



# Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

---

*2018-2019 Sustainability Plan Update*

## Mission, Overview & Strategic Plan

### External Impact

**Mission:** To help protect and restore healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies.

**Vision:** Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) is a leader in the conservation of Oregon's natural resources and enjoys strong public support for its contributions to community-based conservation, watershed health, and local economies.

**Organization:** The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board is a state agency that provides grants to help Oregonians take care of local streams, rivers, wetlands, and natural areas. Community members and landowners use scientific criteria to decide jointly what needs to be done to conserve and improve rivers and natural habitat in the places where they live. OWEB grants are funded from the Oregon Lottery, federal dollars, and salmon license plate revenue. The agency is led by an 18-member citizen board drawn from the public at large, tribes, and federal and state natural resource agency boards and commissions.

---

ORS184.421 definition of sustainability: “ ‘Sustainability’ means using, developing and protecting resources in a manner that enables people to meet current needs and provides that future generations can also meet future needs, from the joint perspective of environmental, economic and community objectives.”

---

### OWEB Sustainability Model

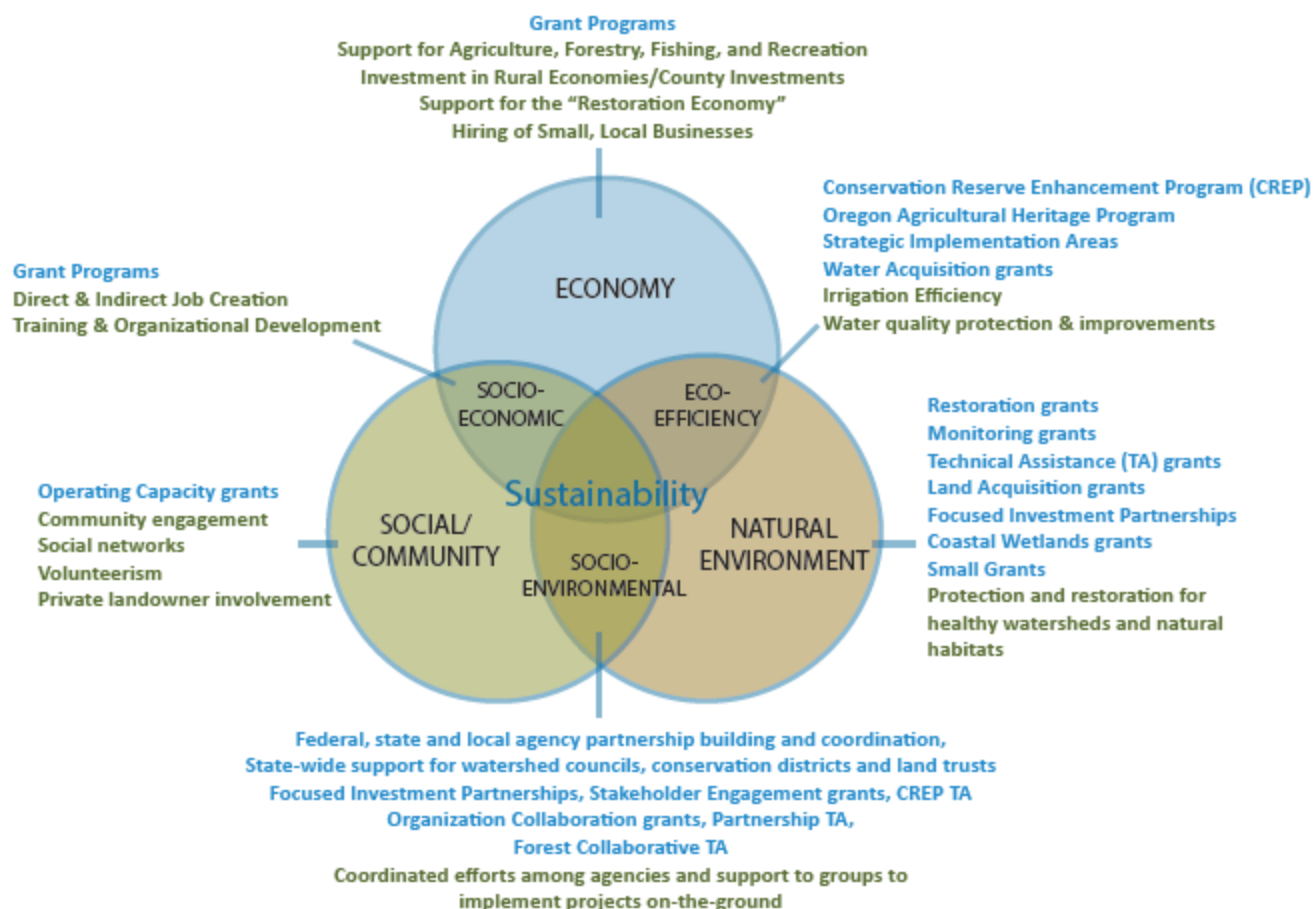
The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board mission and vision is firmly grounded in the three sustainability tenets of environment, economy and community. The inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact of the organization support a more sustainable Oregon, see Figure 1.

OWEB's grant programs directly support the protection and restoration of healthy watersheds and natural habitats. OWEB grants provide funding to local, non-profit organizations for restoration, technical assistance, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring projects, among others that improve watershed function and target species-at-risk. Acquisition grants directly protect high-quality natural areas and conserve water in streams.

Other grant programs invest in the social and human capital required for restoration to be effective. Operating capacity grants directly support watershed council and soil and water conservation districts to enable community engagement, build local social networks and provide volunteer opportunities. They also create a critical, local connection to private landowners to engage in conservation and restoration projects on their land.

OWEB helps improve the ecological and economic health of Oregon’s communities through its investment in watershed restoration. A research project from the University of Oregon Ecosystem Workforce Program showed that every \$1 million of public investment in clean water and habitat restoration creates about 15-24 jobs. Organizations receiving OWEB grants typically hire small local businesses (by the Small Business Association definition), so 90% of funds stay in Oregon. OWEB investments have supported nearly 230 jobs per year. This would be nearly 7 jobs or 1-2 small businesses per county per year, if investments were distributed evenly across the state.

**Figure 1. OWEB Sustainability Model: Inputs, Outcomes & Impact**



## Supporting State Priorities & Strategic Collaboration

OWEB leadership plays a key role in multiple initiatives with a statewide footprint. These partnerships impact policy and help coordinate and plan for strategic investments to address critical environmental issues.

**Oregon 100-Year Water Vision** – Meta Loftsgaarden, OWEBs Executive Director, is leading the 100-Year Water Vision for the Governor’s Office. The project aims to address changes in climate and population dynamics that require renewed investment in natural and built water infrastructure. Strategic investments will result in resilient natural and built water systems across the state to support safe and healthy communities, vibrant local economies, and a healthy environment. The initiative is working with a broad coalition on a multi-year effort to assess the current condition of green and built water systems to identify the nature and extent of the problem and need. Initial activities include visiting communities across the state for a series of meetings to gather feedback and learn about each region’s water challenges.

**Water Core Team** – Renee Davis, OWEB’s Deputy Director, currently co-chairs the Water Core Team. The Governor’s Natural Resource Office convened the Water Core Team in spring of 2018. It is comprised of representatives from various natural resource agencies, Regional Solutions, Business Oregon and the Oregon Health Authority. It serves a need to organize around efficiency, collaboration and communication across state agencies, with a focus on improved inter-agency coordination of work programs and state resources related to water. A direct outcome of this team has been technical support for the development of the Governor’s 100-year vision.

**Place-based Integrated Water Resources Planning** – The Water Resources Department leads this effort to undertake a collaborative, integrated approach to water planning, with OWEB staff participating in interagency meetings and the place-based learning partnership with the Ford Family Foundation. This involvement by OWEB and other agencies, along with local partners, helps to support ongoing community building and peer-to-peer learning between places.

**Tide Gate Partnership** – The Oregon Tidegate and Infrastructure Discussion supports resilient coastal communities by reducing risks from coastal hazards, protecting landscapes that support local economies, and enhancing ecological function of estuarine resources for fish and wildlife. Discussion participants include landowners, state and federal agencies, agricultural organizations, counties, and conservation organizations. OWEB staff helps lead the Tide Gate Partnership, supporting inclusive discussions and outreach. Current areas of information gathering and development include creating a tide gate inventory, developing a decision support tool, engineering-related issues, and analyzing opportunities to streamline regulatory processes.

**Responding to a Changing Climate** – OWEB staff contributes to the development of the Governor’s Climate Adaptation Framework. OWEB’s grant programs intersect with climate change on two levels: 1) Restoration and acquisition projects increase carbon storage on a landscape-level and mitigation capacity, and 2) OWEB-funded projects foster resiliency by supporting the ability of an ecosystem to maintain its structure, function and processes. Whole landscapes are more resilient and adaptive

through strategic restoration investments. OWEB also is playing an important role in both natural and working lands discussions associated with cap-and-invest efforts, and the interagency update to Oregon’s climate adaptation framework.

**Conservation Effectiveness Partnership** – OWEB staff lead the Conservation Effectiveness Partnership. This partnership convenes the Oregon Departments of Agriculture, Environmental Quality, and Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and OWEB, with the goal of describing the outcomes from agencies’ investments in projects to improve water quality. Member agencies work with local partners on watershed case studies, and agencies work together to improve inter-agency reporting efforts.

**STREAM Team** – OWEB staff lead the STREAM Team. This group facilitates collaborative decision making to support a healthy environment through coordinated planning, monitoring, and communication of water-related data and information among Oregon’s state natural resource agencies. Accomplishments include regional water monitoring summits, an inter-agency water-related monitoring calendar and map, and an inter-agency Memorandum of Understanding focused on monitoring to address harmful algal blooms.

## Measuring Our Mission

OWEB’s Executive Team has adopted a Continuous Improvement (CI) approach to create adaptive, human-centered, and high performance service excellence. Process improvements are developed and tested to achieve the following target: “People submit high quality applications to get money for measurable watershed improvements....OWEB consistently and rigorously reviews and evaluates each application/project.” To effectively identify and prioritize agency processes needing improvements, OWEB implements techniques that facilitate learning and improvement based on measured results.

OWEB’s CI program is called **Measuring Our Mission** and has two distinct components (see Figure 2). The first, **Measuring Mission Progress**, assesses how OWEB’s business processes are aligned in support of OWEB’s mission. Action measures will monitor process inputs and outputs to support an ongoing, methodical approach to improving process through evidence-based decision making, continuous organizational learning, and focus on aligning community needs with agency process results.

Paired with this process is the agency’s approach to measuring the impacts of our investments – **Measuring Mission Impact**. Results measures will assess outcomes and impact (i.e. what difference is made from OWEB investment) utilizing variety of tools such as effectiveness monitoring, accomplishments reporting, implementation monitoring, strategic plan reporting and other approaches that measure accomplishments from OWEB investments. Together, **Measuring Mission Progress** and **Measuring Mission Impact** will provide a complete assessment of agency progress towards meeting legislative, stakeholder, board, and staff expectations in carrying out OWEB’s mission.

**Figure 2. Measuring our Mission Infographic**



### 2018 Strategic Plan

In June 2018, the OWEB Board formally adopted a new 10-year strategic plan. The planning process included broad stakeholder engagement with Board members, regional listening sessions open to the public, and an external advisory team to offer perspective on strategy. Internal staff managed process, logistics, participation, and review collaboratively with facilitators.

In addition to outlining the strategic direction of the organization, the plan defines the agency’s approach to its work by articulating values, impact, ideas, and commitments. To ensure accountability, staff provides the OWEB Board with quarterly updates on actions taken to implement the strategic plan. A summary of key highlights and examples of progress in the first-year of implementation is in Table 1.

## The Approach We Take

### Involving stakeholders broadly and in partnership

- Involving community members with diverse interests at all levels
- Collaborating and communicating to promote community ownership of watershed health
- Building and mobilizing partnerships

### Using best available science supported by local knowledge

- Addressing root sources and causes with efficient, science-driven approaches
- Incorporating local knowledge, experience and culture
- Catalyzing local energy and investment

### Investing with long-term outcomes in mind

- Taking the long view on projects and interventions
- Maintaining progress in the future

### Demonstrating impact through meaningful monitoring and evaluation

- Measuring and communicating watershed change and community impact
- Increasing appropriate accountability
- Incorporating adaptive management, changing course when something isn't working

### Reaching and involving underrepresented populations

- Including voices and perspectives that are not typically at the table
- Ensuring information is available to diverse audiences

**Table 1. Strategic Plan Progress: Annual Summary of Highlights, July 2018-19**

Strategic Plan (SP) Priorities	SP 2018-19 Inputs	Progressing Towards
<b>Priority 1: Broad awareness of the relationship between people and watersheds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership with Oregon Lottery on a state-wide awareness campaign featuring restoration work of six OWEB partners through video, TV and billboards.</li> <li>• Outreach for OWEB's 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday, unveiling a new logo and events at the Capitol and around the state.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output:</b> Oregon Lottery media campaigns have new stories every year of watershed work and progress.</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> More Oregonians are aware of the impacts of their investment in their watershed.</p>
<b>Priority 2: Leaders at all levels of watershed work reflect the diversity of Oregonians</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency staff completed 194 hours of training in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).</li> <li>• Formed a DEI cross-section team to plan, listen, learn and gather information internally and externally and provide training opportunities for staff.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output:</b> OWEB Board and staff have been trained in diversity, equity and inclusion.</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> New and varied populations are engaged in watershed restoration.</p>

SP Priorities	SP 2018-19 Inputs	Progressing Towards
<p><b>Priority 3: Community capacity and strategic partnerships achieve healthy watersheds</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiated capacity evaluation project to develop a framework to complete a retrospective evaluation of council and district Operating Capacity investments.</li> <li>As a result of OWEB's continuous learning approach to the FIP program, OWEB is now offering partnership TA grant offering.</li> <li>Continue to engage in agency partnerships to fund capacity and collaborative natural resource management.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output:</b> Data exists to better understand the impacts of OWEB's capacity investments</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> OWEB can clearly tell the story of the value of capacity funds.</p>
<p><b>Priority 4: Watershed organizations have access to a diverse and stable funding portfolio</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinated grant-making with NRCS, ODOT, USFWS and others to leverage investments.</li> <li>Partnered to develop state's 100-Year Water Vision.</li> <li>Engaged through cap and invest process to develop an incentives framework for natural and working lands.</li> <li>Analysis of the natural resource funding landscape by Oregon Fellow.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output:</b> OWEB has a clear understanding of its role in coordinating funding.</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Agencies have a shared vision about how to invest strategically in restoration.</p>
<p><b>Priority 5: The value of working lands is fully integrated into watershed health</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic Implementation Area technical assistance grants engaged private landowners in streamside management for water quality in 11 watersheds.</li> <li>Supported the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP), including commission establishment and rulemaking.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output:</b> Local organizations have the technical assistance to address gaps in implementing working land conservation projects.</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Fully functioning working landscapes remain resilient into the future.</p>
<p><b>Priority 6: Coordinated monitoring and shared learning to advance watershed restoration effectiveness</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funded seven <i>Telling the Restoration Story</i> grantees to share quantified success.</li> <li>Supported the Conservation Effectiveness Partnership to describe benefits of cumulative conservation actions among agency partners.</li> <li>Advanced progress monitoring frameworks and strategic monitoring by Implementation FIPs to measure long-term outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output:</b> Information is readily available to wide audiences to incorporate into adaptive management and strategic planning at the local level.</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Partners are using results-based restoration 'stories' to share conservation successes and lessons learned.</p>
<p><b>Priority 7: Bold and innovative actions to achieve health in Oregon's watersheds</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaged Regional Review Teams on the importance of innovation and experimentation.</li> <li>Approved five new Implementation FIP partnerships for collaborative and strategic long-term conservation.</li> <li>Incorporated a shared risk approach in draft land acquisition rules.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output:</b> OWEB works with partners to share results of landscape-scale restoration with broader conservation community.</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Conservation communities value an experimental approach to learning and innovation.</p>

## Current Practices, Activities & Policies

### Internal Impact

OWEB employs multiple avenues to minimize waste and increase efficiency. For example, OWEB’s Administrative Services Group plays a lead role in managing day-to-day internal operations, including procurement and how meetings are managed and conducted, consistently applying a sustainability lens. The Safety Wellness Action Team (SWAT Team) is the lead committee on employee engagement and awareness. They regularly organize activities around wellness to support a healthy, balanced, and productive working environment. Table 2 outlines OWEB’s current practices.

“Everything we do as an administrative team has an eye towards environmental consciousness.”

Katy Gunville, Manager, OWEB Administrative Services Group

**Table 2. 2018-19 Sustainability Practices**

Topic	Practice
<b>POLICY &amp; STRATEGY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SWAT Team engages and educates employees on sustainability practices</li> <li>• Administrative Services establishes systems and practices to reduce waste within the office environment</li> <li>• Solutions Forum cross-section team defines problems, identifies strategies and monitors implementation related to grant-making processes to foster efficiency and a high-level of customer service</li> <li>• Digital signature policy created so OWEB grant administration transactions can be executed without paper</li> </ul>
<b>WATER USE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installation of freshwater bottle filler on 1st floor discourages use of water bottles</li> <li>• "Water Club" offers fresh filtered cold/hot water options instead of bottled water</li> <li>• Extra water from meetings is used to water indoor plants</li> </ul>
<b>PROCUREMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic letterhead is used, agency no longer purchases stamped envelopes or printed letterhead</li> <li>• Mailings have been minimized to field offices, most communication is done electronically; documents are scanned and emailed</li> <li>• OWEB follows DAS pricing lists and contracting guidelines when considering purchase of sustainable products and services</li> <li>• Use eco-friendly paper that is 30% recycled content</li> <li>• Banker boxes are reused and all cardboard boxes are recycled or given to staff to use</li> <li>• Binders and tabs from board meeting are re-used until replacements are needed</li> </ul>



<b>WASTE REDUCTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Savings in paper due to transition to online grant application system</li> <li>• In-house printing of business cards reduces cost and waste</li> <li>• Staff make double-sided copies</li> <li>• A small garbage can and large recycling container is at every desk</li> <li>• Communal areas include a recycling bin option</li> <li>• Coffee mugs are available for employee use</li> <li>• Cans and bottles are collected for deposit and money donated to the food drive</li> <li>• Printer toners are recycled where possible and cost-effective</li> <li>• Changed from printed to electronic copies where possible for previously binder-based documents</li> <li>• Field Staff now access all board information online and no longer receive a printed binder</li> <li>• Electronics, cell phones and computer equipment are recycled through Garten Services, a non-profit organization that employs people with disabilities and other challenges</li> <li>• Batteries are collected in the office and properly disposed of</li> <li>• Unwanted items are donated to DOC and state surplus facility</li> </ul>
<b>MEETING PLANNING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vendors that use sustainable practices and support community are used; for example hosting meetings at Broadway Commons in Salem</li> <li>• Trexler Farms and Roth’s Fresh Markets are both used as caterers. They use local foods and durable dishware (no disposable items) when catering</li> </ul>
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DAS Motor Pool includes option to select fuel-efficient vehicles</li> <li>• Many employees have a telecommute option</li> <li>• Four employees use vanpools, six carpool, and five employees regularly walk or bike to work</li> <li>• Carpooling to meetings is encouraged and coordinated</li> <li>• Web meetings and conference calls are used to reduce travel</li> </ul>
<b>ENERGY CONSERVATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffs close blinds during summer to reduce HVAC need and at the end of work shifts as regular practice</li> <li>• Energy efficient lighting and motion sensors lights are installed</li> </ul>
<b>HEALTH &amp; WELLNESS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Houseplants in the office promote well-being and are cared for by staff</li> <li>• SWAT activities boost morale and help with stress management. Activities include break-time trivia, potlucks, and houseplant propagation, such as the “Bring a Pot, get a Plant” event, to further “green” office</li> <li>• SWAT team promotes healthy activities and choices at All-Staff meetings through presentations</li> </ul>
<b>DIVERSITY, EQUITY &amp; INCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OWEB’s Board includes diverse representation. A tribal government representative is currently serving as Board Co-Chair. Board members also represent underserved and economically distressed populations including North and South coasts, Klamath Basin and Southern Oregon</li> <li>• The 2018 Strategic Plan outlines actions and outcomes to meet Priority 2 - Leaders at all levels of watershed work reflect the diversity of Oregonians</li> <li>• Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Awareness (IDEA) Team meets monthly and plans staff workshops and engagement to train staff on DEI concepts to increase agency capacity</li> </ul>

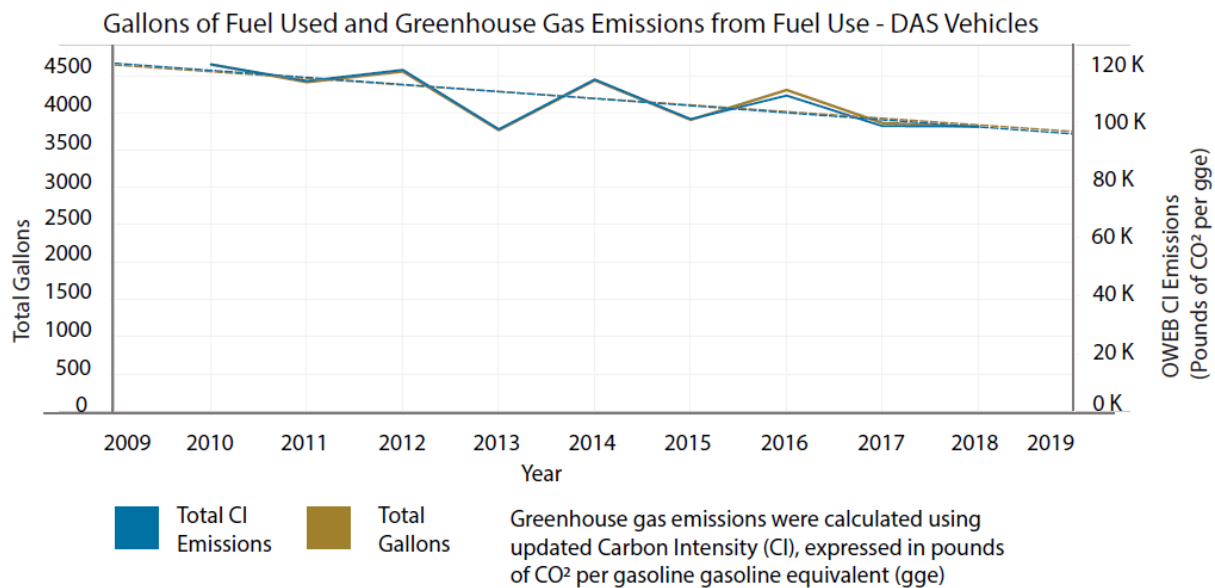
## Metrics

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board does not own or manage facilities. OWEB rents office space in Salem from Department of State Lands (DSL); and field offices are rented from other public agencies including Department of Environmental Quality, Water Resources Department, and Department of Geology and Mineral Resources. The agencies providing office space are responsible for following Department of Administrative Services (DAS) policies in maintaining their buildings and OWEB staff follows guidelines provided by these agencies to assist in meeting resource conservation targets for energy and water use.

## Transportation

**Fuel use has been reduced by approximately 10% from 2010 to 2018.**

Figure 3. OWEB Staff Vehicle Fuel Usage from DAS Fleet & Parking Services

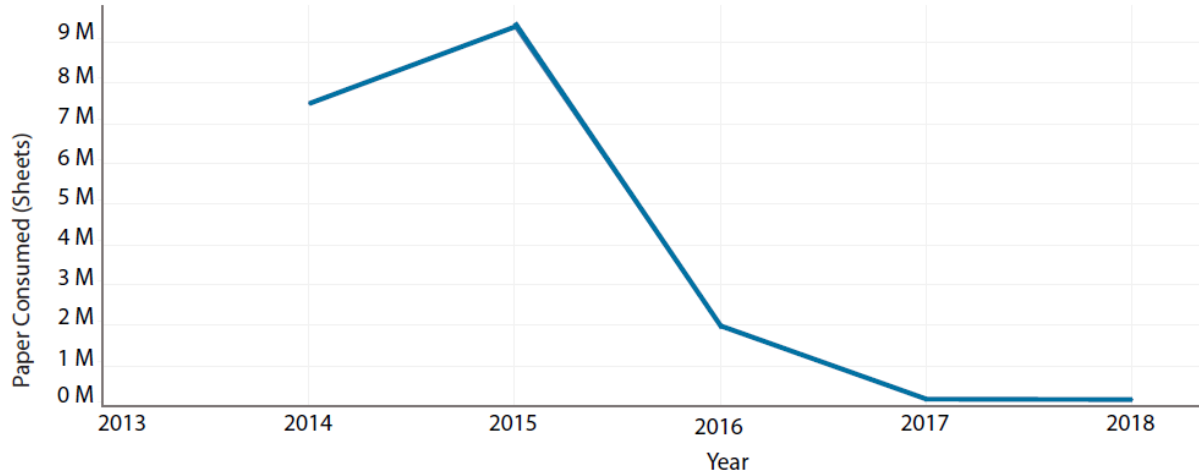


## Procurement

In September 2016, OWEB launched a new online grant application. Previously, OWEB only accepted paper applications that were either mailed or hand-delivered by applicants. Applications would be copied and mailed to approximately 100 OWEB grant reviewers. As a result of the online application, reviewers no longer receive paper applications and now have options to view applications as a pdf or through a new online reviewer module. OWEB continues to convert the paper-based granting process for more grant types to online formats and has seen significant savings.

Figure 4. OWEB Paper Consumption

**Transitioning to the online application system has reduced paper consumption by 98%.**



### Goals (in development)

OWEB staff will be working to discuss and implement internal goals over the next two years. OWEB's Sustainability lead will engage internal stakeholders including the SWAT Team, Administrative Services Group, and Solutions Forum to implement actions, measure progress, research new strategies, and perform adaptive management.

#### Short-Term Goals (2020-21)

- 1. Policy and Strategy Goal: Continue to measure implementation progress of the agency's 2018 Strategic Plan.**
  - a. Produce four quarterly reports and one annual summary report documenting the agency's progress in strategic plan implementation, which guides external efforts to support statewide sustainability through the OWEB model.
- 2. Policy and Strategy Goal: Internal sustainability practices continue to be an agency priority.**
  - a. SWAT team offers one sustainability-focused activity at an All-Staff meeting and one enrichment activity in the Salem office.
  - b. OWEB Administrative Services Group identifies one additional green practice to reduce waste and increase efficiency in the office environment.
- 3. Policy and Strategy Goal: Support Earthwise certification for the Department of State Lands (DSL) Building**
  - a. Work with DSL and other building tenants as appropriate and needed to achieve Marion County's EarthWISE certification for the DSL building.
- 4. Energy Conservation: Reduce GHG footprint of the agency**
  - a. Conduct spring and fall night electricity consumption audits to implement the Statewide Plug Load strategy; report results back to staff.

- b. Refine computer power modes for consistency to reduce plug loads.
  - c. Encourage staff to request fuel-efficient vehicles from DAS.
- 5. Waste Reduction: Reduce material waste**
- a. Acquire reusable flatware and dishes for employee use at internal events.
  - b. Use 100% post-consumer recycled content for paper.
  - c. Continue implementation of online grant application system to further reduce paper consumption.
  - d. Move grant file management onto database to eliminate need for paper files.

### *Long-Term Goals (2022-2026)*

- 1. Policy and Strategy Goal: Continue to measure implementation progress of the agency's 2018 Strategic Plan.**
  - a. Continue to develop and report out on metrics that measure the agency's strategic plan implementation.
- 2. Policy and Strategy Goal: Internal sustainability practices continue to be an agency priority.**
  - a. Continue and expand sustainability practices in the office environment.
  - b. Develop and adopt agency Sustainability Policy.
- 3. Energy Conservation: Reduce GHG footprint of the agency**
  - a. Work with Department of Administrative Services and Department of State Lands to ensure compliance with Executive Order 17-20 and 17-21 regarding energy targets and resource conservation.
- 4. Waste Reduction: Reduce material waste**
  - a. Continue to convert grant administration to paperless processes to further reduce paper consumption internally by OWEB staff and externally by OWEB grantees.

## **Conclusion**

The 2018-19 OWEB Sustainability Plan Update links OWEB's mission, grant programs, and partnerships to state priorities related to sustainability and environmental health. The current plan aims to further reduce OWEB's internal resource use, and identifies additional goals that will make measurable progress in reducing energy and paper consumption through operational efficiencies and employee engagement.