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State of Oregon Releases Climate Change Adaptation Framework Includes Climate Equity Blueprint

SALEM - The State of Oregon's new Climate Change Adaptation Framework calls for a coordinated, multi-agency response to climate change. The Framework emphasizes that climate change is a stress multiplier, unequally affecting Oregonians. Produced in association with the recently released Oregon Climate Assessment, the Framework recommends responses to climate change in six categories: economy, natural world, built environment and infrastructure, public health, cultural heritage, and social relationships and systems.

The Framework calls for three immediate actions. First, establish a multi-agency leadership structure to set priorities, ensure coordination among agencies and achieve balance across the state's economy, resources, and communities. Second, complete a comprehensive vulnerability and social resiliency assessment to identify Oregonians most at risk and what they need in order to adapt to a changing climate. Third, implement policies and processes that center equity in all state decision making and programs.

The Climate Equity Blueprint, produced along with the Framework, provides tools to assist state agencies in the delivery of equitable climate change adaptation programs to underserved and overburdened urban and rural communities. "The Blueprint guides us as we work to meaningfully partner with communities hardest hit by climate change," said Emily York of the Oregon Health Authority, which helped produce the Blueprint.

"As reported in the Oregon Climate Assessment, wildfires, floods, drought, heatwaves, coastal erosion, and marine changes will hit Oregon more frequently and severely," said Christine Shirley of the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, which coordinated the Framework. "The multi-agency process that created the Framework revealed ways that existing state programs can be leveraged to adapt to a changing climate. We found the need to integrate our programs to harness the state's capacity, in cooperation with local government and our community partners, to ensure that Oregon's people, economy, and ecosystems thrive in the face of rapidly accelerating climate change."

The Framework will become part of the Oregon Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, which qualifies the state to receive Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster assistance and mitigation funds. These funds augment state investments to build resilience by strengthening infrastructure and buildings, and enhancing the ability of natural systems to withstand hazard events exacerbated by climate change.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provided partial funding, allowing the Department of Land Conservation and Development to coordinate the project. Dozens of state agency staff contributed many hours to the Framework development. Funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Oregon Department of Forestry supported development of the Climate Equity Blueprint. The Oregon Climate Change Research Institute provided information on observed and projected climate changes and their effects on physical and marine environments.

The Oregon Climate Change Adaptation Framework and Climate Equity Blueprint can be downloaded at <https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/CL/Pages/Adaptation-Framework.aspx>. The site also provides more information about the project and its implementation.

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