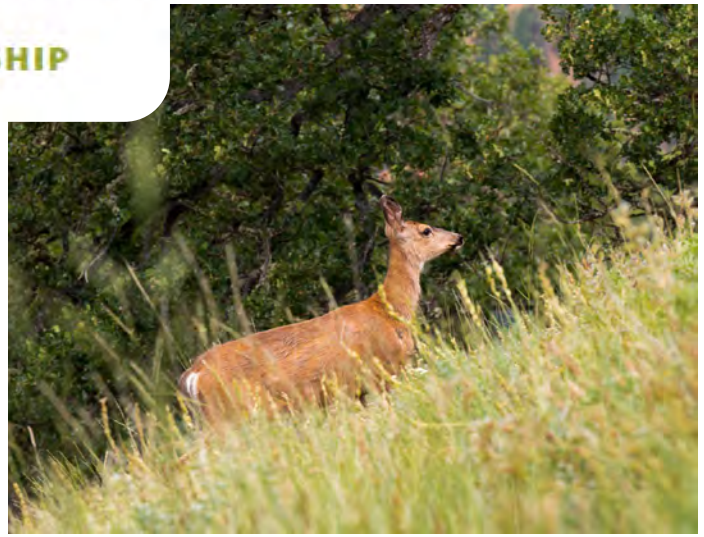
EAST CASCADES OAK PARTNERSHIP



EAST CASCADES OAK PARTNERSHIP

VISION

Oak systems are abundant, diverse, and healthy throughout the region, supporting rich biodiversity and human uses for generations to come.

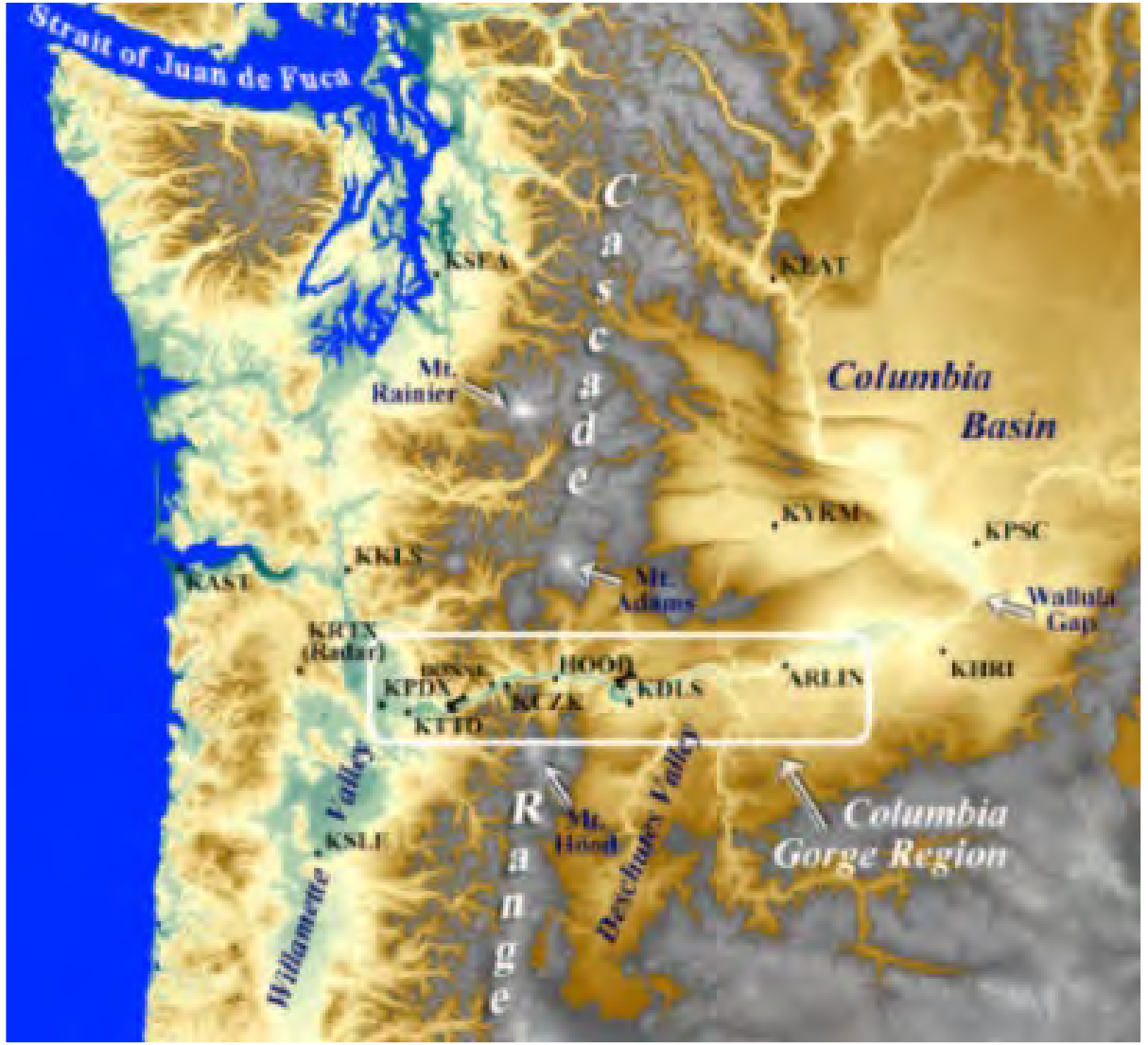
EAST CASCADES OAK PARTNERSHIP

MISSION

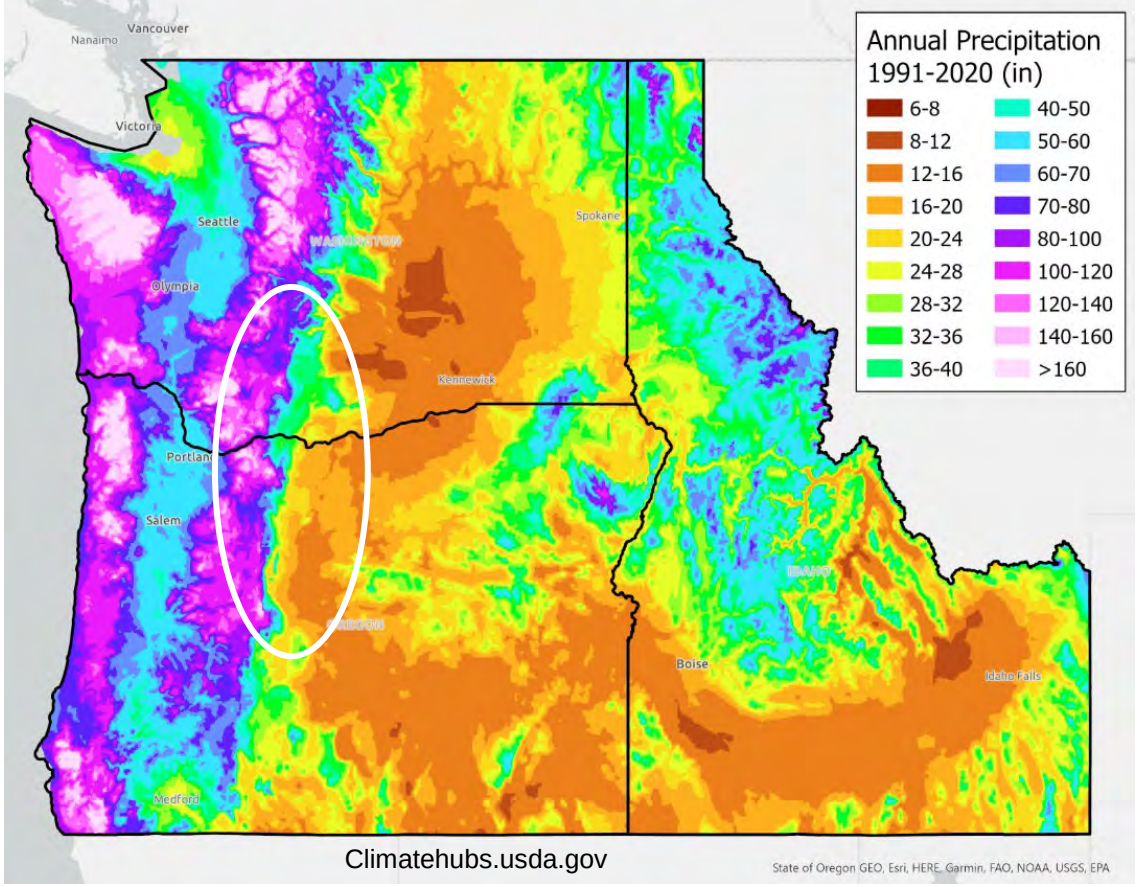
We empower people to make decisions and take actions that improve outcomes for Oregon white oak systems.

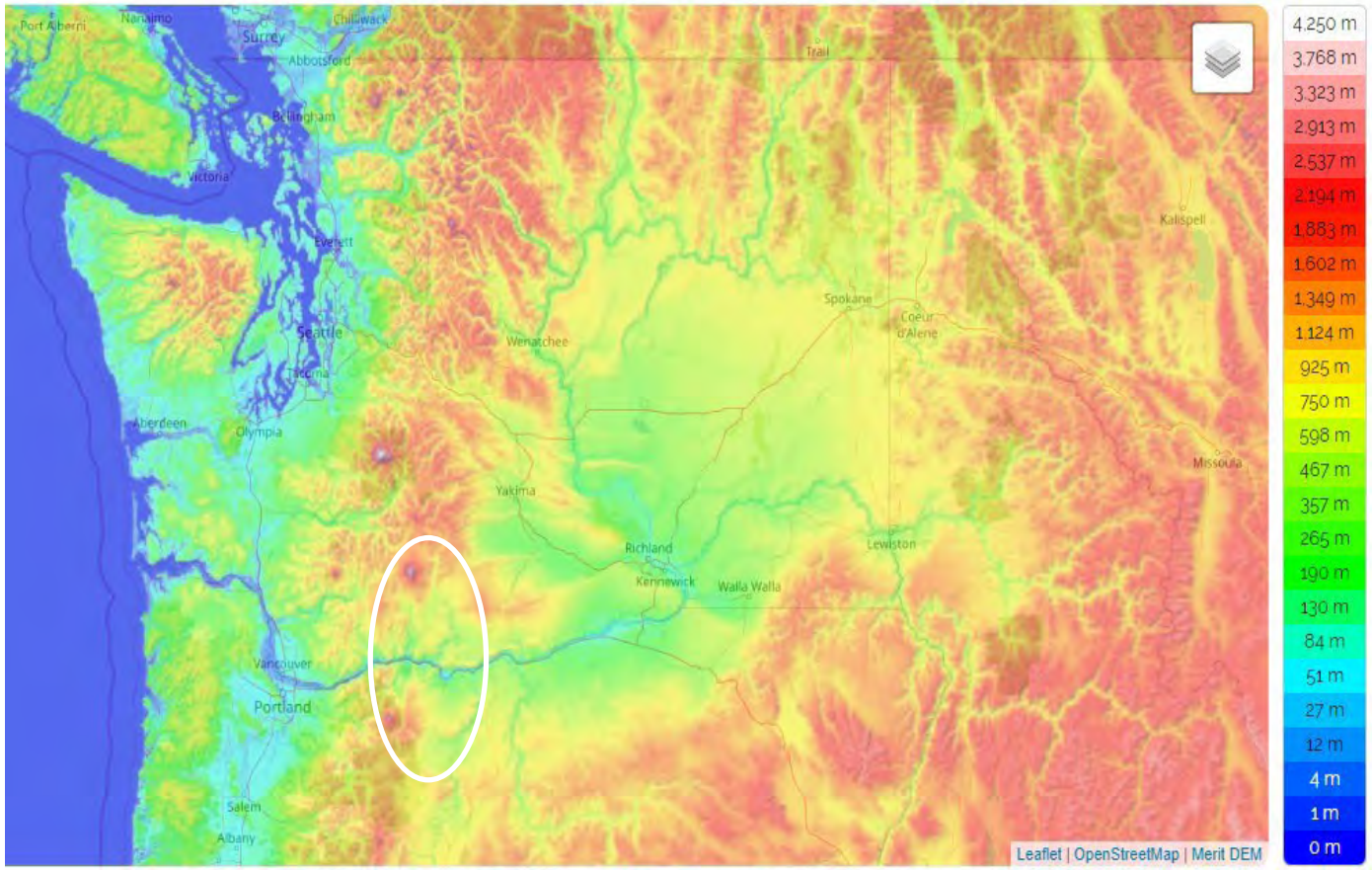
Gorge Gap Flow

Temperate, humid marine air flows through the Columbia River Gorge, allowing Oregon white oak to establish and thrive east of the Cascades.



Map Source: Justin Sharp, Cliff Mass, 2004





Annual precipitation ranges from more than 160” to less than 12”

Elevation ranges from over 11,000 feet at the top of the volcanoes to less than 200 feet on the Columbia River

Over linear distances of only about 40 miles

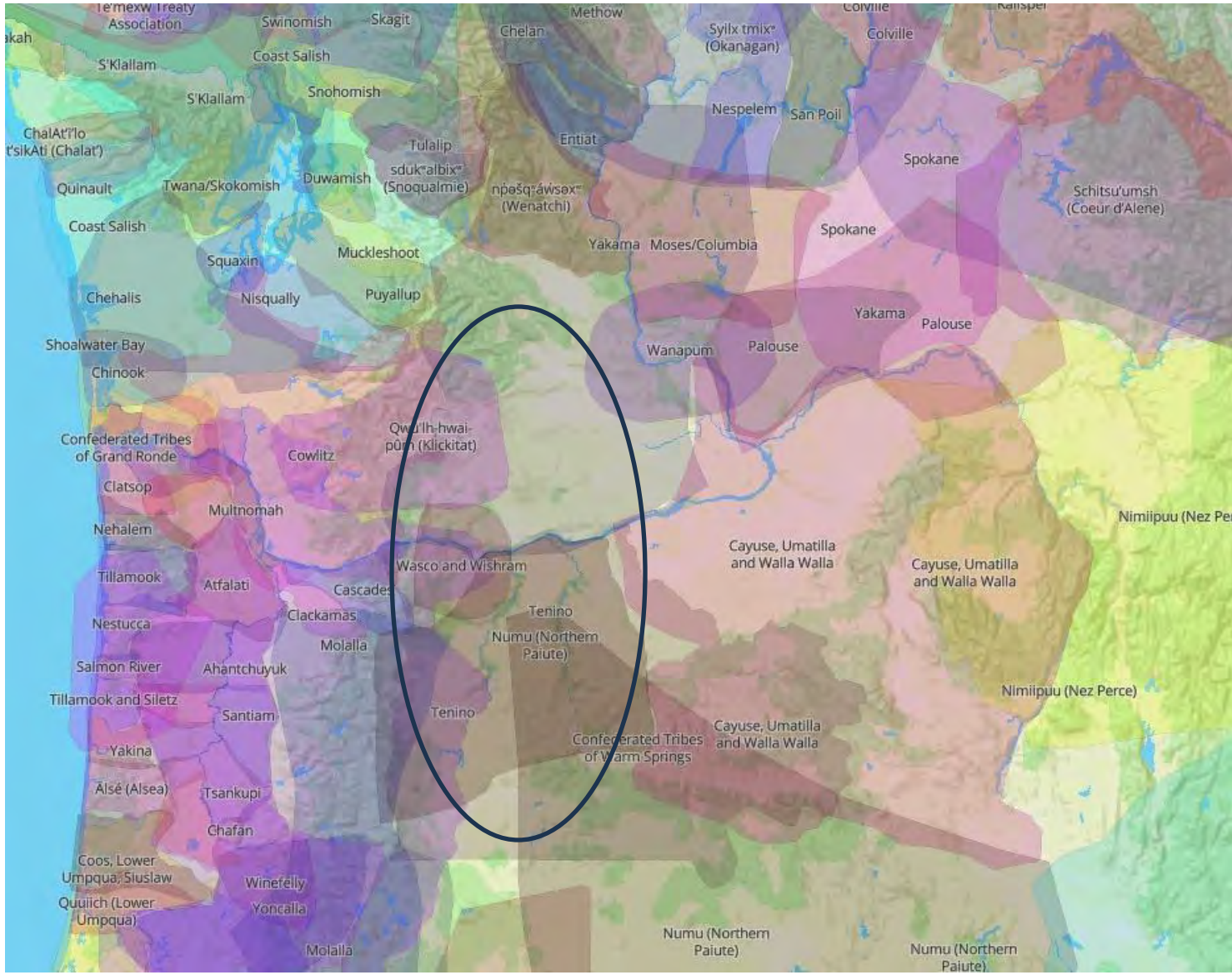
SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL

Seasonal rounds
Cultural ecology – fires: let them burn
Oak utilization:

- oak-associated flora & wildlife
- grinding bowls
- roasted and raw acorns
- wood utilization

LIFEWAYS VS UTILIZATION: EFFECT OF REMOVAL

https://www.oregonhistoryproject.org/articles/historical-records/carved-wood-mortar/#.YMq8Ob5KiUk



Source: https://native-land.ca/
Native Land Digital is a Canadian not-for-profit organization, incorporated in December 2018.


TREAT OR NOT TO TREAT?

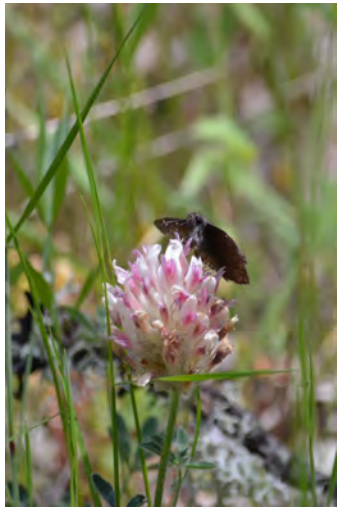



Photo: Brian Chambers


Photo: Chris Rombough


Photo: Chris Rombough


Photo: Chris Rombough

Photo: John Davis

Photo: Partners in Flight


Photo: John Jacobsen


Photo: Roy Anderson


Photo: WDFW


Photo: Gorge Wildlife Cams

Photo: Shaun Wilsey


Photo: Bryan Ribelin

Altered Structure and Species Composition

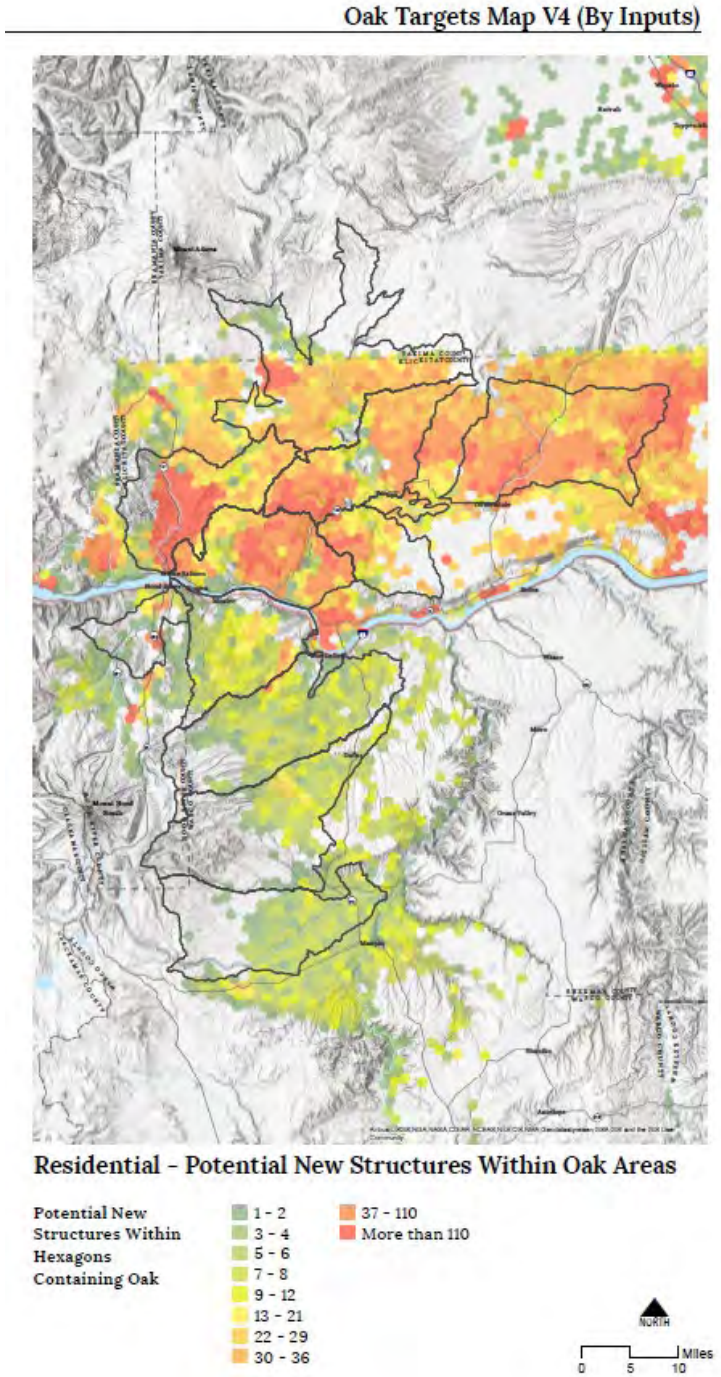
Fire suppression and intensive grazing alter species composition and contribute to conifer encroachment, competition, invasive species, and the accumulation of fuels and biomass, setting the stage for high severity wildfire and loss of biodiversity.

Climate Change

Adds complexity & urgency.

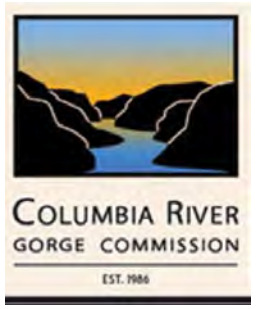
Habitat Conversion and Fragmentation

Rural residential development in the oak landscape fragments a uniquely intact migratory and climate corridor.



Management Uncertainty

Ecological complexity and lack of peer reviewed science or understanding of ITEK creates uncertainty about how to manage changing habitats.



LOMAKATSI
RESTORATION PROJECT

WASHINGTON STATE DEPT OF
NATURAL
RESOURCES

EAST CASCADES OAK PARTNERSHIP

GOALS

THE OAK LANDSCAPE IS INTACT AND CONNECTED

THE OAK LANDSCAPE IS RESILIENT TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISTURBANCE

BIODIVERSITY PERSISTS

RECIPROCITY IS CENTRAL TO HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN THE OAK LANDSCAPE

NEEDS OF UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES ARE RESPONDED TO

STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION RESULTS
Protect and restore priority habitat and bring into ecological stewardship	Priority oak systems are identified, conservation and restoration tools selected & implemented.
Develop adaptive BMPs, informed by ITEK, monitoring, peer-to-peer learning, and research.	Lessons learned are reflected in stewardship approach and published guidance. Effort is focused on key uncertainties.
Remove barriers to prescribed fire and ensure fuels reduction is compatible with habitat	Fire personnel and resources are available to landowners, risk is reduced, and burns are underway on priority lands.
Increase capacity and efficiency of oak system stewardship	Funding for stewardship is increased and spatially prioritized for use. Native plant materials and trained workforce are available.
Build and maintain a culture of learning, reciprocity, and adaptation among partners.	Partners collaborate across boundaries, understand cultural practice unique to each partner, and align around shared values.
Make available credible data to policy decision makers and funders.	Partners responsible for creating and enforcing policy have access to credible data and partner perspective. Outcomes value oak.
Prevent fragmentation and conversion of large working lands	Connecting lands are protected by easement & other financial tools. Landowners have access to incentive funding and guidance.

ECOLOGICAL OUTCOMES

Connectivity is preserved for species migration and adaptation

Oak system diversity persists, climate buffers are protected

Oak systems are healthy and ready to receive fire

Diverse oak associated species persist

Mature oak habitat features are retained and recruited

Human interactions within the oak landscape are reciprocal

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

Crops, forests, and homes are protected from wildfire

Agricultural crops are pollinated and resist pests

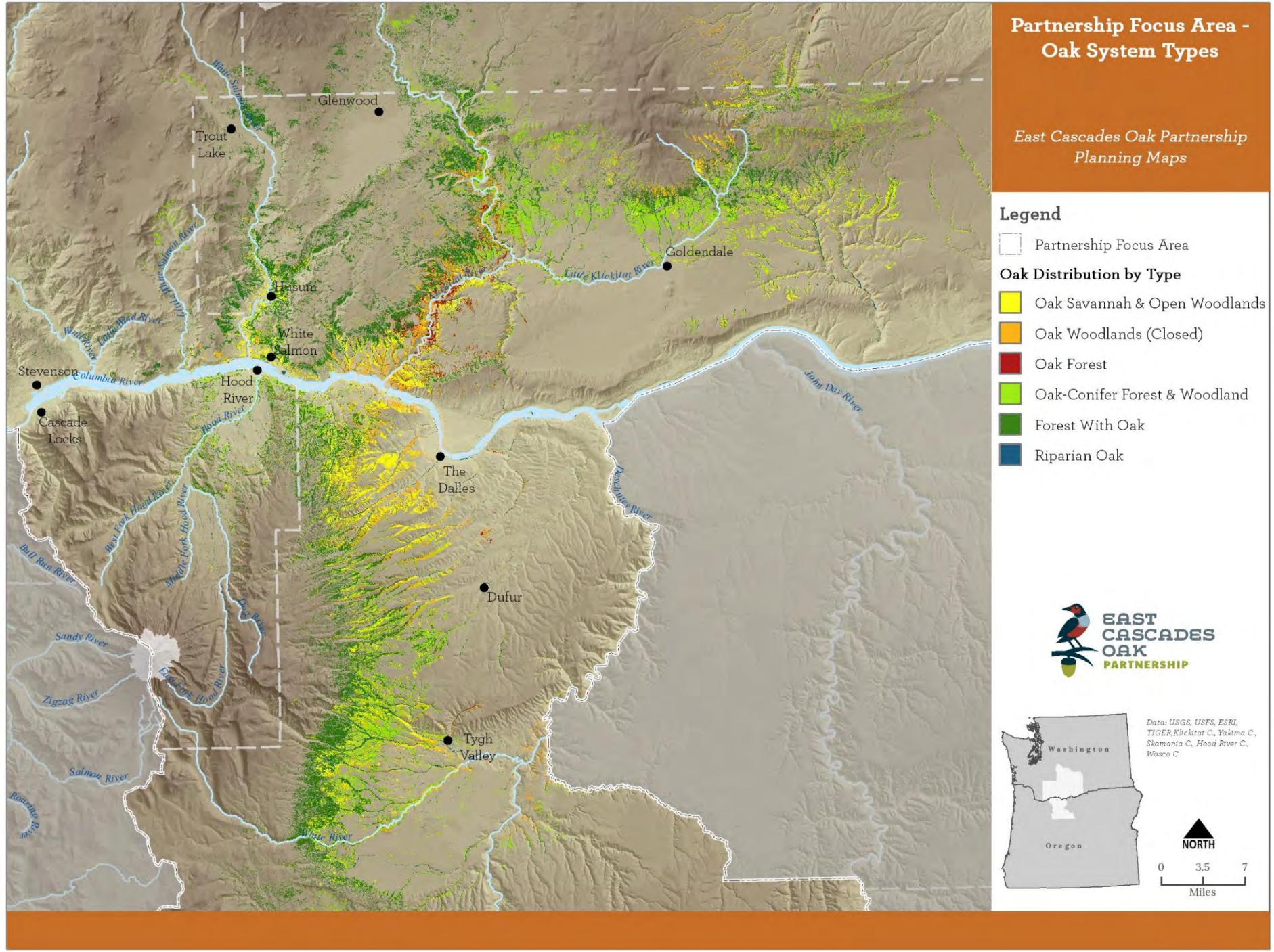
Health & economic impacts from smoke are reduced

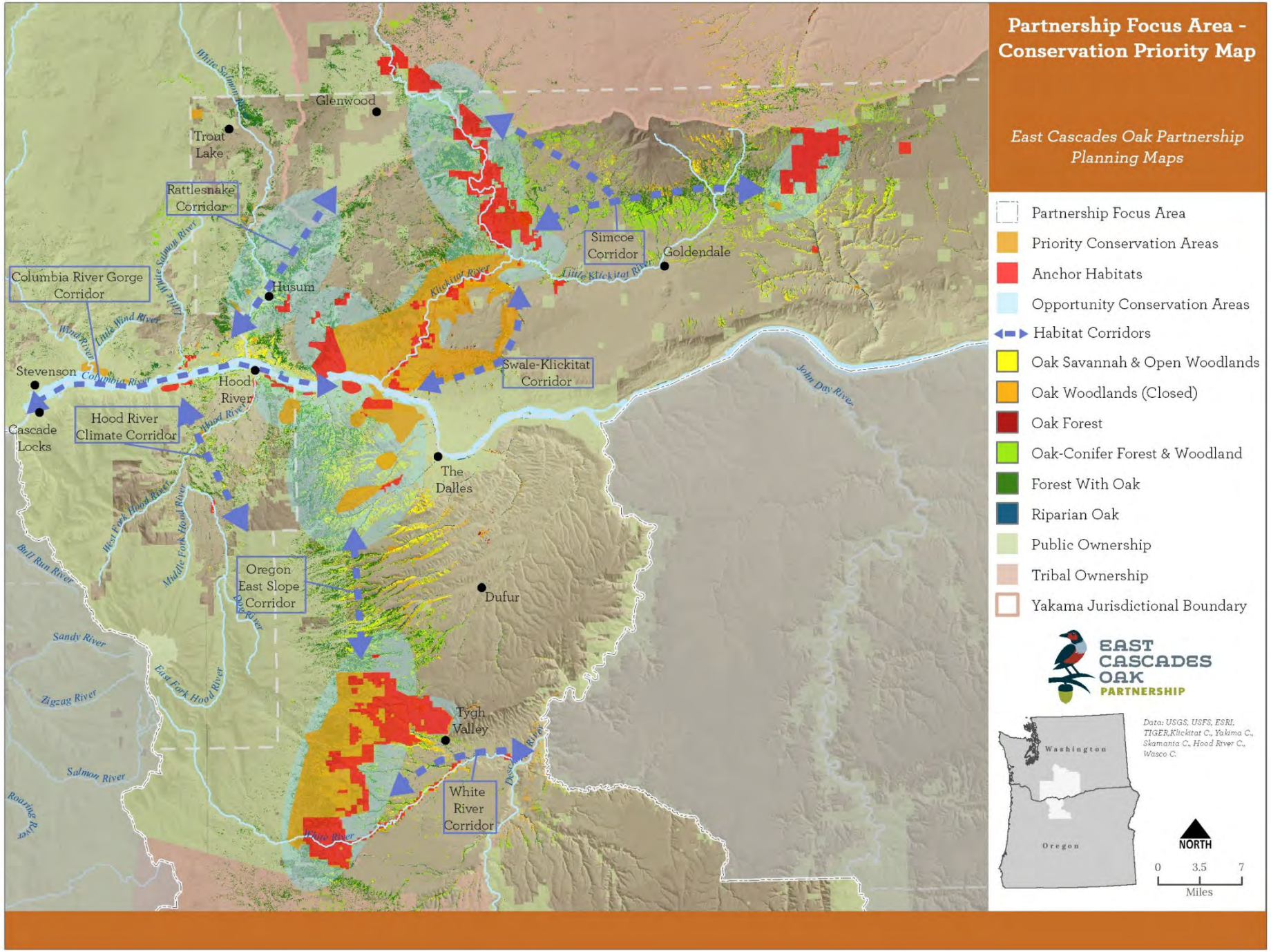
Local economies are supported

Forage for domestic livestock is improved

Safe access to first foods and medicines is widely available

East Cascades Oak Partnership Theory of Change


Glenwood
Trout Lake
Goldendale
Husum
White Salmon
Stevenson
Columbia River
Hood River
Cascade Locks
The Dalles
Dufur
Tygh Valley
John Day River
Deschutes River
Little Klickitat River
Little Wind River
Wind River
White Salmon River
Hood River
West Fork Hood River
Middle Fork Hood River
East Fork Hood River
Dog River
Bull Run River
Sandy River
Zigzag River
Salmon River
White River
Partnership Focus Area - Oak System Types
East Cascades Oak Partnership Planning Maps
Legend
Partnership Focus Area
Oak Distribution by Type
Oak Savannah & Open Woodlands
Oak Woodlands (Closed)
Oak Forest
Oak-Conifer Forest & Woodland
Forest With Oak
Riparian Oak
EAST CASCADES OAK PARTNERSHIP
Washington
Oregon
Data: USGS, USFS, ESRI, TIGER,Klickitat C., Yakima C., Skamania C., Hood River C., Wasco C.
NORTH
0 3.5 7
Miles


Partnership Focus Area - Conservation Priority Map
East Cascades Oak Partnership Planning Maps
Partnership Focus Area
Priority Conservation Areas
Anchor Habitats
Opportunity Conservation Areas
Habitat Corridors
Oak Savannah & Open Woodlands
Oak Woodlands (Closed)
Oak Forest
Oak-Conifer Forest & Woodland
Forest With Oak
Riparian Oak
Public Ownership
Tribal Ownership
Yakama Jurisdictional Boundary
EAST CASCADES OAK PARTNERSHIP
Data: USGS, USFS, ESRI, TIGER,Klickitat C., Yakima C., Skamania C., Hood River C., Wasco C.
Washington
Oregon
NORTH
0 3.5 7
Miles
Glenwood
Trout Lake
Rattlesnake Corridor
Columbia River Gorge Corridor
Husum
Simcoe Corridor
Goldendale
Swale-Klickitat Corridor
Stevenson
Hood River
Hood River Climate Corridor
Cascade Locks
The Dalles
Oregon East Slope Corridor
Dufur
Tygh Valley
White River Corridor
White Salmon River
Little Wind River
Wind River
Columbia River
Klickitat River
Little Klickitat River
Hood River
John Day River
West Fork Hood River
Middle Fork Hood River
Bull Run River
Deep River
Sandy River
Zigzag River
East Fork Hood River
Salmon River
Roaring River
White River
Deschutes River

EAST CASCADES OAK PARTNERSHIP

We do more together!

Partner Networking and Capacity:

Strategic plan
Quarterly meetings and workshops
Grant and funding collaborations
PNW Oak Alliance participation

Engagement:

Community learning projects
Tours and workshops
Website and brochures

Technical Assistance:

Information sharing
Monitoring & assessment tools
Management guidance
Spatial data management and mapping support
Seed source and plant material development

More restoration!
More land protection!
Focuses resources on priorities
Improves management outcomes
Earns funder confidence
Expands public awareness & action

Management Guidance

- Considers ecological variability
- Informed by ITEK, monitoring results, partner observation
- Raises awareness of limiting factors and emerging stressors
- Delivered through tours, events, and the website

EAST CASCADES OAK PARTNERSHIP

MANAGING OAK LANDSCAPES

HOW ECOP SUPPORTS DECISION-MAKERS

GETTING STARTED

Consider your goals

What do you value about land?
What do you need from it? Why?

Consider the land

What is your land capable of providing? How might your choices impact soil and plant health, wildlife, or future resources? What can you do for your land to help it stay healthy?

STEP 1
LEARN YOUR SITE

Getting to know your site is a good place to start. Assess the soil, water, weather, plants, and animals interacting at your site. How has each responded to past management decisions? How might they respond to future decisions or to natural events?

Gain insights and set goals using:

- ECOP's Condition Assessment Tool
- NRCS's Ecological Site Descriptions

SET GOALS

STEP 2
MAKE A PLAN

Identify treatment options that will help you achieve your goals. Absorb lessons learned from your peers and consider guidance provided by people who've tried something similar.

You can pursue this learning through:

- ECOP's meetings and tours
- ECOP's website and mailing list
- ECOP's listserv
- Relationships with Indigenous practitioners
- Published guidance in our online resource library

STEP 3
MAKE IT HAPPEN

Time to get to work! Locate contractors, secure permits and funding, find tools and machinery to implement your plan.

You can find resources for project implementation and funding support:

- ECOP's website
- ECOP's brochures
- ECOP partners who provide incentive funding and technical support

STEP 4
MONITOR OUTCOMES

Let's evaluate the results. Were your intentions realized? What didn't you expect? What improvements can you make?

ECOP partners have developed tools to help you evaluate success:

- Monitoring protocols
- Project tours
- Case studies and guidance on the ECOP website

The process of managing an oak system is adaptive and ongoing.
You can take action, observe outcomes, and try something new—make adjustments, and watch your oak system get healthier as you go.

REPEAT PROCESS

Monitoring Tool Deployment

- Answer questions about management & response
- Track trends
- Inform planning

Special Projects:
Oaks on the trailing edge

- Addresses key uncertainty on a more actionable timeline
- Engages academia & multiple partners
- Provides highly localized climate and soils data

Current Condition Assessment Tool

- Helps the user observe and diagnose stressors and make a strategic management plan
- Provides rapid assessment for tracking change over time

Outreach Tools

- Customizable for partners
- Standardizes messaging
- Builds public awareness
- Connects landowners with resources
- Facilitates implementation of ECOP's strategic plan

Quarterly Meetings, Tours and Workshops

- Wide variety of presentations
- Grass ID workshop
- Seed collection workshop
- Grazing tour – virtual fencing
- Comparing and contrasting the outcomes of prescribed and wildfire
- Latino Conservation Week
- Oak gall ink workshop

Funding Collaborations

OWEB Focused Investment Partnership Grant - $7,153,000

- $14 million in match
- 17,000 acres of restoration
- 15,490 acres of land protected
- Website, assessment tools, monitoring projects
- Invaluable learning and community building

Gorge Implementation

FIP:
Technical Assistance – Cultural Resources
Restoration Grants – planned for 2025

CWDG:
Hood River All Lands Partnership
Wasco County
Klickitat County

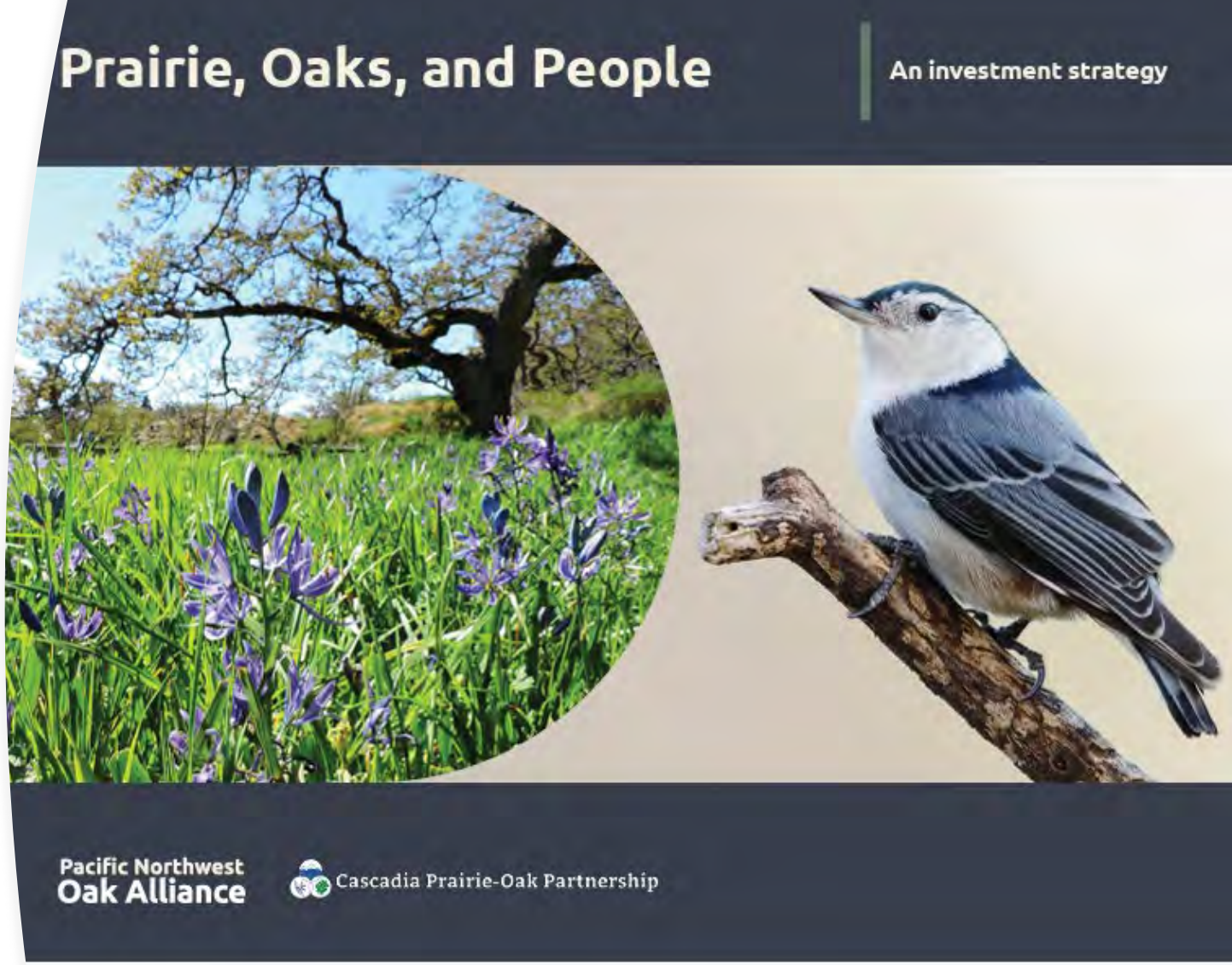
Forest Legacy:
Hood River Mountain
White Salmon River

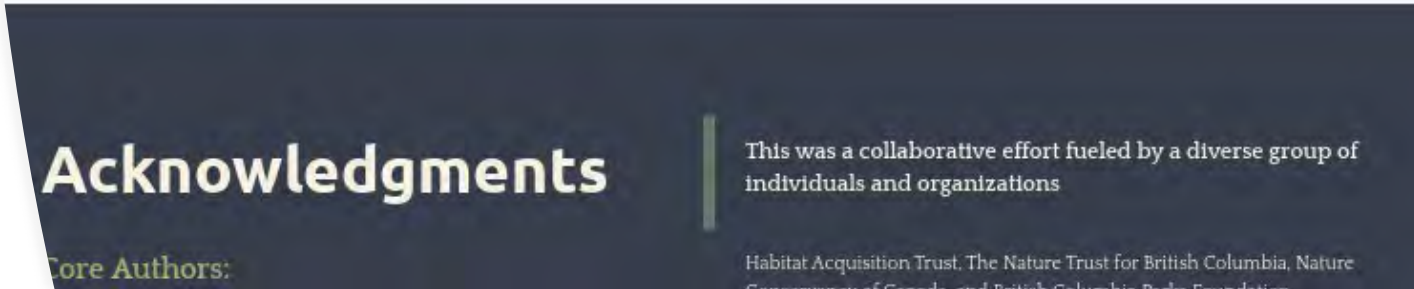
Working at Scale

Pacific Northwest Oak Alliance

- Strategy and support
- Business plan
- Decade of the Oak

https://oakalliance.org/





THANK YOU!

Receive our monthly digital newsletter by emailing:
oaks@columbialandtrust.org

EAST CASCADES OAK PARTNERSHIP

Visit the East Cascades Oak Partnership website coming soon in May 2025!
EastCascadesOakPartnership.org