



# RS EXCHANGE

## REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

### Weekly Report

Wednesday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019

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

#### Mid-Valley Region – Jody Christensen

- **Engaging with the 100-Year Water Visioning Process:** The State of Oregon is working with local partners to convene a series of conversations with current and emerging water leaders. “Each conversation is intended to: A) form stronger cross-sector connections for leaders in a variety of water sectors and places; B) create a common base of water information from which to inform ongoing water conversations at the local, regional, and state levels; C) articulate some of the water challenges and opportunities in Oregon communities; and, D) provide feedback on the current draft of the 100-Year Water Vision and Problem Statement. The Vision is a way to craft the investment and implementation actions linked to the Integrated Water Resources Strategy”
  - RS Coordinators from Mid-Valley and South Valley/Mid-Coast participated in the October 30<sup>th</sup> stakeholder meeting, which included a wide-variety of stakeholders, elected officials, and water systems managers.
  - To learn more, visit the 100-Year Water Visioning Project [website](#) and participate in the [survey](#).

#### Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee (RSAC) Meeting

- **Mid-Valley RSAC:** Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM; Location – TBD

#### South Valley/Mid-Coast Region – Sarah Means

#### Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

- **South Valley/Mid-Coast RSAC:** Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM; Location – TBD

#### Southern & South Coast Regions – Alex Campbell

- **Oregon Connections Conference:** Telecommunications professionals, economic developers, and broadband advocates met for two days last week at the 24<sup>th</sup> annual Oregon Connections Telecommunications Conference in Ashland, Oregon. Sessions focused on smart city applications, sources of broadband coverage data (e.g., [online tools](#)), and forthcoming policy proposals. To view conference presentations, [click here](#).

## Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

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

### North Central Region – Nate Stice

- **Wasco Community Center and Ford Family Foundation visit:** Many thanks to The Ford Family Foundation's (TFFF) Roque Barros and Alicia Flory for spending last Friday learning about project underway in Sherman County; and, thanks to Sherman County for inviting RS to participate in their visit. The visit, arranged by the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD), centered on the Wasco Events Center—a collaboration between community volunteers, the County, and City of Wasco to turn a historical school into an event and community center. The center serves as a gym, gathering space, library, and food pantry. The volunteer board has made great strides in renovating the facility and developing the administrative structures to support long-term operations. We also visited former TFFF facilitated/funded projects, including a leadership class project at the Sherman County Fair grounds and The Grass Valley Pavilion. Again, many thanks to the Foundation for the visit and their ongoing partnership in the North Central Region.
- **Four Rivers Early Learning Hub Regional Stewardship Committee:** The RS Team and Four Rivers Hub are collaborating on efforts to explore the link between availability of child care and economic prosperity with the ultimate goal of creating innovative partnerships to increase child care supply. The Hub invited members of the Team—with expertise on employment centers, communities, and players—to participate in their Regional Stewardship Committee to help develop information that will help guide investments and partnerships. Over 30 participants from a range of partners participated in the first meeting last week. As part of the overall collaboration, RS is working on a survey targeted at employers and employees. Many thanks to Hub lead, Christa Rude, for the invite!

### Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **Economic Forecast:** RS attended the annual economic forecast event hosted by the Bend Chamber. *Key takeaways:*
  - The economy is cooling; growth is primarily being generated by consumption.
  - Manufacturing has declined; tariffs and trade wars have created significant uncertainty for key sectors.
  - Housing appreciation has slowed.
  - Labor participation rates have declined. Reasons for this include: the population is aging, there is an increase in people claiming disability, increased child care costs have created a mass exodus of women from the workforce, and the opioid epidemic.

## Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

- **Central RSAC:** Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM – Noon; Location TBD

### South Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **South Central Regional Solutions Advisory Committee meeting:** The committee met in Klamath Falls. Many thanks to Baker County Commissioner Bennett for providing an overview of the Governor's Wildfire Response Council Recommendations. The remainder of the agenda focused on projects to improve water quality in Upper Klamath Lake. The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is doing great work with agricultural land owners around the lake, and is supporting research on biochar as a potential filtration medium to remove phosphorous from

run-off water. Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT) just completed a pilot project that deployed a solar powered aeration dredge to increase oxygen in the water. The committee also heard about potential opportunities for water quality trading that would benefit current and future economic development efforts. The RS Team will convene a subgroup to explore developing a menu of projects that could generate tradable “credits.” Many thanks to Beth Piertzak (ODA) and Wade Peerman (Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)) for their presentations.

- **Klamath River Recreation:** RS participated in a meeting convened by Cailin O’Brien-Feeney (Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD), Office of Outdoor Recreation) to better understand the concerns of river outfitters and guides about Klamath River access post-dam removal. Attendees included OPRD, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and Senator Jeff Golden. The lands that previously were integral to the hydropower system are slated to go into ODFW’s ownership. River guides have developed a detailed plan for increasing access and have requested flow studies and river restoration as part of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission FERC process.
- **Klamath Outreach:**
  - RS met with Klamath Falls Mayor Westfall to discuss City priorities. As a result, RS connected the Mayor with Karen Homolac at Business Oregon for potential Brownfield assistance exploring contaminated groundwater.
  - RS met with Klamath County Commissioner Minty-Morris. We are working on setting up a meeting and tour of Klamath Kids Center.
  - RS toured shovel ready housing subdivisions with Randy Cox, Executive Director of Klamath County Economic Development Association (KCEDA). KCEDA has been working with local employers to create solid partnerships to increase housing supply. Kingsley Field alone is estimated to need an additional 40 housing units per year over the next five years.

## [Greater Eastern](#) & [Northeast Regions](#) – Courtney Warner Crowell

- **Oregon Torrefaction Project:** The Oregon Torrefaction project in John Day is getting very close to production and, this past month, have been busy hiring new employees. In fact, they have doubled the numbers on their payroll over the last month. [Click here](#) to view a recent article about the impact of this project on the John Day community.