

# Yamhill Habitat Conservation Plan – Q & A

---

## **What is a Habitat Conservation Plan?**

A Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is a planning document which results from the presence of a plant or animal species which is listed as threatened or endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). An HCP is required as part of an application for an incidental take permit. The HCP describes the anticipated effects of the proposed activity and lists how those effects will be minimized or mitigated.

## **What is a “take”?**

The ESA defines “take” as to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. “Harm” includes significant habitat modification that will impair essential species behavior such as breeding, feeding, or sheltering.

## **Who needs an incidental take permit?**

Anyone whose otherwise lawful activities will result in the “incidental take” of a listed wildlife species. Some examples of agricultural activities include grazing, vineyard development and timber harvest. Activities or actions must have some beneficial effects to the listed species.

## **What species will be part of Yamhill’s HCP?**

The focus will be on the Fender’s blue butterfly (*Icaricia icarioides fenderi*) and its host plant, Kincaid’s lupine (*Lupinus sulphureus ssp. kincaidii*). Other ESA listed prairie species may be included if further information, through survey efforts or research, warrants concern.

## **What type of properties will be a part of the HCP?**

This HCP will focus on private rural lands within Yamhill County. Upland prairie habitats will be the focus. Participation will be voluntary and is meant to not only benefit the species, but also the landowners.

## **Who is funding this HCP?**

The Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) received a grant in August 2010 from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to develop an HCP. The Oregon Division of State Lands (ODSL) will act as the pass through agency for funding.

## **Why should private landowners participate in this?**

There are numerous benefits including;

- Gaining knowledge on species presence or absence.
- Helping aid in the recovery effort and eventual delisting of listed species.
- Securing legal protection while continuing to manage the land for economic prosperity.
- Receiving technical and planning assistance on conservation practices.
- Being eligible to receive USFWS funds for conservation activities and easements where significant species populations are located.

## Yamhill Habitat Conservation Plan – Q & A

---

### **If the lupine and/or butterfly are found on my property, will I be prohibited from using the land?**

Currently there is no federal protection for plants on private lands. However, the lupine is the host plant to butterfly larvae and the butterfly does require protection. Many typical land use activities can benefit the butterfly and lupine. Walking away and doing nothing in an inhabited site is not a benefit to either species. Appropriately timed and selected management activities will provide the greatest benefits.

### **Will the federal government take my land away if they know that the butterfly is present?**

No. The government cannot and is not interested in “taking away” privately owned land. If a significant butterfly population is located and the landowner is interested in a permanent conservation easement on the inhabited parcel, USFWS may consider making an offer to purchase this easement. However, if an easement is purchased, the private landowner still retains ownership.

### **How can I get involved?**

Sign up for a no cost, no obligation property survey which will determine if you have either of these species. Surveys will occur between April and July of 2011 and 2012. Surveys will be conducted by Yamhill SWCD staff and will remain confidential unless the landowner chooses to participate in the HCP or would like to be eligible for USFWS restoration or easement funding.

**Contact Amie Loop-Frison, HCP Project Manager, at (503) 472-1474 ext.113 or [amie.loop-frison@or.nacdnet.net](mailto:amie.loop-frison@or.nacdnet.net) for more information or to be added to the survey list.**