



RS EXCHANGE REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Monday, July 27th, 2026



Upcoming RSAC Meetings

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

Tuesday, August 4th from 1:00-3:00pm

A.A. Red Emmerson Advanced Wood Products Lab | [Google Maps Link](#)

[Virtual Link](#)



Regional Updates

South Valley/Mid-Coast – Courtney Flathers

Frontiers of Advanced Semiconductor Technology funded! On July 14th, the National Science Foundation named Oregon's statewide semiconductor coalition – [Frontiers of Advanced Semiconductor Technology \(FAST\)](#) – one of just 12 Regional Innovation Engines in the country. This coalition led by Oregon State University consists of nearly 100 partners including Business Oregon, industry partners, higher education institutions, local governments, workforce organizations, nonprofits, investor networks, and more. As a Regional Innovation Engine, FAST will receive \$15 million over the next two years and is eligible to receive up to \$160 million during the next 10 years to grow the state's semiconductor ecosystem. You can read more on the announcement from OSU [here](#).



Governor Kotek's statement on this news: "This announcement affirms what made the FAST proposal so compelling: investing in world-class talent, strengthening partnerships across higher education, and advancing industry research. It builds on years of intentional work by my administration and the Legislature to grow Oregon's semiconductor industry and workforce. FAST will help accelerate Oregon's globally competitive semiconductor ecosystem and reinforce our position as a national leader in innovation."

North Central – Nate Stice

Coordination keeps The Dalles First Street project on track:

The City of The Dalles is rebuilding five blocks of First Street in the heart of downtown. The \$7 million project includes pedestrian improvements, roadway upgrades and streetscape features designed to improve safety and accessibility, strengthen the downtown corridor and support local businesses. During construction, archaeological costs were approaching \$1 million as additional work continued to be identified, placing significant pressure on the project's budget and schedule. SHPO worked with the City and its archaeological team to clarify the remaining requirements and identify a path forward, while Regional Solutions helped facilitate the coordination and maintain momentum. The archaeological permit subsequently entered a formal expedited 48-hour review. The resulting approach keeps construction on track and is expected to save the City approximately \$250,000 in additional project costs.

Regional Solutions joins MCEDD economic strategy kickoff:

Members of the North Central Regional Solutions Team joined public, private and community partners in Stevenson on July 23 to launch the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District's next five-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The bi-state process will engage all six MCEDD counties—including Gilliam County, the district's newest member—to assess regional economic conditions, identify priority industries and develop shared goals and strategies supporting jobs, business growth and regional resilience.



The first session focused on demographic and economic data and the challenges affecting the region's resilience. Future sessions will rotate among the district's six counties and address industry sectors, regional strengths and challenges, goals, strategies and measures of success.

North Coast – Nate Stice

DSL review advances Port of Astoria Pier 2 rehabilitation: Pier 2 West is critical working-waterfront infrastructure supporting the North Coast's commercial fishing fleet and seafood-processing industry. Originally constructed in the 1940s, the pier has deteriorated pilings and significant seawall damage and has operated under weight restrictions since 2017. The Port is advancing an approximately \$28 million rehabilitation supported by a \$1.2 million Business Oregon preconstruction grant and \$25.3 million from the federal Port Infrastructure Development Program. The project had been delayed while proposed compensatory mitigation approaches at two different sites encountered several technical barriers. DSL's removal-fill permitting staff, in consultation with the agency's mitigation specialist, determined that compensatory mitigation is not required for the project. DSL found that the work will occur on existing fill and remain entirely within the footprint of the existing dock. The resource loss is limited to degraded water-column habitat resulting from the placement of additional fill over existing fill. DSL is also coordinating with ODFW and DEQ to ensure that near-shore habitat and water-quality considerations are addressed through the eventual state permit conditions. The decision resolves a significant state permitting question and allows the project to advance while the separate federal review continues. Regional Solutions helped elevate the issue and supported communication among the Port and state agencies.

Central – Scott Aycock

Governor Kotek Visits Sisters/Akawa Butte Fire: Governor Tina Kotek joined Oregon State Forester Kasey KC, Oregon State Fire Marshal Mariana Ruiz-Temple, Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM) Director Erin McMahon, and incident command and operational staff at the Akawa Butte Fire Camp at Sisters Rodeo Grounds to receive a situation update on the Akawa Butte Fire, which is now the highest priority fire in the nation. "Across Oregon, firefighters and support crews are working nonstop to protect communities from wildfires," Governor Kotek said. "I am deeply grateful for their courage and service. We must all stand together to support their efforts, and I am working to make sure resources are in



place for successful fire suppression efforts.” The Akawa Butte Fire now stands at over 27,000 acres with containment at 5%. Fire behavior has been extreme, at times producing 150-200 foot flame lengths and a pyrocumulus cloud. Over 1,100 firefighters have been assigned to the Akawa Butte Fire. Roughly 3,500 residences are currently under threat, and nearly 6,000 people are under some level of evacuation status. During her time in Sisters, the Governor viewed the fire from the Henkle Butte Fire Lookout where the fire was first identified. She also met with volunteers and guests at the Red Cross evacuation shelter currently located at Sisters High School. Following her time at the evacuation shelter, the Governor met with local officials and state legislators at the Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire Station to hear about their experiences and discuss fire resource needs.

Geothermal Energy Potential in Oregon Workshop: I participated in a July 17 workshop on geothermal energy development in Oregon, coordinated by the PNW Geothermal Rising Group and the Bend Climate Collective during PNW Climate Week. The event included two panels featuring geothermal energy experts, natural resource experts, government and public stakeholders and



current geothermal project operators and developers. I focused on the potential for enhanced geothermal system development (ESG – “hot rocks technology”) to help meet Oregon’s GHG reduction, clean energy, and economic development goals, including the Governor’s Prosperity Roadmap. I also discussed the

prospect of creating an ESG hub in Central Oregon, leveraging R&D partnerships, workforce development, and associated services and supply chain businesses.

South Central – Scott Aycock

Lake County Business & Innovation Services/Marius Building: On a visit to Lakeview, I had the opportunity to learn more about [Community Solutions Innovators'](#) vision for the historic Marius Theater Building. Originally designed by Portland architect James W. DeYoung, the Marius Theater opened in 1930 as Lakeview's premier gathering place before closing in the early 1960s. Rather than simply restoring a historic building, CSI is reimagining the space as a long-term investment in rural capacity, preserving an important piece of Oregon's history while creating a modern resource for economic development. The building's anchor program is Lake County Business & Innovation Services (Lake Co BIS), a Small Business Incubator and Entrepreneur Development Center that will connect entrepreneurs and small businesses with business coaching, technical assistance, workforce partners, educational institutions, and regional business resources. By coordinating these services locally, the project will help strengthen existing businesses, encourage new business creation, and expand economic opportunities throughout South Central Oregon. Projects like this demonstrate how historic preservation can support broader community goals. By investing in shared community infrastructure, Lake County is creating a model that helps rural communities better connect people, partnerships, and resources, laying the foundation for long-term economic resilience

and sustainable community development. CSI describes its role as a community infrastructure partner. Community infrastructure is more than a building, it's the combination of facilities, technology, trusted local leadership, and cross-sector partnerships that enables public, private, nonprofit, and educational organizations to deliver services more effectively. By providing that local foundation, CSI helps regional partners expand their reach into remote frontier communities while reducing duplication and strengthening coordination in the Oregon Outback.



Cascade Health Alliance and Klamath Falls System of Care Awards grants: [Cascade Health Alliance](#) has awarded Klamath Community College (KCC) \$363,000 to create a collaborative center that will support low-income families in achieving economic stability, educational advancement, and self-sufficiency. Lack of affordable childcare is one of the most significant hurdles for TANF recipients pursuing employment, education, stable housing, mental health treatment, or substance use disorder recovery. By reducing childcare instability, the program directly supports TANF participants in providing quality and affordable childcare and a well-educated workforce to serve rural Oregon. CHA was an awardee of the Oregon Health Authority's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Pilot Program, and the KCC Childcare Learning Center is being developed in partnership with the Oregon Childhood Development Coalition and Klamath County. The center will provide childcare services for up to 144 infants and toddlers while also serving as an educational and workforce-training site for students enrolled in Early Childhood Education and Paraeducator programs (see [link](#) for more).

Also related to CHA, Klamath Falls System of Care recently awarded **\$174,000** to 11 nonprofit community partners for projects that address social determinants of health.

SCOEDD Brownfield Project: [The District](#) has begun work on a Brownfields project for Lakeview. Project deliverables will include updating the Lakeview Downtown Roadmap and a broadband evaluation. This work has also brought together multiple agencies and community partners in Lake County, helping align efforts and reduce duplication. New partnerships have emerged, and long-standing silos are being broken down, creating a more collaborative approach to addressing regional priorities.

Eastern — Courtney Crowell

City of Elgin Land Use Fix: DLCD and I met with the City of Elgin last week to talk about a land use problem that they have uncovered. The current city administrator has found a subdivision that was annexed into the city back in 2018 in an improper way. Now they are trying to fix the issue but it's not as simple as just bringing that land into the UGB. The only way to fix the issue is to figure out a UGB swap or have specific legislation extend the UGB around this land. We have a potential path on the UGB swap so I'll be working with the city, county and DLCD to see if we can find a way forward.

Wallowa County Commissioner Outreach: I had the opportunity to visit with new Wallowa County Commissioner Cody Lathrop this week as well as check in with Commissioner John Hillock. We had a great visit talking about type of work that Regional Solutions does and how we can work together as well as discussing some potential development opportunities near the Joseph State Airport. I'll be reaching out to the Oregon Department of Aviation to follow-up on some concerns that the commissioners have.

NEOEDD USDOE Grant: The Northeast Oregon Economic Development District (NEOEDD) received a \$15 million USDOE grant a couple years ago for the implementation of their comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS). They received this funding through a federal grant program focused on communities impacted

by transmission lines. The grant funding can be used in the NEOEDD areas that are impacted by the Boardman to Hemingway (B2H) transmission lines which include Baker and Union counties. That grant has been in limbo over the past two years, however they have received word that the grant will be able to move forward. ODOE and Regional Solutions will be working closely with NEOEDD as they navigate this process.

Stepping Stones Tour: I had the opportunity to visit the Stepping Stones Alliance shelter in Umatilla recently and learn about the great work they are doing in Umatilla and Morrow Counties. Stepping Stones is a sheltering facility between the cities of Umatilla and Hermiston that provides services to six cities in Umatilla County and two in Morrow County. They operate a sleep center year-round and have 23 individual shelter units on site. They also have a navigation center that works with clients experiencing homelessness and have the ability to grow in the future. They are significantly outside the downtown areas of both Hermiston and Umatilla but have a shuttle services the pick ups in downtown Hermiston every evening and drop offs in the morning. To expand, they need to connect to city water/sewer services. I'll be meeting with the city of Umatilla soon to see if there's anything the state can do to help that project move forward.

Resources and Opportunities

HUD Funding for Lead Hazard and Healthy Homes – Applications due August 31st

The Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes has announced three U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding opportunities that support communities in addressing lead hazards, improving healthy housing conditions, and helping older adults safely age in place. The deadline to apply for all three programs is August 31st, 2026.

Lead Hazard Reduction Grant Program

The Lead Hazard Reduction Grant Program protects children under the age of six from lead poisoning by assisting eligible jurisdictions in identifying and controlling lead-based paint hazards in privately owned rental and owner-occupied target housing. The program also includes Healthy Homes Supplemental funding to address additional housing-related health and safety hazards in homes receiving lead hazard control assistance.

Eligible Applicants: State, county and city governments, special districts and federally recognized Native American Tribes.

Contact: Damian Slaughter, (202) 725-5749, olhchh.nofa@hud.gov

More Information: [Lead Hazard Reduction](#)

Healthy Homes Production Grant Program

The Healthy Homes Production Program supports comprehensive interventions that address multiple housing-related health and safety hazards, helping reduce childhood diseases and injuries through coordinated healthy homes strategies.

Eligible Applicants: State, county and city governments, federally recognized Native American Tribes, 501(c)(3) Nonprofit organizations, and other eligible entities as identified in the NOFO.

Contact: Sacsheen S. Scott, (202) 402-4370, olhchh.nofa@hud.gov

More Information: [Healthy Homes Production](#)

Older Adults Home Modification Program

The Older Adults Home Modification Program provides funding to experienced nonprofit organizations, state and local governments, and public housing authorities to make safety and accessibility modifications that enable low-income older adults to remain safely in their homes and age in place.

Eligible Applicants: Experienced nonprofit organizations, State and local governments, and public housing authorities

Contact: Dr. Taneka Blue, (202) 402-6846, olhchh.nofa@hud.gov

More Information: [Older Adult Homes Modification](#)

Water Conservation Communications Toolkit

The Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM) and the Oregon Water Resources Department (WRD) have jointly released the [2026 Water Conservation Communications Toolkit](#), a comprehensive collection of customizable outreach materials designed to help communities communicate effectively about water conservation during Oregon's ongoing drought conditions.

The toolkit provides agencies, local governments, community organizations, and partners with ready-to-use key messages, sample news releases, social media templates, Frequently Asked Questions, and water-saving tips to support consistent statewide communication. It emphasizes practical, low-cost steps Oregonians can take to conserve water at home, including checking for leaks, watering during cooler hours, adjusting irrigation based on weather, and installing water-efficient fixtures.

OWRD and OEM thank the [Regional Water Providers Consortium](#) for sharing their research on water conservation and offering information on saving water in six languages.

Water Conservation Resources:

- [OWRD Water Conservation](#)
- [Drought Declarations](#)
- [Regional Water Providers Consortium](#)
- [Drought & Water Supply Conditions Report Email sign-up](#)
- [Current and previous Drought & Water Supply Conditions Reports](#)

OR Agencies Urge Fire-Affected Residents & Volunteers in Gilliam & Sherman Counties to Share Recovery Needs

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and the Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM) are asking individuals, landowners, producers, volunteers, and community members affected by – or assisting with – the Gilliam and Wheeler County fires to complete the 2026 Wildfire Recovery Surveys. These surveys will help state and local partners coordinate recovery support and identify critical needs across the agricultural and rural communities impacted by the fires.

Three surveys are available. Community members are encouraged to choose the option that best matches their situation:

- **[2026 Wildfire RecoSurvey](#)**: For residents and property owners affected by the fires. This survey gathers estimates of post-fire recovery needs. Exact numbers are not required. Information collected will be used solely to coordinate assistance and support affected individuals and properties.
- **[Request for Land and CRP for Animal Grazing](#)**: For landowners willing to provide access to Conservation Reserve Program, rangeland, or fallow land for grazing. This information will help match available land with producers who lost forage due to 2026 wildfire impacts.
- **[Recovery Supply Donation Survey](#)**: For individuals and organizations able to donate hay, livestock feed, fencing materials, equipment, transportation, volunteer assistance, or other recovery supplies. A coordinator may follow up to confirm needs and arrange logistics.

ODA and OEM extend their gratitude to everyone supporting response and recovery efforts. Community participation in these surveys is essential to helping ranchers, farmers, and residents recover from the Gilliam and Wheeler County fires.

[Download a printable flier](#) to help spread the word!

Remember you are not alone in dealing with the stress or everything that is happening: [The AgriStress Helpline - AgriSafe Network](#), call or text 1-833-897-2474