



RS EXCHANGE

REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Weekly Report

Wednesday, October 7, 2020

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

Regional Solutions (RS) Director – Leah Horner

North Coast Region – Jennifer Purcell

- **Gervais Creek Stormwater Improvements (City of Wheeler, Tillamook County)** – This week, the City of Wheeler received formal notice of a 2018 FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant award. The grant funding will support planning related to the Gervais Creek drainage. Wheeler's downtown commercial district has been plagued by a series of flood events. Addressing stream flow and stormwater capacity at Gervais Creek is critical to reducing future impacts to local businesses and protecting the Hwy 101 transportation corridor. The North Coast Regional Solutions Advisory Committee designated the Gervais Creek stormwater improvements as a regionally significant project and Regional Solutions supported the City's grant application process with technical assistance, letters of support, and Business Oregon match funding.
- **Clatsop County Strategic Planning** – Clatsop County engaged Portland State University's Center for Public Service to assist the County with developing a five-year strategic plan. Regional Solutions Team members have engaged in priority-setting discussions relating to key focus areas such as economic development, infrastructure, affordable housing, and childcare.
- **Clatsop Plains Elk Collaborative – *Background*** – The Governor designated the Clatsop Plains Elk Collaborative an Oregon Solutions project on April 26, 2019 to address increasing public safety risks and occurrences of property damage from encounters with elk in several cities and unincorporated areas in northwest Clatsop County. Co-convened by Mayor Henry Balensifer (Warrenton) and Mayor Jay Barber (Seaside), the project team established four subcommittees – Elk Management, Human Management, Land Use, and Data – to collect data, refine definitions, develop matrices for evaluating interventions, and identify recommendations.
 - *Update* – The subcommittees have completed their work and prepared final recommendations. Oregon Solutions staff have been working with members of the collaborative to finalize the Declaration of Cooperation (DOC), including the cities of Warrenton, Seaside, and Gearhart, Clatsop County, Oregon Departments of Fish and Wildlife, Forestry, Transportation, and Land Conservation and Development, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Oregon State Police, Oregon Military Department, National Park Service, Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce (CREST), North Coast Land Conservancy, OSU Extension Services, Greenwood Resources, Gearhart Golf Links, and the Oregon Hunters Association. The draft DOC proposes a hyper-local, inter-

jurisdictional coordinated approach and includes both short-term and long-term actions. A final project team meeting is expected in mid-November, to be held virtually. DOC parties are discussing an in-person signing ceremony, when appropriate.

Mid-Valley Region – Jody Christensen

- **Santiam Canyon Wildfire Economic Recovery Team (ERT) – *Background*** – As part of the Governor’s Disaster Cabinet and [Wildfire Economic Recovery Council](#) (WERC), the 4 wildfire-impacted regions will be standing up expanded Regional Solutions Advisory Committee to establish Wildfire Economic Recovery Teams (ERTs). The ERTs will identify issues and provide feedback to the WERC.

The Santiam Canyon Wildfire ERT met on Oct. 8 to get a brief recovery update and begin to identify issues, which include debris cleanup timeline, housing, equity in recovery, and the need to coordinate infrastructure and utility work.

The ERT members, elected officials, and community partners elevated the urgent concern about the runoff/erosion/debris mitigation for the Santiam River, which is the drinking water source for downriver communities of Turner and Salem.

- ***Updates* – FEMA has approved a Housing Mission in Jackson, Linn, and Marion counties.** More information will be released soon.
 - **FEMA Category A approval** – Category A Debris removal will take 3-9 months. Still working on the cost share for the Phase 2 of debris removal. In Phase 1, hazardous household waste (HHW) cleanup, which is launching now/soon.
 - **The State *will be seeking approval* by FEMA to make [Community Disaster Loans](#) available.** These are loans from FEMA to local government for lost revenue, up to \$5M, and are commonly forgivable.

Upcoming Santiam Canyon Wildfire Economic Recovery Team (ERT) Meeting

Weekly, Thursdays from 8-9:30AM via Zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/93851096785?pwd=Sk0xdSt0emt0NERQNW1yN1JQNUJxdz09>

Meeting ID: 938 5109 6785 Passcode: 664133

One tap mobile +16699006833,,93851096785#,,,,,0#,,664133#

South Valley/Mid Coast Region – Sarah Means

- **SVMC Wildfire Economic Recovery Team** – Note that this team will be focused on the Echo Mountain and Holiday Farm fires in Lincoln and Lane/Linn counties respectively. This group convened for the first time on October 8 from 3-4pm. The meeting consisted of introductory remarks about the structure, purpose, and ongoing tasks of the team. The Team also had initial conversations on issue identification. Topics raised included housing, land use, debris removal, and communications. The group also expressed the clear need for community voice in any identified solutions moving forward. The group will meet weekly.

Upcoming SVMC Wildfire Economic Recovery Team (ERT) Meeting

Weekly, Thursdays at 3PM via Zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/7515010544>

Meeting ID: 751 501 0544

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Metro Region – Raihana Ansary

- **Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) District #8 Meeting** – Metro Regional Solutions attended AOC's District 8 meeting with Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington County Commissioners. The Counties discussed shared priorities that are of regional significance and that may be used to inform their priorities for the upcoming 2021 legislative session. Priorities discussed included the following (in no particular order):
 - **Transportation** and the use of state highway trust fund dollars.
 - **Police Accountability and Reform.**
 - **Climate and Wildfires** – Clackamas County would like to address the need for climate change and forest management practices because of wildfires across the state. Over 200,000 acres burned in Clackamas County over Labor Day weekend.
 - **Human Services / Public Health / Domestic Violence** – People are experiencing higher levels of stress, anxiety and depression as a result of COVID. Suicide rates and substance abuse are up. Need to ensure funding for mental health services, disability services, senior aging services, and domestic violence survivors.
 - **Housing** – The metro region's housing crisis has worsened because of COVID and job losses. The need for additional rent assistance will be critical especially as eviction moratoriums near their end and back rent comes due. Multnomah County estimates that they need \$40M a month in rent assistance alone.
- **Metro Region Wildfire Economic Recovery Team** will meet for the first time next Wednesday, October 14, 2020 from 1 – 2:30 PM. The agenda will include a presentation by Andrew Phelps at the Oregon Office of Emergency Management and a guest speaker who worked on the response to wildfires in Paradise, California.

North Central Region – Nate Stice

- **North Central Oregon Recovery Team** – The Mid-Columbia Economic Development District and Region Regional Solutions stood up the bi-state Columbia Gorge/Mid-Columbia Bi-State Economic Resilience Team.
 - This week, the group received updates from public health officials from the seven county region. Overall, they expressed concerns about spikes heading into the fall and impacts on school reopening. They stressed the need to get the word out on flu shots. Overall, there remain concerns about overwhelming local hospital capacity.
 - The Superintendent of the White Salmon Public School Jerry Lewis and Superintendent of North Wasco County Schools Theresa Peters joined the meeting who are engaged in comprehensive distance learning and anticipate ending this trimester in remove learning. Both hope to have some in-person for k-3 if cases remain low.
- **Dog River Pipeline** – Congratulations to the City of The Dalles for receiving a decision of final notice and Finding of Not Significant impact from the US Forest Service, allowing them to move forward with the replacement of the Dog River Pipeline, the city's main municipal water supply. The project received one million in funding from the Oregon Water Resources Department, and the city is currently in conversations with Business Oregon on funding. After completing initial design, the team plans to work with the city to help navigate additional regulatory processes.

Central & South Central Regions – Annette Liebe

- **Central/South Central Equity in Recovery Council** – The council had their kick off meeting on Wednesday. Agenda focused on council purpose, meeting agreements and an overview of equity related demographic and economic data. Many thanks to Damon Runberg, Oregon Employment Department’s Regional Economist, for a great presentation on Oregon and regional data. The group plans to meet weekly until mid-November.
- **Central Oregon COVID Response Team – *Background*** – Central Oregon Regional Solutions (RS) Team along with county commissioners, city leaders, chambers, economic and workforce development, downtown organizations, local legislators, federal congressional delegation representatives and the Regional Solutions Advisory Committee have been meeting since mid-March.
 - *Update* – The team met to hear about the next round of small business grant funds being disbursed to local partners from Business Oregon. Other agenda items included overview of latest state budget forecast and monthly review of the metrics the team is tracking. Highlights from the metric review included lower than anticipated continuing unemployment claims and transient lodging tax revenues (TRT). Deschutes County TRT revenues were slightly higher than 2019, while City of Bend revenues were down just over 20%. Moving forward, the group will meet monthly.

Greater Eastern & Northeast Regions – Courtney Warner Crowell

- **Pendleton Affordable Housing Project** – Great news on this project that stems from the funding the Emergency Board gave to Umatilla County after the February 2020 flooding. Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) has awarded Chrisman Development a gap-funding award of \$4.2M that combined with the funding from the emergency board will allow Chrisman Development to build almost 100 affordable housing units in Pendleton. This will greatly increase the affordable housing in the community and help flood impacted individuals who are still struggling to find affordable housing. Great work to everyone involved in this project!
- **Boardman Food Pantry** – RS worked with the Association of Oregon Counties to bring together many stakeholders in Morrow County to try to fill the funding gap needed to create a food pantry in Boardman. COVID-19 and a windstorm in May have shown the need for a food pantry in the community and they have rallied to make this a reality. Right now, they have \$175,000 committed from Morrow County, the city of Boardman and the Oregon Community Fund. They need another \$125,000 to buy a vacant church and turn it into the food pantry. It was a good meeting and we are hopeful to fill the gap in the next month.
- **Northern Blues Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program Award** – Secretary Purdue announced this week that the Northern Blues Collaborative was the one and only new Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program award this year. The two forests combined (WWNF and Umatilla NF) will get **\$2.7 million in additional funding to implement restoration projects this year**. If Congress continues to fund this program, this award will translate to 10 years of additional funding totaling over \$40 million. This is great news and congratulations to everyone that was involved including Wallowa Resources, OSU Forest Extension, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) and Nez Perce Tribe.