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January 21, 2026

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360

Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for Lower Columbia River Watershed Council's Engagement Grant Application

Dear OWEB Grant Review Committee:

On behalf of the Columbia County Board of Commissioners, we are pleased to support the Lower Columbia River Watershed Council's (LCRWC) application for an Engagement Grant to advance restoration in the Clatskanie River Basin.

The Clatskanie Basin is an ecologically and economically significant part of Columbia County. It supports critical habitat for salmon and steelhead, provides drinking water and irrigation resources, and underpins forestry and agricultural livelihoods. However, like many watersheds in the Lower Columbia region, it faces challenges including degraded riparian areas, impaired water quality, disconnected floodplains, and fish passage barriers, all of which threaten its ecological health and the community's resilience.

The LCRWC's proposal to engage landowners, agencies, and the broader community in identifying and prioritizing high-value restoration projects is an essential step toward addressing these challenges. Building relationships, fostering trust, and collaboratively planning effective projects will lay the groundwork for meaningful, on-the-ground improvements to watershed health, habitat quality, and community sustainability.

We strongly support this effort and appreciate OWEB's continued investment in grassroots, collaborative restoration that supports fish and wildlife habitat and improves water quality. We urge you to fund this project and help realize the shared vision of a healthy, resilient Clatskanie River Basin.

Sincerely,

Kellie Jo Smith

Casey Garrett

Margaret Magruder