

Climate Resolution

OWEB Resolution 01-2022

Background

WHEREAS, Oregon's watersheds will continue to experience the impacts of significant climate changes, including but not limited to increased water temperatures, altered streamflows (e.g., decreased summer flows, earlier timing of flows), increased extreme events (e.g., drought, heat, flooding), and increased wildfires.

WHEREAS, these changes will affect fish and wildlife populations and may lead to changes in species distribution; reduced population sizes; decreased extent, availability, and quality of habitat; displacement of native species by invasive species, and other impacts.

WHEREAS, the impacts of climate change are affecting the quality and quantity of ground and surface water that is critical for Oregon's watersheds, natural resources, people, and communities.

WHEREAS, the impacts of a changing climate may disproportionately affect impacted communities, such as Native American tribes, communities of color, rural communities, coastal communities, lower-income households, and other communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes.

WHEREAS, investments in fish and wildlife habitat and watershed restoration and health can aid in mitigating for and adapting to the impacts of climate change on our state, by sequestering and storing carbon, maintaining and improving water quality and quantity, and building resiliency in fish and wildlife populations, ecosystems, and communities.

WHEREAS, restoration project components, including fuels, equipment, materials, and transportation, among others, will generate greenhouse gas emissions which may require acceptable tradeoffs in order to achieve the desired long-term net gains for communities and ecosystems.

WHEREAS, Oregon state agencies have been directed by Governor Brown (Executive Order 20-04) to address climate change in a comprehensive and urgent manner and, to the full extent allowed by law, shall consider and integrate climate change, climate change impacts, and the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals into their planning, budgeting, investing, and policy making decisions.

Resolution

Be it resolved that the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board will:

- Integrate climate mitigation and adaptation in their budgeting, investing and policy making decisions by:
 - Funding climate-smart adaptation and resilience for Oregon's watersheds, natural resources, people, and communities.

- Funding projects that include meaningful emissions reductions, carbon sequestration, and protection of carbon storage in enhancing watershed health and habitat restoration.
- Valuing project co-benefits and assessing long-term sustainability of projects and acquisitions.
- Learn and apply diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice principles when making funding decisions to address challenges arising from climate change to traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities.
- Engage traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities in processes to craft meaningful solutions that are integrated into funding decisions.

It is further resolved that the above resolutions will be implemented through applicable strategies within OWEB's authorities. Strategies include but are not limited to:

- Rulemaking to include OWEB Climate Lens of climate-focused evaluation criteria
- Developing agency level goals and metrics for climate adaptation and mitigation to track progress
- Identifying opportunities for and collaborating with climate-focused partners and staff in other agencies to increase efficiencies and share expertise
- Supporting and assisting grantees and partners by providing funding for technical resources and guidance to improve understanding of climate considerations and criteria
- Supporting and funding continued learning and development of climate-smart strategies in watershed restoration and habitat improvement
- Employing a continuous improvement approach in the integration of climate considerations in the agency's grant programs

Definitions

Adaptation: the process of modifying and adjusting to a new or changing environment

Climate lens: project ranking criteria designed to determine the relative value of proposals according to how they address climate action

Climate-smart: the intentional consideration of climate change, and application of strategies that improve resilience, increase carbon sequestration, and/or reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Mitigation: a human intervention to reduce emissions or enhance greenhouse gas sequestration and storage

Resilience: the ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disruptions