Southern Oregon-Northeastern California (SONEC): Oregon Factsheet

What is SONEC?
SONEC is a priority landscape that is continentally significant for migratory birds and is an important agricultural region for livestock production on working lands.

Socioeconomic Values
- SONEC is ranching country and livestock production has sustained rural communities here since the late 1800s.
- Flood-irrigated pastures and wet meadows provide valuable livestock forage through haying and grazing management practices.
- The abundance of wildlife makes the region a preferred destination for outdoor enthusiasts and this supports rural economies.

Ecological Values
- SONEC is one of the most important areas for migratory birds in North America. This region supports up to 70% of the Pacific Flyway’s bird populations that pass through during migration.
- Private and public wetlands here serve as a crucial migration hub between wintering and breeding areas across the hemisphere and regionally important breeding habitat for many priority bird species.
- Flood irrigation on hay pastures and wet meadows mimic historic hydrologic patterns and functions, providing valuable ecological services, such as groundwater recharge and habitat diversity.
- The region has also received national attention due to its value for greater sage-grouse. Wet meadows on public lands provide critical late-summer habitat for these sage-grouse and their broods.
**Conservation Challenges**

- Balancing the migratory bird habitat needs with other resource issues, such as water availability and quality, riparian health, fish passage, non-native carp management, etc.
- Communicating the values of flood-irrigated wet meadows
- Updating aging and inefficient irrigation infrastructure
- Conversion of flood irrigation to other forms of land management
- Establishing conservation funding and capacity

**SONEC Land Ownership**

- Private: 55%
- Federal: 39%
- State: 4%
- Tribal/Other: 2%

**Conservation Solutions**

Robust partnerships exist in the Oregon portion of SONEC and stakeholders are working to overcome conservation bottlenecks by:

- Providing science tools and field capacity
- Supporting OWEB and other local watershed initiatives
- Developing innovative funding mechanisms
- Assistance and incentives for private landowners
- Promoting sustainable land-use practices compatible with wildlife & Ag
- Addressing regulatory issues
- Implementing communication strategies

**Oregon Partners**

PRIVATE and NGO
- Ducks Unlimited
- Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center
- Harney Basin Wetland Initiative
- High Desert Partnership
- Klamath Bird Observatory
- Klamath Lake Land Trust
- National Audubon Society
- Northwest Rangeland Trust
- Oregon Duck Hunters Association
- Oregon Habitat Joint Venture
- Oregon Wildlife
- Point Blue Conservation Science
- Private Landowners
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Wetlands Conservancy

STATE AGENCIES
- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Oregon Department of State Lands
- Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- Oregon State University Extension

EDUCATION & RESEARCH
- Oregon State University
- Portland State University
- University of Montana, Avian Science Center

FEDERAL AGENCIES
- Bureau of Land Management
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- U.S. Geological Survey

LOCAL AGENCIES
- Local Governments
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Watershed Councils

TRIBES
- Burns Paiute Tribe