



Partnership for Lake Abert and the Chewaucan

Group Charter

Last Updated: 4/25/24

This Charter is intended to be revisited once per year (or as needed at any time when suggested by the Partnership) in order to evaluate and adapt it based on any changes to conditions, resources, and needs that may affect the scope, objectives, and timeline of the Partnership for Lake Abert and the Chewaucan (“Partnership”) effort. This document is not legally binding or intended to be used in any way beyond informing how this group makes its decisions.

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1.0 Background

Parties who care about Lake Abert and the Chewaucan River watershed agreed to convene a collaborative effort in Spring 2023 to address water management issues in the area. These parties included Tribes, ranchers, environmental groups, natural resource organizations, federal, state, and local government, and others. This Charter describes the purpose and operating principles for the Partnership for Lake Abert and the Chewaucan and its participants.

2.0 Purpose

- 1) Develop a shared understanding of water management in the Chewaucan River watershed.
- 2) Identify broadly supported actions related to the Chewaucan River watershed that will strive to:



- a) meet water needs, including needs for agricultural operations, communities, Lake Abert, wet meadows and fish and wildlife;
- b) address the ecological health of Lake Abert and the entire Chewaucan River watershed and consider social, economic and environmental benefits and impacts; and
- c) address current and future in-stream and out-of-stream water needs.

3.0 Participation Guidelines

3.1 Timeline

It is anticipated that the collaborative work of the Partnership will occur in phases beginning April 2023 and will span through June 2025, possibly beyond.

- Phase I: Joint fact-finding and Charter
- Phase II: Gathering data and planning
- Phase III: Options and actions

3.2 Membership

Consistent with the interests of stakeholders and House Bill 2010, Section 8, the Partnership will represent a balance of interests, including but not limited to interests in in-stream and out-of-stream water. The members of the Partnership are listed below under Section 8.0 Partnership Membership. Organizations and agencies (or interested individuals) are invited to designate a representative and an alternate to participate during meetings. Members can self-elect to be a voting member or a non-voting member.

3.2.1 Participation

One representative or alternate, who has self-selected as voting members (as listed below in Section 8.0 Partner Membership), will participate in decision-making. Both voting and non-voting members are welcome to participate in the meetings and discussions. Members of the general public are welcome to attend and listen in on meetings but there will be no formal public comment period.

3.2.2 New Members

Representative membership will remain open until December 31, 2023 so that everyone who is interested can be involved. After that date, formal membership (for both voting and non-voting members) will be in place as defined by the Section 8.0 Partner Membership, and approval from the partnership will be required for new members going forward. Additional individuals may join the group, subject to the following process. Interested individuals should email the facilitator a request to join with the following information:

- The names of a representative and alternate.
- A statement explaining:
 - 2.0.1. How the requesting individual, organization, or agency represents an interest that is not represented on the Partnership; OR

- 2.0.2. If the interest is already represented at the table, a statement demonstrating that the partnership's membership is unbalanced and should include more perspectives representing the interest of the petitioning individual.
- The partnership voting members will then determine through the consensus-seeking process outlined below if the requesting organization may join. The Planning Team or other partnership members may also decide to proactively invite individuals and organizations to join, which would still involve the new member admission process outlined above.

3.3 Commitments/Norms

Partnership participants are expected to:

- Attend meetings and follow through on promises and commitments;
- Bring concerns related to the Partnership's work from their interest group or organization up for discussion at the earliest point possible in the process;
- Share all relevant information that will assist the Partnership in achieving its goals;
- As appropriate, keep their organizations or interested communities informed of the Partnership's process and substance; and
- Concur in decisions about the collaborative process, including overseeing the implementation of the operating principles.

3.4 Attendance

Attendance is always preferred, but is most critical during decision-making times. In the event of planned absence or an unplanned emergency, the facilitation team will take steps to ensure any missing member is provided an update about the meeting if an alternate is not able to attend and provide that organizational/agency continuity. If a member organization does not attend two of the last three meetings, they may not participate in decision-making again until they have participated in at least two of the prior three meetings. The facilitator is responsible for keeping track of members, approved representatives, and attendance records.

3.5 Withdrawal

Any member may withdraw from the Partnership for Lake Abert and the Chewaucan at any time. Early communication about the reasons for withdrawing, if related to the process, would be expected.

3.6 Onboard New Members

It is expected that in the case of staffing transitions, members are responsible for identifying and onboarding the next person who will participate in the Partnership on behalf of their organization. If there is a new member joining who does not already have organizational representation in the Partnership, the facilitation team will lead the onboarding.

3.7 Use of Alternates

The use of alternates is permitted. If the primary representative for a member is not available to attend a meeting, they may send someone else to attend. The primary representative is responsible for ensuring the alternate is



up-to-date on the work of the group before a meeting so they can fully participate when called on to do so. The alternate will be responsible for briefing the member afterward.

4.0 Organizational Structure

4.1 Facilitation Team

Oregon Consensus and Oregon State University are responsible for providing facilitation for the Partnership, joint fact-finding process, and any subgroup efforts. This also involves developing agendas, meeting summaries, following up on action items, and coordinating meeting logistics.

4.2 Planning Team

This subgroup was established by nomination/self-nomination and consensus agreement and consists of two local agricultural perspectives, two conservation groups, and Tribal representation. This subgroup is responsible for helping the facilitation team draft agendas and providing high-level process advice throughout the duration of the Partnership.

4.3 Use of Subgroups

The Planning Team will be a standing subgroup. The full Partnership may form subgroups or task-specific teams as needed (i.e., Joint Fact-Finding subgroup). As a new subgroup forms, it will include a description of membership, tasks, timeline, and draft products/recommendations expected to bring back to the full Partnership.

4.4 Voting Members

These are stakeholders who hold decision-making authority in the Partnership for Lake Abert and the Chewaucan.

4.5 Non-voting Members

These are stakeholders interested in providing important technical, regulatory, and programmatic context but will self-elect to not participate in decision making.



5.0 Meetings

Meeting notices will be sent to the distribution list managed by the Facilitator. Meetings will be a mix of virtual and in-person. Meetings will not be recorded. A meeting summary will be developed by the Facilitator, then sent to the distribution list and posted on the shared meeting materials folder. The collaborative effort's records such as formal documents, meeting summaries, materials, action item memos, and exhibits are public records.

5.1 Public Participation

Meetings are open to the public but specific public comment will not be scheduled during these meetings. The Partnership may also elect to solicit written comments from the public related to decision-making, prior to a consensus decision.

5.2. External and Media Relations

The Planning Team will be the point of contact with the public and media about meetings, agenda topics, and general progress. All public or media inquiries should be directed to the Facilitator, who will relay any requests to the Planning Team for consideration and response. The Planning Team will also represent the full Partnership to the legislature or other external audiences. For any significant responses from the Planning Team to media or external requests, a draft response should be shared with the full Partnership for others to have the opportunity to weigh in before a final response is provided.

6.0 Decision-Making

Consensus-Seeking: The Charter defines representation (see Section 8.0) for each participating organization who will be able to participate in decisions. Consensus will be sought from these representative voting members. Throughout the process, members may be asked to come to agreement on particular items (e.g. language regarding a particular topic, priorities, etc.); in these cases the Partnership will strive for consensus agreements. Consensus is defined as "all members can live with the decision" (e.g., either a member loves the decision, fully supports it, generally supports with some concerns, or has serious concerns but will not block a consensus decision).

If full consensus is not reached, the Partnership will make time to hear the concerns of the individual(s), discuss, and then engage in decision-making again. If 2 or more of the voting members ask to block a decision, then the decision cannot move forward. A statement of "I have serious concerns but won't block" does not count toward the 2 people. In practice, this means decisions happen only when there is roughly 90% or more supporting. The record of decision and any future communication, representation or use of the decision will include notation that it was not made by full consensus, and why.

If a member, or their alternate, is not available for an important decision (important being defined by the member, the Partnership, or the facilitator), the facilitator will work with the member in advance or after the meeting where the decision is being discussed to include that member's opinion. Members can submit their contributions to a consensus decision by email, phone, or other means before or after a meeting (within a designated window of time communicated by the Facilitation Team, which may vary depending on the decision).



Materials and questions related to decisions will be sent at least one week in advance, except in time-sensitive cases, to provide time for vetting with various constituents, Tribal Councils, etc. There may be times where a decision needs more than one week to discuss.

7.0 Process Ground Rules of Engagement

7.1 Good faith

All members agree to act in good faith in all aspects of this Partnership for Lake Abert and the Chewaucan. As such, members will consider the input and viewpoints of other participants and conduct themselves in a manner that promotes collaboration.

7.2 Rights in other forums

Participation in the collaborative effort does not limit the rights of any member. Members will make a good faith effort to notify the Partnership in advance (via the Facilitation Team) if another action outside the process will be initiated or pursued which could affect the issues, proposals, or agreements being discussed. Notification of relevant outside actions is critical to maintaining transparency and trust in the Partnership for Lake Abert and the Chewaucan.

7.3 Ground rules

- Be open, honest, straightforward.
- Be civil and respectful, avoiding what could be seen as personal attacks.
- Avoid making assumptions or attributing motives, instead asking for clarification.
- Act in good faith--All agree to act in good faith in all aspects of the collaborative effort.
- Individuals should not represent their personal or organization's views as views of the Partnership.
- Allow for a balance of speaking time – respect time limits and facilitator's direction.
- Statements made in open and frank problem-solving conversations should not be used against any other member in future litigation or public relations.
- Be tough on issues and questions, not on people and organizations.

8.0 Partnership Membership

All participants reserve the right to determine whether they would like to participate as a decision-making member or a non-voting participant. This will be documented at the time of Charter approval. The following groups representing a balance of interests are anticipated to represent Partnership membership as follows:



Voting Members

1. Bird Alliance of Oregon (formerly Portland Audubon) (Teresa Wicks)
2. Bureau of Land Management (contact TBD)
3. Chewaucan Watershed Collaborative (Tess Baker)
4. Chewaucan Watershed Collaborative (Jack O'Leary / Marty St. Louis)
5. Chewaucan Watershed Collaborative (Matt Withers / Tom Flynn)
6. Ducks Unlimited (Greg Green / Ashley Tunstall)
7. National Audubon (Emily Hamel)
8. Oregon Agricultural Trust (Marc Hudson)
9. ONDA (Ryan Houston / Mark Salvo)
10. Oregon Lakes Association (Theo Dreher/Ron Larson)
11. Lake County (Barry Shullanberger / Williams)
12. Lake County Resources Initiative (Quincy)
13. Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District (Justin Ferrell)
14. Lake County Umbrella Watershed Council (Autumn Muir / Colleen Withers)
15. WaterWatch of Oregon (Steph Hays / Lisa Brown)

*May participate as voting members and/or in other sovereign engagements mechanisms

- Burns Paiute Tribe
- Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs
- Klamath Tribes
- Fort Bidwell Indian Community

Non-Voting Members

- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (Anton Chiono)
- High Desert Partnership
- Intermountain West Joint Venture (Ed Contreras)
- Joint Water Caucus (Harmony Burright)
- Legislative Commission on Indian Services (Patrick Flanagan)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (Phil Milburn)
- Office of Congressmen Cliff Bentz
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (Cole Hendrickson / Tyler Dearman)
- Oregon Water Resources Department (Matt Anderson)
- Oregon Governor's Office (Courtney Warner Crowell / Zavi Borja)
- Representative Mark Owens
- US Forest Service (Richard Pyzik / Amy Markus)
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Geological Survey (Casie Smith / Scott)



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