



RS EXCHANGE

REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Weekly Report

October 16, 2019

Below are some highlights from the Governor's [Regional Solutions \(RS\) Coordinators](#), on behalf of the eleven interagency teams across Oregon.

[North Coast Region](#) – Jennifer Purcell

- **Fort George Brewery expansion: *Background*** – Fort George Brewery was established in Astoria in 2006. Within two years, the company had surpassed its 10 year growth projections, expanding into an adjacent historic building and doubling their pub and production space. Today, Fort George owns 45,000 square feet of pub and production space in downtown Astoria, and leases an additional 11,000 square foot warehousing space in nearby Warrenton. Fort George currently employs 155 Astorians. The company has outgrown its existing footprint, and Fort George has been seeking additional space for brewery production, distribution, and storage. Expansion plans include the creation of up to 50 additional jobs.
 - *Update* – Fort George Brewery recently acquired the former Astoria Warehousing property along the Columbia River. With a strong desire to stay in Astoria and limited availability of land, the prime commercial riverfront property provided the perfect opportunity. This acquisition provides for redevelopment of an anchor waterfront property in downtown Astoria and launches the next chapter for an important Oregon brand. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) worked with Fort George to secure a Prospective Purchaser Agreement (PPA) to limit liabilities associated with historic contamination at the site, and Business Oregon facilitated a complex portfolio of financing options.

[Mid-Valley Region](#) – Jody Christensen

- **Polk County Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Projects:** Polk County Commissioner Mordhorst asked RS to convene a meeting with ODOT to meet the new interim Region 2 manager and get an update on Polk County projects. Polk County Public Works Director Todd Whitaker and Planning Director Austin McGuigan participated in the meeting as well, which provided a comprehensive history of several projects. The ODOT staff delivered updates on ten projects including OR22 Independence Junction, OR99W Orrs Corner Road – Clow Corner Road, and 99W Ash Swale & Plum Creek Bridges. In addition, ODOT shared upcoming communication and website enhancements for Region 2 which will have timely project updates.
 - Kudos to ODOT and RS Team Member Jae Pudewell for organizing the meeting. Thank you to Area 3 Interim Manager, John Huestis, District 3 Manager, Cole Mullis, and Region 2 Strategic Communications Manager, Michelle Becker for their time.

South Valley/Mid Coast Region – Sarah Means

- **McKenzie River Discovery Center (MRDC):** The MRDC Board aspires to develop the McKenzie River Discovery Center on a former fish hatchery site in eastern Lane County by spring 2024. Fundraising by the non-profit organization is ongoing. The MRDC has a 99-year lease with Lane County to develop the site as an interpretive center. Some of the former hatchery buildings will be repurposed and a new museum/interpretive center will be the centerpiece of this 46-acre parcel along the McKenzie River. The MRDC Board approached RS to determine if there is opportunity to collaborate on the project. Thanks to Patrick Wingard with the Department of State Lands (DLCD) and the South Valley/Mid-Coast (SVMC RS for attending the MRDC Board meeting on behalf of the Team to engage in the initial conversations. RS is touring the site with the MRDC Board and will continue to engage with the project as appropriate.
- **Lane County Community Vitality & Natural Hazards Workshop:** RS was invited to participate in a Community Vitality & Natural Hazards workshop hosted by Lane County. The goal of this workshop was to bring in regional partners to discuss Lane County's vulnerabilities to natural disaster and capabilities to prepare, respond, and recover cooperatively. The group also heard from Dr. Lucy Jones, a Caltech seismologist and natural disaster scientist, on approaching the work that we do through a resiliency lens. The group has proposed forming a collaborative committed of regional stakeholders to continue the conversation and explore ways to formalize the partnership and work that needs to be done. They have requested RS remain engaged in the conversation.

Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

- **SVMC RSAC:** Wednesday, December 18th, 2019, 2pm-4pm; Location – TBD

Southern & South Coast Regions – Alex Campbell

- **Yoncalla Wetlands Bank:** RS has been working with North Douglas Betterment (NDB) for years on establishing a greatly-needed wetlands bank in Yoncalla. This week, NDB received notification from DEQ that they concur with NDB's environmental submittal, which will allow the issuance of a No Further Action (NFA) letter, clearing the final remaining hurdle to negotiating and completing the wetlands banking instrument.

Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

- **Southern RSAC:** November 8th, 2019; Time/Location – TBD

North Central Region – Nate Stice

- **Oregon Tourism Commission:** Many thanks to the Oregon Tourism Commission for inviting RS to join a panel on fire impacts and recovery in the Gorge at their meeting in Cascade Locks with Travel Oregon's Sara Morrissey and United States Forest Service (USFS) Staff Stan Hinatsu. The presentation focused on regional impacts, recovery, and resilience, as well as work RS is doing statewide. Regionally, RS has participated in, and at times, helped to lead recovery efforts from the Eagle Creek Fire in 2017 and Grass Fires in 2018. The leadership and partnership of local, state, and federal agencies such as local emergency managers, soil and water conservation districts, The Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD), Oregon Insurance Commissioner's Office, Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), and countless others helped the region to recover. MCEDD (with funds from Business Oregon's Local Economic Opportunity Fund (LEOF)) leveraged these and other disaster response experiences to create an [economic resilience plan and material](#) for businesses. RS also spoke about the effort that South and Southern Coast and North Central RS coordinators led to catalogue the variety of state and federal tools for fire recovery prior to the 2019 fire season, and our work in helping to staff the

community and economic recovery subcommittee of the Governor's Wildfire Council. The catalogue of tools is available to community partners.

Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **Childcare:** RS convened a follow up meeting in Powel Butte (Crook County) with childcare center business owners, Judge Crawford, Ann Beier (Crook County Planning Director), and Scott Edelman (the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)), to better understand zoning barriers to locating childcare centers on Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) lands. State statute does not allow early childhood education facilities on land zoned exclusive farm use; K-12 schools are allowed but pre-K schools, childcare centers, etc...are not. The only path forward is a “home occupation business”, where the business owner must reside in the home, and under state law may not have more than five employees. County code for home occupation businesses is more restrictive than state law (no more than 400 sq. ft. and one non-family employee). The group identified two solutions (not mutually exclusive): 1) the county will begin the process to align the county code with state law for home occupancy businesses; and 2) work with DLCD and Legislators to explore revising the statute pertaining to EFU lands to allow early childhood education centers since K-12 schools are already considered an outright use. Great work by Scott Edelman at DLCD to assess options.
- **Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs:** The Warm Springs Housing Authority and Behavioral Health program were selected for participation in Oregon Housing and Community Service's (OHCS) Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Technical Assistance (TA) cohort. They were one of 10 teams selected, out of 29 applicants. The Warm Springs Housing Authority and Warm Springs Behavioral Health Center will now jointly participate in an intensive training and TA program, to be ready to deliver PSH, combining affordable units with wrap-around support services. The Governor's budget also set aside \$20 million that only the 10 participants in this TA cohort are eligible to apply for, for rent assistance, development capital and service funding, in association with PSH.
- **La Pine outreach:** RS and Business Oregon met with city and economic development leaders in La Pine to meet new staff and catch up on priorities. The La Pine Chamber is working on an events center for Frontier Days, the longest 4th of July celebration in Oregon. RS is following up on questions the Chamber raised related to the wetland permitting process for this site.
- **City of Sisters:** RS met with DLCD, City and economic development partners to provide TA for the re-development of the USFS property. The USFS is moving their headquarters and selling their existing land within the City. Redevelopment of this site has been a priority for the USFS and the City for many years. One of parcels has sold and the other is under contract. Re-zoning is desired to support employment and mixed use. Scott Edelman did a great job providing assistance on next steps.

Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

- **Central Oregon RSAC Meeting:** Thursday, December 5th, 9 AM – Noon; Location – TBD

South Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **Housing:** RS is connecting leaders in Lakeview and Klamath Falls with experts in Opportunity Zone investing to assess opportunities to increase the supply of workforce housing.
- **South Central Regional Solutions Advisory Committee meeting:** The next meeting is Wednesday, October 30th, in Klamath Falls; the agenda focuses on opportunities to identify projects that create water or air quality “credits” than can be available for future economic development projects, and an overview of the Governor's Wildfire Response Council.

Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

- **South Central RSAC Meeting:** Wednesday, October 30th, 10 AM – Noon; Location – Klamath Community College, Klamath Falls, OR

Greater Eastern & Northeast Regions – Courtney Warner Crowell

- **Hines Pellet Mill Project:** *Background* – This is an effort to create both a biomass and alfalfa pellet mill in Harney County that will employ up to 20 people. *Update* – This week the company completed the Cleaner Air Oregon process and will now move forward through the regular permit process. There is still discrepancy between the types of permit, although DEQ has provided a response back to the company. Representative Lynn Findley and RS met with the company in Harney County this week to learn more about the project, and the timelines and needs in order to get them up and running by next alfalfa season in June. RS will continue to engage to help make this project a reality.
- **Burns Armory Project:** RS met with the Burns Paiute Tribe general manager this week to hear an update on how the Burns Armory project is moving forward. This was a RS project in that we helped facilitate the sale of an old National Guard Armory in Burns to the Burns Paiute Tribe for use as a wellness center. That sale went through last year and now it is used on a daily basis by Tribal members. In fact, they will have a new basketball floor going in soon that will allow more use and the boiler will be fixed soon as well. The Burns Paiute Tribe still needs funding to bring the bathrooms and kitchen up to code.
- **RST Team Meeting and Rural Opportunity Initiative outreach:** We had our monthly RS Team meeting this week and got a great overview from Brian Plinski from Business Oregon about the Rural Opportunity Initiative and how our Team can help get the word out and help communities come up with successful proposals. It was a great opportunity to get a better understanding of the program, some best practices across the state and brainstorm ideas. Our Regional Development Officers will be reaching out to communities soon to share more information.
- **Burns Paiute Tribal Council Meeting:** RS and Business Oregon Director Chris Harder met with the Burns Paiute Tribal Council this week and talked about the Business Oregon strategic plan and gave an overview of the RS program and how we might be able to partner in the future.