



RS EXCHANGE REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Monday, March 9th, 2026

Upcoming RSAC Meetings

Greater Eastern (Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, and Wheeler Counties)

Tuesday, March 10th from 2:00-4:00pm

[Virtual Link](#)

Mid-Valley (Marion, Polk, and Yamhill Counties)

Thursday, March 12th from 1:30-3:30pm

Chemeketa Community College (Salem); Building 9, Room 162

[Virtual Link](#)

Northeast (Baker, Union, and Wallowa Counties)

Friday, March 13th from 2:00-4:00pm

[Virtual Link](#)

South Central (Klamath and Lake Counties)

Tuesday, March 17th from 10:00am-12:00pm

Oregon Institute of Technology; College Union Building, Sunset Conf. Room

[Virtual Link](#)

Southern (Jackson and Josephine Counties)

Wednesday, March 25th from 12:00-2:00pm

[Virtual Link](#)

South Valley/Mid-Coast (Benton, Lane, Lincoln, and Linn Counties)

Thursday, March 26th from 1:00-3:00pm

[Virtual Link](#)



Regional Updates

Eastern – Courtney Crowell

Grassy Mountain Mine: Regional Solutions is continuing to work on the Grassy Mountain Mine project which is slated to have final permits over the next several weeks. We continue to engage as issues arise and look forward to the final permits being issued.

Milton-Freewater Water Collaborative Oregon Solutions Project: We officially have a signed MOU between CTUIR, the Milton-Freewater Water Control District, the Walla Walla Irrigation District and the Hudson Bay District Improvement Project that would request a US Army Corps of Engineers general investigation study for the 5-mile reach of the Walla Walla River within Milton-Freewater to look at an ecosystem restoration study. This study is one of the highest priority strategies in the Walla Walla 2050 plan and would advance critical needs along this river for ecosystem benefits as well as flood mitigation. This is the culmination of the Oregon Solutions project and we are hoping to plan an event (with cake) to celebrate the signing of the MOU.

Carcass Debris Removal Workgroup: Eastern, Central and South Central Oregon are working together on a carcass debris removal workgroup (ODFW, DEQ, ODA, ODOT, Defenders of Wildlife and Western Landowners Association). We have developed a scope of work for Western Landowners Association to conduct a feasibility study on the issues around carcass debris and begin to chart a path for a series of composting facilities across Eastern/Central Oregon to address carcass debris. We agreed that the study needs to acknowledge the statewide challenges with carcass debris (wolf predation, meat processing, transportation carcasses, wildlife concerns (ie. chronic wasting disease)) but that it would be more focused on the eastern half of the state. The good news is that Western Landowners Association is willing to conduct the feasibility study in-house and they have funding through NRCS to complete it.

Lake Owyhee Road Project: I pulled together the state, federal and local partners on the Lake Owyhee Road project to talk about next steps. We have a three-part plan to address issues in this area.

1. Malheur County is applying for a CIP from the federal government for funding to construct a boat inspection station on Lake Owyhee Road on the way to the Owyhee Reservoir. This would help to protect Oregon from Zebra and Quagga mussels and other invasive species.

2. Work with the US Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) to apply for a federal grant through BOR to address road maintenance issues within the state park at Lake Owyhee.
3. Work with ODOT to apply for a Federal Lands Access Program grant to address road maintenance along the road up to Lake Owyhee.

Overall, there is great collaboration between all the parties and we have a path forward for finding funding to address both aquatic invasive species and road maintenance.

Highway 20 Wildlife Crossing Project: This Oregon Solutions project continues to move forward and the project team is actively working on narrowing down options that everyone can support. A variety of solutions have been identified to improve safe passage for both people and wildlife and habitat connectivity. Additionally, this collaborative group is planning to apply for a CIP to implement the solutions that the group has identified.

OTEC purchases Idaho Power Oregon Service Region: Big news out of Eastern Oregon with Idaho Power selling their Oregon service territory to the Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative (OTEC). [Idaho Power and Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative Announce Agreement to Transfer Ownership of Idaho Power's Oregon Service Area - Idaho Power](#)

Southern – Jessica LaBerge

Renewable Energy Facility Highlights Impacts of Reduced Production Schedule: RS recently met with Oregon Department of Forestry representatives and [Biomass One](#) leadership, a White City facility now in its 40th year. The company is working to meet DEQ air-emissions requirements tied to Oregon's Regional Haze goals. A key challenge is uncertainty about future operating time for generating and selling renewable electricity.

Biomass One does not use live trees; it converts waste-wood residues from manufacturers, land managers, and other partners into renewable energy. In 2020, the facility repurposed more than 17,000 truckloads of biomass material into electricity.



The company also produces biochar, used for soil improvement and environmental remediation, including at multiple Superfund cleanup sites. As a long-standing producer of renewable energy and a critical processor of waste biomass, Biomass One supports Oregon's goals for sustainable resource use, wildfire-resilient landscapes, and reduced-carbon energy systems.

Grants Pass & Josephine County Chamber Business survey results are in! The results of the Grants Pass & Josephine County Chamber Business Survey are now available. This project reflects months of focused effort, confidential outreach, and detailed analysis. The data offers a clear view of the challenges and opportunities facing businesses throughout Josephine County and will help inform future economic development and policy decisions. The findings are presented by Chuck Rund, President of Charlton Research Company, together with Terry Hopkins, President & CEO of the Grants Pass & Josephine County Chamber of Commerce. The Business Retention & Expansion Survey findings are available at this [link](#).

Harry & David: A Vertically Integrated Legacy in Southern Oregon: During a recent visit and conversation with local leadership at Harry & David, several themes emerged that highlight the company's unique position within Southern Oregon's economy. As one of the region's most recognizable and longest-operating brands, Harry & David represents a rare example of deeply rooted vertical integration within the agricultural, food manufacturing, and specialty goods sectors.

Unlike many modern consumer goods companies that outsource portions of their supply chain, Harry & David continues to manage a substantial share of its operations end-to-end. This includes orchard management, harvesting, food production, packaging, fulfillment, and customer distribution. The ability to coordinate these functions internally provides both operational stability and quality control, ensuring that the brand remains closely tied to the region's agricultural heritage.

Local leadership emphasized how this integrated model has supported resilience through changing market conditions. It also sustains a broad range of job types—from agricultural and seasonal roles to manufacturing, logistics, and professional services—making the company a multifaceted contributor to Southern Oregon's workforce landscape. Additionally, the company's long history in the Rogue Valley positions it as a cultural anchor, with community familiarity and a legacy of partnerships across the region.

The conversation underscored Harry & David's ongoing commitment to Southern Oregon and its intention to evolve while preserving the characteristics that have made it a distinctive regional business for decades.

This blend of heritage, product diversity, and vertical integration continues to differentiate the company within both local industry and the broader national specialty-foods market.

Mid-Valley – Beth Wytoski

Stratus Village: This collaborative housing project features 175 affordable units and is being finished ahead of schedule. Planning for the large new project has been in the works for several years and included contributions from the city of McMinnville, Yamhill County, and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. Applications for tenancy became available in December - more than three dozen families have already moved in - and the second half is about to become available. Stratus Village is the largest affordable living project in the county and is located just west of the Willamette Valley Medical Center and south of additional medical providers, with public transit nearby. In addition to housing, the facility has an office space with a kitchen and multiple spaces suited for classes, a community center with laundry, a hall to be used for residents' gatherings or other programming, and a central courtyard with a staged area for performances or speakers - planning that was informed by nearly 5 years of conversations around community need. The units are available in one-, two-, or three-bedroom styles with more than a dozen floor plans, with some reserved for members of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, in appreciation of their financial contribution to construction.

Yamhill County Business Survey: Unidos Bridging Community, in collaboration with the McMinnville Area Chamber of Commerce and SEDCOR, is seeking community stakeholders to provide feedback about on-the-ground conditions related to workforce recruitment and retention, recent sales trends, foot traffic data, and effects of immigration policies and enforcement activities. If you have observations and/or feedback to offer, please do so here:

- *English* - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/27GSZDB>
- *Spanish* - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WYG5YC9>

RST Visit to Gervais: The City of Gervais has been in some transition and with a new council and staff, they hosted our Mid-Valley RST team for a site visit. I was joined by leaders from Business Oregon, DEQ, ODOT, DLCD, OHCS, the MWVCOG, and SEDCOR as we heard about goals of growth, improved infrastructure, transportation, business development, working around wetlands, and collaborating with regional partners and stakeholders like Marion County, local corporations, and Union Pacific. There are a handful of follow up tasks for my team as we problem solve and identify tools and programs to support the city in its advancement of its goals.

Economic Development: Business Oregon, SEDCOR, and Regional Solutions have engaged in several BRE visits to learn more about specific needs and challenges of regional employers and to support efforts to ensure local longevity. Recent business visits have included:

- World Class Technologies, which employs more than 300 FTE in McMinnville, uses advanced manufacturing to create orthodontia supplies and medical devices
- Harris Thermal Transfer products, with 85 FTE in Newberg, fabricates pressure vessels and similar steel structures to be used in a range of industries from food processing to mining
- GK Machine, a long time family-owned manufacturer and fabricator in Hubbard, creates all manners of metal creations from custom painted tractors to massive fuel tanks and tiny metallic decals
- Canopii, the 2024 SEDCOR Innovative Product of the Year, is redefining controlled-environment ag through greenhouse technology intended to improve sustainability in food production
- Cabinetworks Group, the largest privately owned cabinet manufacturer in the country, has 200 FTE in Independence and just cut the ribbon on its new on-site urgent care clinic that provides free medical attention for its employees and their families



Metro – Kathy Hyzy

Apply for Metro’s Community-led Programs Sponsorships: Metro Parks and Nature is now accepting applications for [Community-led Programs Sponsorships](#), which support efforts to connect historically marginalized communities with nature. This funding opportunity is ideal for groups or organization seeking additional capacity to facilitate nature-based activities in the greater Portland region. Up to \$243,000 will be available to allocate as sponsorships for community-led programs. Individual groups can request up to \$5,000. Applications are due April 21st.

Resources and Opportunities

Offshore Wind Energy Roadmap Webinar March 17th

Join the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), the League of Oregon Counties (LOC), and the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) on Tuesday, March 17, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for a webinar on the DLCD's draft Offshore Wind Energy Roadmap. The purpose of this webinar is to provide Oregon's cities and counties with an opportunity to ask questions and provide informal feedback on the draft roadmap.

The draft roadmap was developed utilizing more than one year of input and advice from a roundtable group representing a broad array of interests about the future of offshore wind energy in Oregon. The draft is also a product of consultation with federally recognized Tribes in Oregon, feedback provided during public meetings, and meetings with existing ocean users and wind energy businesses.

The roadmap presents a suite of recommendations for legislative, rulemaking, or other formal policy-making settings, and considers four alternative futures for Oregon and its coast. Two of these alternative futures include offshore wind turbines, and two do not.

In addition to this joint AOC/LOC webinar, the DLCD is accepting formal, written feedback on the draft roadmap until April 3, 2026. The agency will incorporate public feedback, review a revised draft with the roundtable group and Tribes, and finalize a roadmap document this summer for submittal to the Legislature consistent with the requirements of HB 4080 (2024) and [House Bill 3963](#) (2025). More information about the roadmap, including the public review draft, can be found on the DLCD website here: <https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/OCMP/Pages/Offshore-Wind-Roadmap.aspx>

To attend the webinar, please [register via Zoom](#).

DSL Submerged Lands Enhancement Grants

Applications are due for the [2025-27 Submerged Lands Enhancement Fund \(SLEF\) grant funding cycle](#) by April 30, 2026. A total of \$213,600 in grant money is available to cover expenses associated with management and enhancement activities along Oregon-owned, submerged and submersible lands along Oregon's waterways, [see maps here](#). Eligible projects include:

- Activities to improve water quality
- Watershed enhancement and fish and wildlife habitat

- Removal, salvage, and disposal of derelict structures and boats
- Removal and disposal of marine debris

State agencies, city and county governments, federally recognized Tribes, water improvement districts, watershed councils, park and recreation districts, ports, and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply. Federal agencies are not eligible to receive funds.

A 25% funding match (in-kind or cash) is required for all projects not initiated by DSL. Projects associated with compensatory mitigation requirements are not eligible for funding.

OSFM 2026 Wildfire Season Staffing Grants

The Oregon State Fire Marshal is preparing to launch the 2026 Wildfire Season Staffing Grant, marking the fifth year this program has supported Oregon fire agencies in building capacity for wildfire response. This year, the grant will be managed through a new online grant system. Applicants must create a new account to apply.

The grant application will officially open Wednesday, March 11 at 8 a.m. and will close April 12th at 11:59pm. Optional application support webinars will be offered for drop-in assistance:

- Wednesday, April 1, from 9–10 a.m.
- Friday, April 3, 10–11 a.m.

The wildfire season staffing grant helps agencies increase staffing and readiness during Oregon's wildfire season. Fire chiefs and administrative staff are encouraged to attend webinars and take advantage of available support to maximize their application.

OSFM Fire Season Mobilization Resources and Training

As agencies prepare for the upcoming fire season, the Oregon State Fire Marshal encourages fire service partners to use the tools and training resources available on the agency's [mobilization webpage](#). The webpage is a centralized hub for critical materials, including the current mobilization plan, the task force leader guidebook, and instructions for accessing Survey123. Operational documents and guidance are also available to support fire responders before and during deployments. At the bottom of the page, users will find expanded training materials, including instructional videos covering the structure protection plan, radio operations, SOFSA, and sprinkler kits. Several in-person training opportunities are scheduled this spring. Task force leaders and trainees are encouraged to attend the annual task force leader

symposium in late April, which provides operational updates and leadership development. New this year, the Oregon State Fire Marshal will host two engine boss forums, a one-day event offered on both May 1 and May 2 in Salem. The forum will cover many of the same operational topics as the symposium, tailored specifically to engine bosses. For more information about mobilization resources or to register for upcoming training, email Agency Mobilization Coordinator Jamie Kometz at Jamie.Kometz@osfm.oregon.gov.

Oregon Humanities Public Program Grants

Oregon Humanities awards annual [Public Program Grants](#) in support of humanities programs and events across Oregon that explore challenging questions and strive for connected communities. In 2026, they will award a total of up to \$100,000. The maximum award per organization is \$5,000. Applications are due by Friday, April 3, at 5:00 p.m. PT.

An information session for this grant cycle will be held on Thursday, March 26, from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. This session will focus on the budget section of the grant application. There will be opportunities for attendees to ask questions. To attend, [register here](#).

Their grants team also offers individual support to grant applicants who have questions or could use technical assistance.

Email grants@oregonhumanities.org to schedule a phone or Zoom meeting.

Oregon Humanities Beyond 250 Conversations

Beyond 250 is a special series of community conversations that reflect on the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. These ninety-minute programs are spaces to share thoughts and experiences, listen to and learn from one another, and think together about the future of our democracy and our communities. Here are this month's conversations:

- [March 13: Preserving Our Culture and Traditions](#)
3:30 p.m., Coquille Public Library, Coquille
- [March 28: Civicus: What Does It Mean to Be a Citizen?](#)
2:00 p.m., Jacksonville Branch Library, Jacksonville
- [See all Beyond 250 events here](#)