell the story. When the species was listed in 1993, there were fewer than 1,000 fish in eight known locations. Today, Oregon chub numbers exceed 150,000 in 80 locations.

Private landowners have played a big part in the return of the little minnow that exists only in lazy backwaters, ponds and marshes of the Willamette Valley.

"Forty percent of known chub populations are on private property," said Brian Bangs, ODFW Native Fish

Investigations biologist, so landowners are paramount to recovery.”

And cooperation has been great. “We’ve met a lot of amazing people who are excited to know that they are helping to recover a species.”

In 2001, Bob Russell of Marcola heard that “Paul Sheerer over at ODFW was looking for fishless, year round ponds to put an endangered fish in. I called him and said I had a pond he could look at.”

It turned out to be exactly what ODFW was looking for. “It’s about a quarter-acre, but it’s spring fed. I had to ditch it and run some pipe from the spring, but it’s pretty self-sustaining,” said Russell.

Was he at all concerned about having an endangered species on the property? “No, I’m kind of a tree hugger anyway, and this is a way for me to help wildlife. It felt pretty good when Brian came by and told me they were going to delist it.”

Bob Koenig of Turner, a life-long wildlife enthusiast, has a conservation easement on the farm where he has lived for 37 years. He was especially pleased when he learned the slough on his property had chub in it. “It’s a good feeling, it really is, to know we are helping recover a species,” he said.

When ODFW wildlife biologist Dave Budeau began restoring wetlands on his property, he was thinking primarily of providing benefits for birds. “I knew a number of other species would benefit from restoration, but I never thought about fish until the day Steve Smith of the US Fish and Wildlife Service Partners Program came by and said it looked like I had a great spot for Oregon chub.

“We had to change the original design to accommodate the chub, but it’s worked out great,” Budeau said.

[USFWS news release](#)

[ODFW Oregon chub website](#)

[Aerial video of chub ponds on Dave Budeau's property.](#) Footage taken by Dave with a GoPro 2 camera and quadcopter.



*Oregon chub are in good hands on biologist Dave Budeau's property. Dave Budeau photo.*



*Bob Koenig's slough near Jefferson has all the right stuff for chub. ODFW photo.*

#### ACQUISITION BODES WELL FOR THREATENED FISH

In 2013, Western Rivers Conservancy acquired a 338-acre former family farm on the banks of the North Santiam River near Stayton. “We have been interested in this area for years,” said Josh Kling, the Conservancy’s program director. “The North Santiam historically produced one-third of the Willamette Valley’s spring Chinook and two-thirds of its winter steelhead.”

With more than two miles of riverfront, 120 acres of riparian forests, twenty acres of wetlands, extensive side channels and a slough where Oregon chub thrive, it one of the most intact riparian areas in the lower Santiam Basin. “This acquisition offers an incredible opportunity to improve habitat for threatened fish.”

Conservation of this land will ensure that its Oregon chub population remains secure into the future. The chub population on the property is one that helped meet the threshold for recovery of the species. Restoration will also benefit Pacific lamprey, red-legged frogs and western pond turtles and native Santiam cutthroat rainbow trout,” said Kling.

The Conservancy conveyed the land to the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde. The Tribe, which calls the property Chahalpam, the traditional homeland of the Santiam Kalapuya, is drafting a management plan. Funding for the project was provided by the Bonneville Power Administration through the ODFW Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program and the Willamette BiOp Habitat Restoration program.



*Gravel bars on the North Santiam River provide critical fish habitat. Steve Terrill photo.*

#### SALE OF DUCK POND’S CONSERVATION CUVEE BENEFITS FISH AND WILDLIFE

Duck Pond Fries Family Cellars celebrates its commitment to healthy fish and wildlife populations with a donation of \$5 to the ODFW Conservation Program for each bottle of its Conservation Cuvee sold.

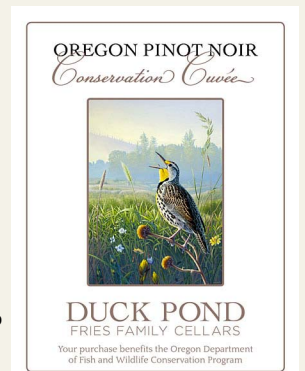
Conservation Cuvee is a limited-production Pinot Noir available only at Duck Pond Cellars and via its website.

“It is a pleasure to work with Duck Pond and the Fries family,” said Andrea Hanson, ODFW Conservation Strategy Coordinator. “Their generosity will do great things for fish and wildlife.”

“We’re excited about this partnership with ODFW,” said Duck Pond President/co-owner Greg Fries. “We feel good knowing this wine will help promote conservation projects throughout Oregon.”

The winery has undertaken projects of its own. A water treatment pond at the winery’s Dundee location captures and filters the water used to sanitize barrels and tanks through a constructed wetland before it is reintroduced to the estate vineyard. St. Jory Vineyard in Salem features restored wetland habitats now home to rainbow trout and a variety of migratory birds, including ducks and geese.

To purchase Conservation Cuvee, visit [Duck Pond Cellars in Dundee](#), Oregon or order online at the [Duck Pond Cellars website](#).



*Duck Pond Conservation Cuvee features the Western Meadowlark, Oregon’s state bird, on the label.*

#### THE GREENING OF RODENT CONTROL

Eric Ufer is trying some different things when it comes to pest control and has found some enthusiastic customers.

Ufer, president of Pest Solutions, Inc. in Beaverton, is relatively new to the pest control industry—he was a stockbroker for 16 years. He sees this as a benefit. “We’re not entrenched in old ways of doing things. Our mission is to protect people and property, but we’re learning that there are many ways to that.”

Recently, he worked with the Oregon Department of Corrections to install owl boxes to help with rodent control. Owls are expert natural rodent control agents. It is estimated that a barn owl can consume a third of its body weight per night—that is about six rodents a night.

"Finding a natural alternative to harmful toxic products is safer for the environment and the community. Taking advantage of an opportunity like this will save money and improve operational efficiencies down the road," said Chad Naugle, Sustainability Coordinator, Oregon Department of Corrections. He notes that the plan meets the Department's sustainability mission and reduces toxins per the Governor's Green Chemistry Executive Order 12-05.

A word of caution comes from ODFW veterinarian Julia Burco. "Owls are great for rodent control, but before attracting owls, landowners have to be sure that they do no harm. "If people are using rodent poison that includes anticoagulant rodenticides, they should not be trying to attract owls."

The reason is that rodent-killing baits can kill or sicken owls and other wildlife. The birds eat dead or dying rodents that have consumed the baits and, as a result, they are poisoned. Anticoagulant rodenticides are used both indoors and outdoors, and are usually formulated into pellets, blocks or bars and can be brightly colored.

Burco adds that rodenticides are not intended for broad scale use across the landscape, and such use should be in cooperation with licensed pesticide applicators.

This project is still in the experimental stage, and Ufer believes it will lead to a greater knowledge of greener pest control.

Learn more

[Anticoagulant rodenticides](#) (pdf)  
[EPA Safer Rodenticide Products](#)  
[National Pesticide Information Center](#)

#### ABOUT THE OREGON CONSERVATION STRATEGY

The [Oregon Conservation Strategy](#) provides a blueprint and action plan for the long-term conservation of Oregon's native fish and wildlife and their habitats through a voluntary, statewide approach to conservation. It was developed by ODFW with the help of a diverse coalition of Oregonians including scientists, conservation groups, landowners, extension services, anglers, hunters, and representatives from agriculture, forestry and rangelands.

#### PAST ISSUES OF THE NEWSLETTER

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*Chad Naugle, Oregon Department of Corrections, is experimenting with attracting owls as rodent control agents on state properties in Salem.*

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