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IN-LIEU FEE MITIGATION – A PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR IMPROVED WETLAND MITIGATION

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Abstract

Quality wetland mitigation is very difficult to create. Good sites are few and far between. Rarely are all the ingredients available to ensure success. Also, the price tag to create or even enhance is quite high. These issues can result in both significant increases in project development time and costs. In searching for ways to have both high value wetland mitigations and get rid of the delays associated with finding and obtaining the necessary land, a unique partnership was formed.

A partnership has been formed between the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Idaho Department of Transportation (ITD). A fund is set up by ITD to pay the Nature Conservancy to restore, create, enhance and preserve aquatic resources for them. This fund is utilized when ITD is required to compensate for impacts to waters of the U.S. and aquatic resources protected by Executive Order 11990.

This partnership is a win-win for all parties involved. ITD can effectively avoid project delays. FHWA and the USACE are confident that the very best mitigation will be provided. Finally, the partnership funds the Nature Conservancy to do a job that it is so eminently qualified to do.

Many other states have similar partnerships. Hopefully, this partnership will become a model for many other states.