



MEMORANDUM

To: Clackamas County Board of County Commissioners
From: Tonia Holowetzki, Director, Public & Government Affairs
RE: Bureau of Land Management Draft Support Letter
Date: April 29, 2025

REQUEST: Approve a letter supporting a proposal by the Bureau of Land Management to acquire the Sixes Creek Property, west of Welches, Oregon.

BACKGROUND: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) seeks funding from the Federal Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to acquire a 283-acre parcel (Sixes Creek Property) near the Wildwood Recreation Site on Highway 26. If acquired, the parcel would be absorbed into and managed as part of the Wildwood Recreation Site to provide public recreation and educational opportunities and advance salmon/steelhead habitat restoration in the watershed.

The Sixes Creek Property is located across the Salmon River from the Wildwood Recreation Site and Cascade Streamwatch. Property acquisition will incentivize further tourism to the Wildwood Recreation Site, benefiting rural restaurants, hotels, and other businesses. Moreover, the project will protect habitat for salmon and steelhead, recognizing that Sixes Creek is one of the most important salmon and steelhead streams in the Sandy basin, with one of the highest abundances of spawning coho and year-round juvenile rearing.

The Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce, Sandy River Basin Partners, Association of NW Steelheaders, the Freshwater Trust, World Salmon Council, Columbia Land Trust, Mt Hood Stewardship Council, and the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde support the proposal.

Welches Middle School and AntFarm are also considering letters of support.

BLM is prioritizing written letters of support from local governments as part of the project ranking process. Without a letter of support from the County, the proposal will not be ranked. County staff reviewed the BLM request and identified no concerns. If the project is selected for funding through the LWCF, then it will be named in the President's budget request to Congress by virtue of being a federal acquisition.

RECOMMENDATION: PGA recommends the Board approve the attached letter supporting the Bureau of Land Management proposal to acquire the Sixes Creek Property.

Respectfully submitted,

Tonia Holowetzki, Director, Public & Government Affairs

ATTACHMENTS

- #A: Draft Letter of Support
- #B: Support Materials

DRAFT Board of County Commissioners Letter

April 22, 2025

Amanda Hoffman – Field Manager
Cascades Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97306

Dear Field Manager Hoffman:

The Clackamas Board of County Commissioners strongly supports the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) request for funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to acquire the 283-acre Sixes Creek Property west of Welches, Oregon. The property is visible from the adjacent Wildwood Recreation Site on the Salmon River, a beloved tourist destination in the county that offers world-class environmental education experiences, as well as family-friendly outdoor recreation opportunities.

Public acquisition will protect and expand the BLM's Wildwood Recreation Site, which receives roughly 80,000 visitors per year – many of whom contribute to the local economy as they dine, shop, and sleep in the area. Expanded recreational access into the upper Sixes Creek watershed has the potential to draw even more visitors seeking hiking, hunting, fishing and other unique outdoor recreation opportunities in Clackamas County. Additionally, the Sixes Creek watershed is one of the most important in the Sandy basin for salmon and steelhead. This project will help ensure Sixes Creek continues to provide outstanding habitat for these species and build on ongoing investment in species recovery across the basin.

The Commissioners are in favor of the BLM's request for funding from the LWCF. We look forward to visiting the site once open to the public.

Sincerely,

DRAFT

Craig Roberts, Chair
On Behalf of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners

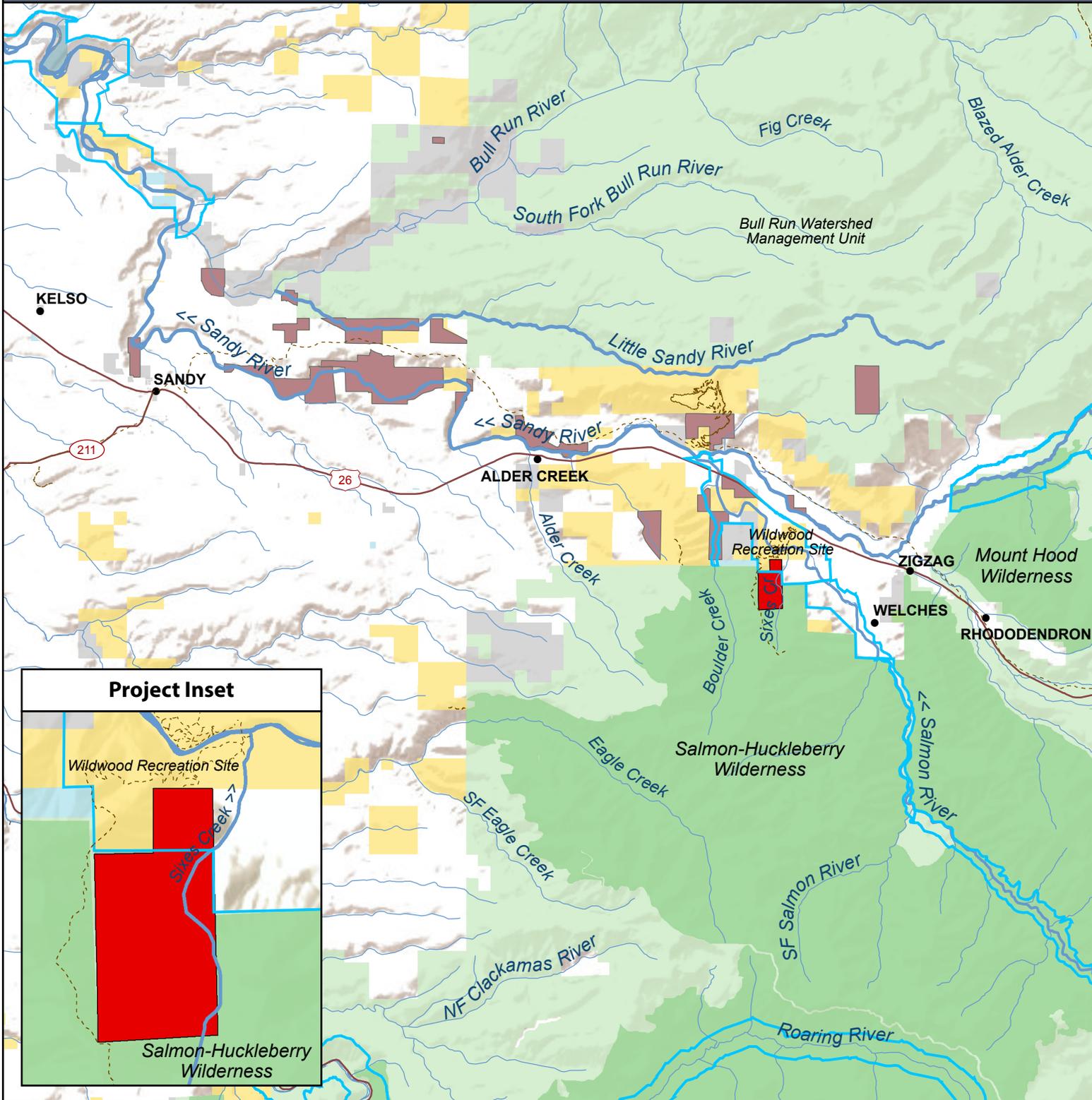
Salmon Wild & Scenic River

Sixes Creek Property

Clackamas County, OR

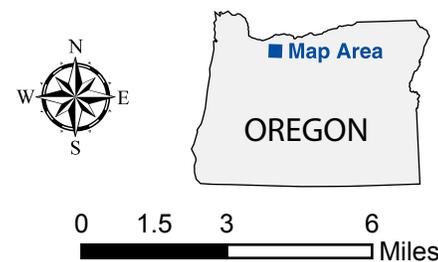


WESTERN RIVERS
CONSERVANCY



- Sixes Creek Property (283 acres)
- Sandy River Conservation and Recreation Area (WRC Project - 4,798 acres)
- Wild and Scenic River Corridor
- US Forest Service
- USFS Wilderness Area

- Bureau of Land Management
- State Lands
- State Outdoor Recreation Areas
- City Lands
- Oregon National Historic Trail
- Highway





03/26/2026

Amanda Hoffman - Field Manager
Cascades Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97306

Re: FY 2027 Land and Water Conservation Fund

Dear Field Manager Amanda:

The Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the efforts of the Bureau of Land Management and Western Rivers Conservancy to acquire the 283-acre Sixes Creek property in Clackamas County, OR. This tract of undeveloped forestland borders the Salmon Huckleberry Wilderness to the south and the Salmon Wild and Scenic River corridor to the north. Protection will ensure that habitat within the Sixes Creek watershed, a pristine tributary to the Salmon River, remains intact for the benefit of fish, wildlife and people.

The property will be managed as part of the Wildwood Recreation Site and Cascade Streamwatch following conveyance to the BLM. Known as a world-class environmental education experience, Wildwood receives around 80,000 visitors per year, many of whom contribute to the local economy of Sandy as they dine, shop and sleep in the area. This project would expand recreational opportunities along Highway 26, including canyoneering access to large waterfalls as well as new public lands available for hunting, fishing and hiking. Our destination marketing initiative, Travel26, supports projects like this as they help enhance tourism and outdoor recreation along the Highway 26 corridor, benefiting both visitors and local businesses.

Protecting the watershed of Sixes Creek will also support continued visitation for those who hope to see spawning salmon. This stream provides documented spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and steelhead whose numbers have seen dramatic increases in the area over the past decade. Recent restoration efforts by the BLM at the mouth of Sixes Creek have improved the in-stream habitat quality and will complement the protection of nearly one mile of stream gained through this proposal.

We are enthusiastic about supporting this significant conservation project within the Sandy, OR region and hope that LWCF funding will be granted for the acquisition of the Sixes Creek property.

Sincerely,

Khrys Jones

Khrys Jones, IOM
Executive Director
Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce
khrys@sandyoregonchamber.org



Sandy River Basin Partners

Association of
Northwest
Steelheaders

Clackamas County

East Multnomah
Soil and Water
Conservation District

The Freshwater Trust

Metro

Multnomah County

National Marine
Fisheries Service

Oregon Department of
Fish and Wildlife

Portland Water Bureau

USDI, Bureau of Land
Management -Salem
District

USDA Forest Service,
Mt. Hood National
Forest

February 20, 2025

Amanda Hoffman - Field Manager
Cascades Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97306

Re: FY 2027 Land and Water Conservation Fund

Dear Field Manager Hoffman,

The Sandy River Basin Partners strongly support the efforts of the Bureau of Land Management and Western Rivers Conservancy to acquire the 283-acre Sixes Creek property in Clackamas County, OR. This tract of undeveloped forestland borders the Salmon Huckleberry Wilderness to the south and the Salmon Wild and Scenic River corridor to the north. Protection will ensure that habitat within the Sixes Creek watershed, a pristine tributary to the Salmon River, remains intact for the benefit of fish, wildlife and people.

In 2000, a partnership of public and private organizations was created to prioritize restoration within the Sandy River basin for the anadromous fish that rely on the watershed. By leveraging the group's collective power, we have completed restoration work throughout the basin, including at the confluence of Sixes Creek and the Salmon River. These efforts have helped to increase federally listed salmon and steelhead populations in the Sandy drainage. The protection of spawning and rearing streams, like Sixes Creek, will be especially important to the continued recovery of these fish.

Sixes Creek flows for nearly one mile through the property and will be managed as part of the Wildwood Recreation Site and Cascade Streamwatch following conveyance to the BLM. Known as a world-class environmental education experience, Wildwood receives around 80,000 visitors per year, many of whom day-hike through the Sixes Creek wetland area. This project would provide future opportunities to expand recreation access and maintain wilderness-like characteristics, attracting more visitors, while preserving the water quality and habitats that native fish rely on.

We are enthusiastic about supporting this significant conservation project within the Sandy River basin and hope that LWCF funding will be granted for the acquisition of the Sixes Creek property.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Liane R. Davis".

Liane Davis
Sandy River Basin Partners Chair



ASSOCIATION OF NORTHWEST STEELHEADERS

P.O. Box 55400 Portland, OR. 97238

office@anws.org | (503) 653-4176

Amanda Hoffman - Field Manager
Cascades Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97306

Re: FY 2027 Land and Water Conservation Fund

Dear Field Manager Amanda:

The Association of Northwest Steelheaders strongly supports the efforts of the Bureau of Land Management and Western Rivers Conservancy to acquire the 283-acre Sixes Creek property in Clackamas County, OR. This tract of undeveloped forestland borders the Salmon Huckleberry Wilderness to the south and the Salmon Wild and Scenic River corridor to the north. Protection will ensure that habitat within the Sixes Creek watershed, a pristine tributary to the Salmon River, remains intact for the benefit of fish, wildlife and people.

Northwest Steelheaders has been fighting for anadromous fish since the 1960s. Our work has helped to promote healthy populations of the region's most iconic species through legislation, advocacy and on the groundwork. Protecting tributary and off-channel habitat, such as Sixes Creek, is critical for wild salmon and steelhead to persist in our waterways.

Sixes Creek flows for nearly one mile through the property, quickly losing elevation before joining the Salmon River at the Wildwood Recreation Site. This stream provides documented spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and steelhead whose numbers have seen dramatic increases in the area over the past decade. Recent restoration efforts by the BLM at the mouth of Sixes Creek have improved the in-stream habitat quality and will complement the protections gained through this proposal.

We are enthusiastic about supporting this significant conservation project within the Salmon River basin and hope that LWCF funding will be granted for the acquisition of the Sixes Creek property.

Sincerely,

Jeff Hernandez

Jeff Hernandez, President
Association of Northwest Steelheaders

The Association is a 501(C)3 - non-profit corporation, Federal Tax ID - No. 91-1031100



1120 SE Madison St
Portland, OR 97214
503-222-9091
www.thefreshwatertrust.org

February 4, 2025

Amanda Hoffman - Field Manager
Cascades Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97306

Re: FY 2027 Land and Water Conservation Fund

Dear Ms. Hoffman,

The Freshwater Trust (TFT) strongly supports the efforts of the Bureau of Land Management and Western Rivers Conservancy to acquire the 283-acre Sixes Creek property in Clackamas County, OR. This tract of undeveloped forestland borders the Salmon Huckleberry Wilderness to the south and the Salmon Wild and Scenic River corridor to the north. Protection will ensure that habitat within the Sixes Creek watershed, a pristine tributary to the Salmon River, remains intact for the benefit of fish, wildlife and people.

Since 1999, TFT has worked with the Sandy River Basin Partners (Partners) to restore habitat to benefit federally listed salmon and steelhead. To date, over \$14 million has been invested in 331 projects, leading to the functional restoration of 41 stream miles. As a component of this basin-scale restoration work The Freshwater Trust has worked closely with the BLM implementing restoration projects in the Salmon watershed - a high priority in the Partners' restoration strategy. In the upper Sandy, including the Salmon watershed project, work has focused on restoring natural processes including large wood placement and log jam construction, floodplain restoration and side channel reconnection which has resulted in annual increases in fish returns to the area. A key salmon and steelhead stream within the Salmon watershed is Sixes Creek, which has been a focal area for restoration and monitoring for the BLM-TFT project team for over a decade.

Sixes Creek is one of the most important salmon and steelhead streams in the Sandy basin with one of the highest abundances of spawning coho and year-round juvenile rearing. Its low gradient habitat and connected floodplain provides outstanding habitat for coho salmon. Coupled with the adjacent upstream restored wetland at Wildwood and proximity to completed work on the lower Salmon and tributaries, the area is truly an outstanding resource.

Given the importance of Sixes Creek, TFT strongly supports the BLM-Western Rivers initiative to acquire significant habitat upstream of the BLM managed lower Sixes Creek reaches. Protecting the upstream reaches on Sixes Creek will ensure that Sixes Creek continues to provide outstanding salmon and steelhead habitat. TFT is enthusiastic about supporting this significant conservation project within the Salmon River watershed and hopes that LWCF funding is awarded.

Sincerely,
Mark McCollister
The Freshwater Trust



03/25/2025

Amanda Hoffman - Field Manager
Cascades Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97306

Re: FY 2027 Land and Water Conservation Fund

Dear Field Manager Amanda:

The World Salmon Council strongly supports the efforts of the Bureau of Land Management and Western Rivers Conservancy to acquire the 283-acre Sixes Creek property in Clackamas County, OR. This tract of undeveloped forestland borders the Salmon Huckleberry Wilderness to the south and the Salmon Wild and Scenic River corridor to the north. Protection will ensure that habitat within the Sixes Creek watershed, a pristine tributary to the Salmon River, remains intact for the benefit of fish, wildlife and people.

The property will be managed as part of the Wildwood Recreation Site and Cascade Streamwatch following conveyance to the BLM. The World Salmon Council regularly takes advantage of the world-class educational opportunities and facilities found at Wildwood. Each Fall, we bring local students to the site for an immersive field trip centered around salmon. Through experiential learning, including the opportunity to see actively spawning fish, students are taught about their life cycle and ecological importance.

Sixes Creek supplies cold, clean water and documented spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and steelhead migrating up the Salmon River. Protecting Sixes Creek will encourage salmon to return annually to this spawning site thus providing further opportunities for the World Salmon Council to educate local students. It is imperative that younger generations are exposed to the iconic species of the region. The protections gained through this proposal will compliment the already outstanding Wildwood Recreation Site in accomplishing this mission.

We are enthusiastic about supporting this significant conservation project within the Salmon River basin and hope that LWCF funding will be granted for the acquisition of the Sixes Creek property.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Makayla Simmer".

Makayla Simmer

Executive Director

makayla.simmer@worldsalmon.org

HEADQUARTERS
850 OFFICERS' ROW
VANCOUVER, WA 98661



CONTACT
TEL: 360.696.0131

February 28, 2025

Amanda Hoffman - Field Manager
Cascades Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97306

Re: FY 2027 Land and Water Conservation Fund Support for Sixes Creek Project

Dear Ms. Hoffman,

Columbia Land Trust strongly supports the efforts of the Bureau of Land Management and Western Rivers Conservancy to acquire the 283-acre Sixes Creek property in Clackamas County, OR. This tract of undeveloped forestland borders the Salmon Huckleberry Wilderness and the Salmon Wild and Scenic River corridor. It is also proximal to riparian land conserved by the Land Trust along the Sandy River. Protection will ensure that habitat within the Sixes Creek watershed, a pristine tributary to the Salmon River, remains intact for the benefit of fish, wildlife, and people.

Columbia Land Trust works to conserve the vital lands, water, and wildlife in the region and the Sixes Creek project accomplishes this goal in a highly strategic location. This stream provides documented spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and steelhead whose numbers have increased in the area over the past decade. Recent restoration efforts by the BLM at the mouth of Sixes Creek have improved the in-stream habitat quality and will complement the protections gained through this proposal.

The property will be managed as part of the Wildwood Recreation Site and Cascade Streamwatch following conveyance to the BLM. As a world-class environmental education experience, Wildwood receives around 80,000 visitors per year, many of whom day-hike through the Sixes Creek wetland area or on the adjacent Boulder Ridge Trail. This project would provide future opportunities to expand recreation access and maintain wilderness like characteristics of this popular access point.

We are enthusiastic about supporting this significant conservation project and hope that LWCF funding will be granted for the acquisition of the Sixes Creek property. The project advances important conservation work and leverages the investments in the basin by many partners, including Columbia Land Trust.

Sincerely,

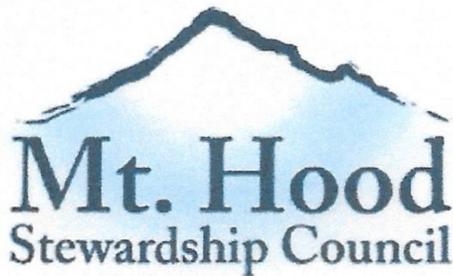


Meg Rutledge
Executive Director

LAND TRUST ALLIANCE ACCREDITED | OFFICES IN ASTORIA AND WHITE SALMON

COLUMBIALANDTRUST.ORG | CONNECT@COLUMBIALANDTRUST.ORG
FACEBOOK • INSTAGRAM: @COLUMBIALANDTRUST | TWITTER: @COLUMBIANATURE

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER



*Preserving the natural beauty and integrity of the mountain community through
the protection and restoration of its forests, rivers and wildlife.*

February 19th, 2025

Amanda Hoffman - Field Manager
Cascades Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97306

Re: FY 2027 Land and Water Conservation Fund

Dear Amanda:

The Mt. Hood Stewardship Council supports the efforts of the Bureau of Land Management and Western Rivers Conservancy to acquire the 283-acre Sixes Creek property in Clackamas County, OR. This tract of undeveloped forestland borders the Salmon Huckleberry Wilderness to the south and the Salmon Wild and Scenic River corridor to the north. Protection will ensure that habitat within the Sixes Creek watershed, a pristine tributary to the Salmon River, remains intact for the benefit of fish, wildlife and people.

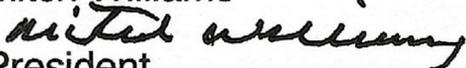
Sixes Creek flows for nearly one mile through the property, quickly losing elevation before joining the Salmon River at the Wildwood Recreation Site. This stream provides documented spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and steelhead whose numbers have seen dramatic increases in the area over the past decade. Recent restoration efforts by the BLM at the mouth of Sixes Creek have improved the in-stream habitat quality and will complement the protections gained through this proposal.

The property will be managed as part of the Wildwood Recreation Site and Cascade Streamwatch following conveyance to the BLM. Known as a world-class environmental education experience, Wildwood receives around 80,000 visitors per year, many of whom day-hike through the Sixes Creek wetland area or on the Boulder Ridge Trail that runs adjacent to the western boundary of the proposed acquisition.

This project would provide future opportunities to expand recreation access and maintain wilderness like characteristics that make up the viewshed of this popular access point. We are enthusiastic about supporting this significant conservation project within the Salmon River basin and hope that LWCF funding will be granted for the acquisition of the Sixes Creek property.

Sincerely,

Mitch Williams


President

Mt.Hood Stewardship Council



The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon

Natural Resources
Phone (503) 879-2424
1-800 422-0232
Fax (503) 879-5622

47010 SW Hebo Road
Grand Ronde, OR 97347

4/4/2025

Amanda Hoffman - Field Manager
Cascades Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97306

Re: FY 2027 Land and Water Conservation Fund

Dear Field Manager Hoffman:

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Natural Resources Department (NRD) strongly support the efforts of the Bureau of Land Management and Western Rivers Conservancy to acquire the 283-acre Sixes Creek property in Clackamas County, OR. This tract of undeveloped forestland borders the Salmon Huckleberry Wilderness to the south and the Salmon Wild and Scenic River corridor to the north. Protection will ensure that habitat within the Sixes Creek watershed, a pristine tributary to the Salmon River, remains intact for the benefit of fish, wildlife and people.

Sixes Creek flows for nearly one mile through the property, quickly losing elevation before joining the Salmon River. It is one of the most important salmon and steelhead streams in the Sandy basin with one of the highest abundances of spawning coho and year-round juvenile rearing. Its low-gradient habitat and connected floodplain provides outstanding habitat. Restoration efforts have helped to increase salmon and steelhead populations in the Sandy drainage, an encouraging trend given their federally listed status. The protection of spawning and rearing streams, like Sixes Creek, will be especially important in the continued recovery of these fish.

The Sandy River watershed lie within the boundaries of the 1855 Willamette Valley Treaty. These are the homelands to the Chinookan people, which were removed from the area post-treaty to Indian reservation in Grand Ronde, Oregon. The US government ratified seven treaties in Western Oregon between 1853-1855 that extended from the Columbia River to the California border. The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon (the Tribe) includes over 30 tribes and bands from western Oregon, northern California, and southwest Washington. The resources of the Sandy River have strong historical, cultural and traditional connection with the Tribe that continue to present day, maintaining an active traditional connection to the resources and land. Just last week, a large group of tribal members engaged in the smelt fishery on the Sandy River for the benefit of the community.

Protection of the Sixes Creek property has significant value in the conservation of traditional resources. The NRD supports this conservation project within the Sandy River basin and hope that LWCF funding will be granted for the acquisition of the Sixes Creek property.

Sincerely,



4/4/2025

Colby Drake
Natural Resources Department Manager
Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde