

Upper Deschutes Conservation Fund (UDCF) 2025 Report

Committee Composition

The UDCF Advisory Committee is comprised of three members, with one representative from each of the following agencies: the USFWS – Bend Field Office, the Deschutes Watershed District of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), and the Deschutes National Forest (USFS).

ODFW: Sara Gregory
USFS: Holly Jewkes
USFWS: Emelie McKain

The UDCF Technical Committee is comprised of employees from the United States Geological Survey (USGS), ODFW, the United States Forest Service (USFS), and the USFWS.

ODFW: Kalysta Adkins
USFS: Jason Grizner
USGS: Chris Pearl
USFWS: Jennifer O'Reilly

Meetings

The UDCF Advisory Committee began meeting in the summer of 2021 and mainly communicate over email for grant approval and recommendations.

The UDCF Technical Committee began meeting in the summer of 2021 and have met regularly in the winter and fall seasons each year. Meetings for the UDCFTC in 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025:

2021 – July, November, December,
2022 – January, February, and November
2023 – January, February, March, October, November
2024 – February, June (Field), October
2025 – June

Projects Funded

Two projects were funded by the UDCF in 2025 (Table 1). The first project, which focused on predatory bullfrog removal in the Little Deschutes River, was funded in the fall of 2021 for work in winter 2021 and throughout 2022 and then funded again in 2023 and 2024. Removal of predatory bullfrogs at concentrated areas near breeding sites is designed to relieve predation pressure on all life stages of OSF and hopefully increase survival of individuals to increase population numbers. The UDCFTC recommended continuation of this work due to its highly successful results removing bullfrogs from populations areas along the Little Deschutes and indications that Oregon spotted frog are responding positively (more egg masses) at some of those breeding sites; work in 2025 included additional areas of bullfrog removal and Oregon spotted frog egg mass surveys at associated bullfrog removal sites.

The second project focused on restoration at Dead Slough. Dead Slough is a historic oxbow on the Deschutes River that is perennially wet and comprised of emergent freshwater wetland habitat. The slough supports a key population of OSF. Restoration aims to improve breeding and overwintering habitat for OSF by increasing inundation levels in the slough during the winter (low flow) periods. To achieve this, the project built two structures similar to a beaver dam to backwater the slough and maintain winter water levels approximately a foot higher than preexisting winter conditions. Overall habitat objectives include increasing and stabilizing winter water levels and decreasing the bare soil margin zone between the emergent vegetation (i.e. slough sedge) and the edge of the low water surface at winter low flows; this bare soil zone has poor habitat suitability and is susceptible to erosion (RDG 2017).

Projects expected to be funded in 2026 will likely involve invasive vegetation treatments (reed canary grass) within the Upper and Little Deschutes Oregon spotted frog breeding habitats, predatory bull frog removal and restoration implementation on the Little Deschutes in coordination with the BOR-funded OSF planning grant awarded to the Deschutes River Conservancy.

Table 1 Summary of Project Funding by the Upper Deschutes Conservation Fund

Project Name	Project Type	Year Funded	Grant Purpose	Amount Funded	Entity Funded	Partners	OSF population/site supported	HUC 8 Sub-basin
Bullfrog Control Project Little Deschutes	Predatory Bullfrog Removal	2021	To perform bullfrog control activities, data collection, and reporting	\$50,000	Upper Deschutes Watershed Council	UDWC	Little Deschutes	Little Deschutes
Brown bullhead Predation and the Effects of Removal on Oregon Spotted Frog Breeding Populations at Crane Prairie Reservoir, Oregon	Predatory Fish Removal (bullhead)	2022	For genetics work on samples collected	\$33,424	OSU Sponsored programs	USGS, ODFW, OSU	Crane Prairie	Upper Deschutes
Brown bullhead Predation and the Effects of Removal on Oregon Spotted Frog Breeding Populations at Crane Prairie Reservoir, Oregon	Predatory Fish Removal (bullhead)	2022	For bullhead removal, stomach sample collection, and reports	\$10,910	USGS- Ft. Collins Science Center	USGS, ODFW, OSU	Crane Prairie	Upper Deschutes
Brown bullhead Predation and the Effects of Removal on Oregon Spotted Frog Breeding Populations at Crane Prairie Reservoir, Oregon	Predatory Fish Removal	2023	For genetics work on samples collected	\$48,972	OSU Sponsored programs	USGS, ODFW, OSU	Crane Prairie	Upper Deschutes
Brown bullhead Predation and the Effects of Removal on Oregon Spotted Frog Breeding Populations at Crane Prairie Reservoir, Oregon	Predatory Fish Removal	2023	For bullhead removal, stomach sample collection, and reports	\$16,492	USGS- Ft. Collins Science Center	USGS, ODFW, OSU	Crane Prairie	Upper Deschutes
Bullfrog Control Project Little Deschutes	Bullfrog Removal	2023	To perform bullfrog control activities, data collection, and reporting	\$68,509	Upper Deschutes Watershed Council	UDWC	Little Deschutes	Little Deschutes
Sunriver Invasive Plant Removal	Invasive Plant Removal	2023	To perform invasive plant removal to restore and enhance breeding sites	\$30,400	Sunriver Nature Center	Sunriver Nature Center	Sunriver	Little Deschutes

Project Name	Project Type	Year Funded	Grant Purpose	Amount Funded	Entity Funded	Partners	OSF population/site supported	HUC 8 Sub-basin
Bullfrog Control Project	Predatory Bullfrog Removal	2024	To perform bullfrog control activities, OSF breeding surveys, data collection, and reporting	\$71,435	Upper Deschutes Watershed Council	3 Rivers Environmental	Little Deschutes	Little Deschutes
Bullfrog Control Project Little Deschutes	Predatory Bullfrog Removal	2025	To perform bullfrog control activities, OSF breeding surveys, data collection, and reporting	\$48,112	Upper Deschutes Watershed Council	3 Rivers Environmental	Little Deschutes	Little Deschutes
Dead Slough Restoration	OSF Habitat Restoration	2025	Install beaver dam-like structures to improve breeding conditions, monitoring and reporting	\$15,097	Upper Deschutes Watershed Council	UDWC	Upper Deschutes below Wickiup	Upper Deschutes
Total Amount Awarded to Date \$393,351								

Fund Balance

Fund contribution history (this does not include fund growth as managed by Oregon Community Foundation)

2021 - \$150,000.00

2022 - \$150,000.00

2023 - \$170,924.00

2024 - \$176,441.00

2025 - \$181,178.00

Fund balance as of 12/31/2024 (prior to 2025 contributions and project awards):

\$336,549.38

Fund balance as of 12/31/2025 (after 2025 contributions, project awards and fund growth):

\$466,575.44