

# MINUTES

## Oregon Sustainability Board



**Meeting Date:** September 25, 2025

**Time:** 8:30 am to 5:00 pm

**Location:** Zoom and Lincoln City Parks and Recreation

**Attendees:** OSB: Rex Burkholder (Chair), Johanna Anderson, Webly Bowles, Serena Dietrich, Josh Proudfoot, Elin Shepard, Tom Kelly,  
DAS: Steven Markham, Jeni Hall, Zechariah Heck (ODOT)

**Guest Presenters:** DAS: Shannon Ryan (EAM Administrator) and Meliah Masiba (Legislative Coordinator); City of Lincoln City: Alison Robertson, Jeanne Sprauge; Dawn Vilaescusa (Deven Capes Bird Alliance); Mandy Watson (Oregon Shores); Brian Vitulli, Cynda Bruce, Cody Franz, Arla Miller, Charlene Pech, Chris Wheatley; Parks & Recreation Dept., Neil Howard; Dept. of Forestry, Danny Norlander; Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, Ken Loffink; Dept. of Environmental Quality, Stephanie Caldera, Amanda Ingmire, Rita Haberman, Lisa Cox; Cascade Head Biosphere Collaborative Duncan Berry

### Welcome & Board Business

8:30 – 8:45 am

Meeting called to order, agenda discussed, and March Minutes Approved

### Briefing from DAS Sustainability Office

8:45 AM–9:00 AM

Shannon Ryan, Administrator at DAS, provided a detailed update on the recruitment of a new State Sustainability Officer. The position had attracted 35 applicants, with interviews scheduled for early October and a hire expected by November. DAS invited board members to participate in the interview process and help draft questions. The board discussed the importance of consistency in interview panels and the value of diverse perspectives.

Shannon addressed the \$379 million state budget shortfall caused by federal cuts. While DAS is not heavily reliant on the general fund, agencies were advised to limit spending. Sustainability efforts, however, would continue due to DAS's funding structure. Ryan emphasized the importance of strategic hiring and maintaining momentum despite fiscal constraints.

### Legislative Recap

9:00 AM–9:30 AM

Meliah Masiba, DAS Legislative Director, provided a detailed overview of the 2025 legislative session. She noted that the session saw a 30–40% increase in the number of bills introduced, totaling over 3,500, which strained legislative capacity. Key sustainability-related bills that passed included HB 3653, which allows state agencies to enter into energy performance contracts without competitive bidding under certain conditions; HB 3336, which requires electric companies to analyze and propose modifications to increase transmission capacity; and HB 825, which updates reporting requirements for energy programs.

Meliah emphasized the importance of understanding the broader context of legislative decisions and encouraged the board to begin early engagement with legislators for the 2027 session. She also highlighted

the impact of federal policy shifts on state programs and the need for strategic planning to navigate these changes.

Key sustainability-related bills included:

- HB 3653 – Energy performance contracts.
- HB 3336 – Electric transmission system upgrades.
- HB 825 – Energy program reporting.
- HB 2688 – Prevailing wage for off-site construction components.
- Updates to the Bottle Bill and single-use plastic regulations.

## **Lincoln City Sustainability Initiatives**

### **9:30 AM–10:15 AM**

Representatives from Lincoln City, including Allison Robertson, Jeannie Sprague, and Andrea Reiner, presented a comprehensive overview of the city's sustainability efforts. The city has developed a Climate Action Plan in partnership with Dudek Consulting, which includes a greenhouse gas inventory and strategies for both mitigation and adaptation. The plan is currently in draft form, with adoption expected in the spring.

Lincoln City has also been proactive in brownfield redevelopment, supported by a \$500,000 EPA grant. The city completed 19 Phase I and 10 Phase II environmental site assessments and is exploring future cleanup grants. In terms of housing, the city is addressing affordability through partnerships with Innovative Housing, Inc. and the Housing Authority of Lincoln County. These projects include 107 and 44 new units, respectively, and are supported by SDC deferrals and urban renewal loans.

The Parks and Recreation Department highlighted its land conservation efforts, including the preservation of 1/8 of city land as open space and the planting of over 27,000 native plants. The city has implemented erosion abatement, native vegetation restoration, and community education programs. It also collaborates with the Siletz Tribe and organizations like the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership to promote environmental stewardship.

Project recaps:

### **Brownfield Redevelopment**

A \$500,000 EPA grant funded brownfield assessments, with 19 Phase I and 10 Phase II assessments completed. The city is redeveloping city- and urban renewal-owned properties and exploring future cleanup grants.

### **Housing and Infrastructure**

Lincoln City is addressing affordable housing through partnerships with Innovative Housing, Inc. and the Housing Authority of Lincoln County, supported by SDC deferrals and urban renewal loans. The city is also upgrading water and wastewater systems and implementing stormwater management strategies.

### **Parks and Community Engagement**

The Parks and Recreation Department highlighted its land conservation efforts, including the preservation of 1/8 of city land as open space and the planting of over 27,000 native plants. Community engagement is central to their approach, with inclusive planning, heritage tree projects, and partnerships with the Siletz Tribe.

### **Break 10:15 – 10:15 am**

## **Sustainability on the Oregon Coast**

**10:30 AM – 11:30 AM**

Kent Doty and Rich Shelley from the Seven Caves Bird Alliance presented their work in coastal conservation, education, and community science. They highlighted initiatives such as the Osprey Awareness Initiative and efforts to protect rocky habitats along the Oregon coast. The alliance engages residents in stewardship activities and collaborates with other organizations and state agencies to enhance both environmental and economic outcomes.

Mandy Watson from Oregon Shores discussed the organization's history, mission, and current campaigns. These include updating estuary management plans, safeguarding public beaches, and advocating for federal funding for coastal protections. Oregon Shores engages in policy advocacy, education, and outreach to protect coastal ecosystems and communities. Watson emphasized the importance of community involvement and the need for sustainable shoreline management practices.

## **HB 3409 Implementation – Sustainability Building Standards**

**11:30 AM–12:00 PM**

Shannon Ryan returned to discuss Executive Order 25-22, which mandates that all state facilities meet life safety and seismic standards by 2060. The order applies to prisons, offices, and leased spaces, and requires that all new construction meet Level 4 operational seismic standards. If existing buildings cannot be upgraded, agencies must consider relocation or disposal.

DAS is developing guidelines to help agencies plan for these requirements, with support from the Capital Planning Advisory Board. The board discussed the need for scalable tools, integration with Energy Trust's Future Ready Buildings initiative, and the importance of community outreach in planning new facilities. The Oregon Department of Emergency Management will also play a key role in advising on seismic resiliency and on-site power requirements.

**Lunch 12:00-12:30 pm**

## **Coastal Public Transportation – Opportunities and Challenges**

**12:30-1:30 pm**

Representatives from NWOTA presented their model for coordinated rural transit across five counties. The alliance promotes car-free travel to the coast, offers 3- and 7-day visitor passes, and maintains a centralized trip-planning website ([nwconnector.org](http://nwconnector.org)). NWOTA has secured funding for a zero-emission fleet transition plan and is working to improve real-time tracking and online fare purchasing.

The alliance has formed strategic partnerships with ODOT, Amtrak, and local tribes. Despite challenges such as driver shortages and funding limitations, NWOTA has seen increased ridership and is recognized as a model for rural transit collaboration. The board praised the alliance's efforts and discussed the potential for expanding similar models to other regions.

## **Agency Sustainability Plan Overview & Updates**

**1:30-3:00 pm**

### **Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD)**

Neil Howard reported on a major space planning project that reduced headquarters space by 50% and physical files by 40%. The department upgraded to LED lighting and expanded its electric vehicle fleet to eight Ford Lightnings and eight hybrid Mavericks. A new Innovation Project Fund will support staff-led sustainability initiatives.

Highlights:

- Reduced HQ footprint by 50%.
- Upgraded to LED lighting.
- Expanded EV fleet (8 Ford Lightnings, 8 hybrid Mavericks).
- Launched Innovation Project Fund for staff-led sustainability ideas.

**Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF)**

John Tokarczyk and Danny Norlander presented ODF's Vision for Oregon's Forests, which includes goals for resilience, wildfire mitigation, and climate leadership. The department received \$10 million from the National Working Lands Fund for climate-smart forestry and seedling programs. ODF is exploring carbon markets, implementing the Private Forest Accord, and managing a seed orchard for climate-resilient species. Over 40 energy efficiency projects have been completed, though challenges remain due to climate impacts and limited funding.

Highlights:

- Developed **Vision** for Oregon's Forests.
- \$10M from HB 3409 for climate-smart forestry and seedling programs.
- Exploring carbon markets and implementing the Private Forest Accord.
- Completed 40+ energy efficiency projects.
- Challenges: wildfire risk, aging infrastructure, limited funding.

**Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)**

Ken Loffink shared ODFW's Climate and Ocean Change Policy, greenhouse gas inventory, and infrastructure upgrades. The agency is incorporating sustainability into building designs and has reduced paper use by 50% through electronic licensing. Fleet electrification and biodiesel use are also being explored.

Highlights:

- Climate and Ocean Change Policy (2020).
- Carbon Reduction Plan (2022).
- Solar installations, HVAC upgrades, LED retrofits.
- Electrified fleet and reduced paper use via e-licensing.

**Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)**

Stephanie Caldera discussed DEQ's efforts in sustainable procurement, office space optimization, and fleet electrification. The Hillsboro lab's green team was highlighted for its leadership in sustainability. DEQ is aligning operational and programmatic sustainability efforts and seeking to restructure funding to support broader coordination.

Highlights:

- Sustainable procurement and office right-sizing.
- Hybrid/electric fleet expansion.
- Strong green team at Hillsboro lab.

- Pollution prevention programs (OASIS, EcoBiz, Safer Choice).

## **Break 3:00-3:15 pm**

### **DEQ Programmatic Updates: Pollution Prevention Success Stories & Opportunities to Reduce Oregon's Embodied Carbon Emissions**

#### **3:15-4:00 pm**

Amanda Ingmire and Rita Haberman introduced a \$25 million Low-Embodied Carbon Housing Program funded by the EPA. The initiative supports building reuse and space-efficient housing, with technical assistance from the Carbon Leadership Forum. DEQ is also collaborating with the Building Codes Division and the Pacific Coast Collaborative to reduce embodied carbon in construction.

Lisa Cox presented success stories from DEQ's Oregon Applied Sustainability Internship (OASIS), food and beverage outreach, and Safer Choice Assistance Program. These programs have provided technical assistance to over 200 companies and promoted safer chemical use and pollution prevention.

#### Highlights:

##### Built Environment Program

- \$25M Low-Embodied Carbon Housing Program (EPA-funded).
- Supports building reuse and space-efficient housing.
- Partners with Carbon Leadership Forum and Building Codes Division.
- Regional collaboration via Pacific Coast Collaborative.

##### Pollution Prevention Program

- OASIS: Internships for sustainability projects in businesses.
- Food & Beverage Outreach: Technical assistance for small manufacturers.
- Safer Choice: Safer chemical product development.
- EcoBiz: Certifies green small businesses.

### **Presentation on Cascade Head Biosphere Collaborative**

#### **4:00-4:45 pm**

Duncan Berry presented a unique climate action project monitoring thermal effects across four habitats. The project integrates education, climate science, and community engagement, with programs like "Secret Life of Salmon" and "No Child Left Inside." Markham also discussed the Cascade Head Biosphere's efforts to promote sustainable livelihoods, including a green hospitality initiative, art-based outreach, and a Native writers residency.

#### Programs:

- "Secret Life of Salmon" (3rd–4th grade).
- "No Child Left Inside" (K–8 outdoor education).
- Green Hospitality Initiative (UNESCO-certified).
- Art on the Beach, natural history tours, and Skookumawa Native Writers Residency.

**Day 1 Wrap-up**  
**4:45-5:00 pm**

A work session is scheduled for the 9/26/25 to align the board's priorities with upcoming legislative and budget cycles. The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment to advancing sustainability across Oregon's public agencies and communities.

The board emphasized the importance of cross-agency collaboration, early legislative engagement, and strategic planning. Members expressed interest in supporting wildfire mitigation, resilient infrastructure, and sustainable development. A work session was scheduled for the following day to align the board's priorities with upcoming legislative and budget cycles. The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment to advancing sustainability across Oregon's public agencies and communities.

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