



Working Lands in Oregon

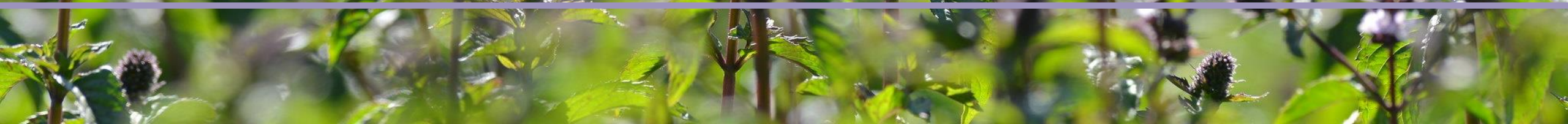
Troy Abercrombie, Oregon Department of Agriculture

Cathy Macdonald, Oregon Climate Action Commission

Sarah Reif, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

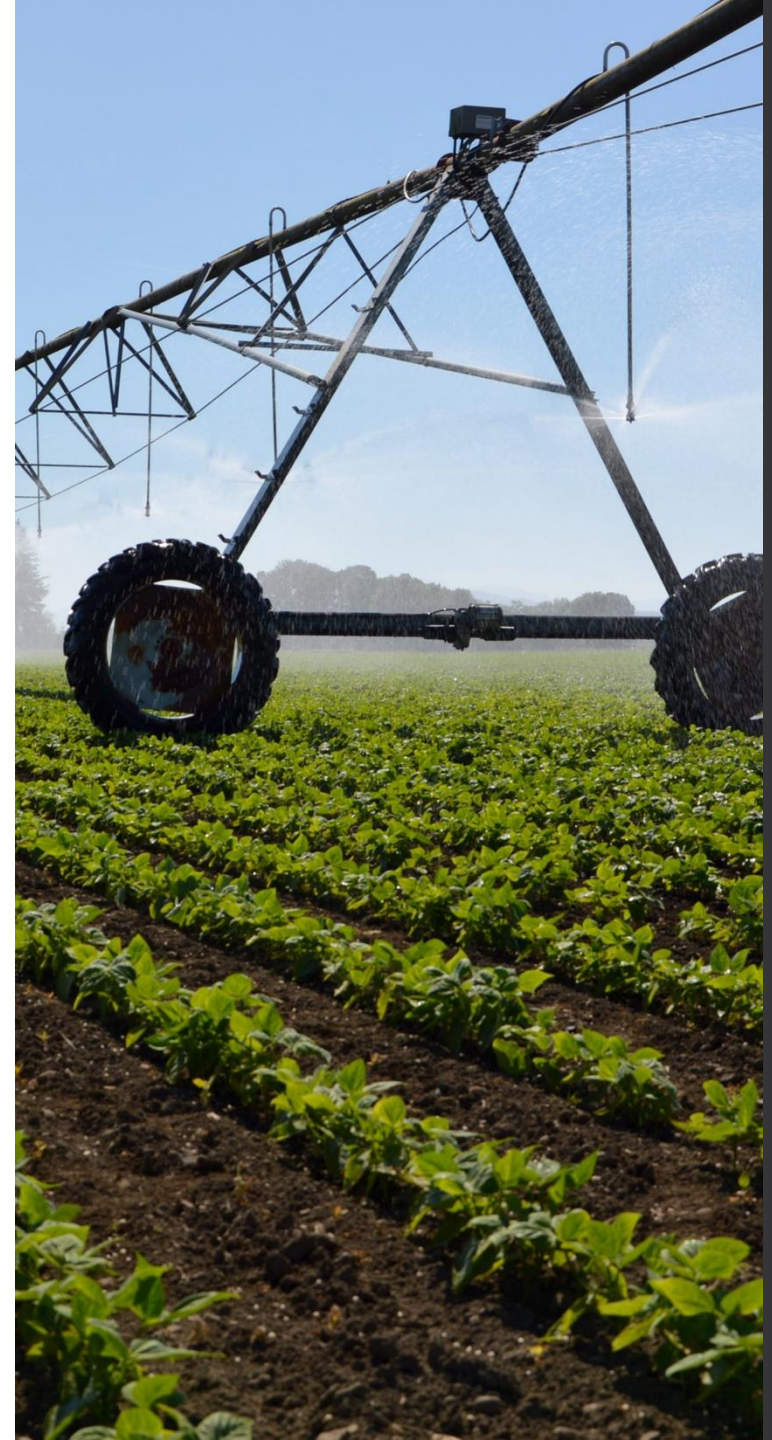
March 13, 2025

State Board of Agriculture Meeting



Natural & Working Lands

- Foundational to Oregon
 - Cultural
 - Economical
 - Ecosystem services
 - Carbon storage
 - Clean air & water
 - Food security
 - Resilience to catastrophe
 - Fish & Wildlife Habitat
- Board can provide strategic guidance, advocacy and connection to stakeholders



ODA Working Lands Priorities & Projects

Troy Abercrombie, Program Manager- Noxious Weed Control & Native
Plant Conservation



WORKING LANDS ARE WHAT WE DO

Resources and support to
Oregon Agriculture

- 15 million acres
- 70,000 producers
- 35,000 farms
- 220+ crops

ODA PROGRAMS SUPPORTING WORKING LANDS

- Technical Assistance
- Policy & Regulation
- Water Quality
- SWCD's
- Soil Health
- Certification/Inspection Programs
- Granting Programs
- Specialty Crops
- Noxious Weeds & Biocontrol
- Insect Pests & Prevention
- Fire Recovery



ODFW Working Lands Priorities & Projects

Sarah Reif, Acting Deputy Director Fish & Wildlife Programs

Jessica Watson, Acting Habitat Division Administrator



WORKING LANDS ARE WILDLIFE HABITAT

- 🦌 94% of ODFW Priority Wildlife Connectivity Areas occur on non-federal working lands
- 🦌 97% of deer and elk winter range in eastern Oregon is on non-federal working lands

ODFW PROGRAMS SUPPORTING WORKING LANDS

- 🦌 Technical Assistance – land use, waterways, restoration
- 🦌 Regional Habitat Biologists
- 🦌 Fish & Wildlife Biologists
- 🦌 NRCS Partner Biologists
- 🦌 Grants: PFA, OCRF
- 🦌 Access & Habitat Program
- 🦌 Fish Passage Program
- 🦌 Tax Incentive Programs: WHCMP, RLTIP



Oregon Climate Action Commission

Cathy Macdonald, Chair

OREGON CLIMATE ACTION COMMISSION

- ❖ Established by the 2007 Oregon Legislature (ORS 468A.210).
- ❖ ODOE Supports the Commission.
- ❖ Primary Charge – produce a biennial report that:
 - ✓ Tracks progress toward our climate mitigation goals
 - ✓ Makes recommendations for changes in policies and programs
 - ✓ Educates Oregonians on the risks of climate impacts and need for mitigation and adaptation
- ❖ Modernized as part of House Bill 3409
 - ✓ Expanded membership
 - ✓ Additional responsibilities
 - ✓ Increased agency capacity to support the Commission



2021 NATURAL AND WORKING LANDS PROPOSAL

Over 1000 Oregonians provided comments through surveys and focus groups

Includes:

- Summary of public input
- Identified Principles
- Draft N&WL Goals and Metrics
- Recommended Strategies for achieving the goal



Natural & Working Lands Proposal
2021

HB 3409 – SECTIONS 53 - 67

- Defined Natural Climate Solutions (NCS) and Natural and Working Lands (N&WL)
- Declared that it is the policy of the state to advance NCS
- Directed OCAC to recommend net sequestration goals for N&WL
- Directed agencies to develop and report on an inventory and metrics
- Provided authority to create a N&WL Advisory Group
- Directed OCAC to conduct Tribal consultation
- Directed the Commission to complete a workforce and training study
- Created a fund to invest in agency programs that support voluntary landowner and rights holder adoption of NCS practices



NATURAL AND WORKING LANDS FUND

- \$10 million to support natural climate solutions in 2023 session
- Four eligible agencies (OWEB, ODFW, ODA, ODF)
- Allocations made by Oregon Climate Action Commission in collaboration with the agencies



PURPOSE OF THE FUND

- Provide incentives, technical assistance, and financial assistance to advance natural climate solutions
- Prioritize the use of existing programs and seek to leverage federal investments
- Prioritize projects proposed by environmental justice communities and Tribes
- Optimize the social, health, ecological, climate resilience, and economic co-benefits of natural climate solutions





2024 OCAC APPROVED INVESTMENTS

Ambitious, cohesive proposal across the four eligible agencies – including 13 areas of investment

Consistent with statutory direction

- Coordinated proposal
- Leverages significant federal funding
- Largely based in existing programs
- Supports environmental justice communities, Tribes, landowners and land managers

ODF & OWEB NWL INVESTMENTS

ODF

- Increase adoption of climate-smart forestry practices for sequestration
- Build capacity for climate-ready seed and seedlings at existing ODF seed orchard

OWEB

- Ag Heritage Program Grants for development and implementation of management plans
- Grants for Restoration and Technical Assistance across all 5 land sectors



ODA INVESTMENTS

- **\$530,000 for Oregon Native Seed Strategy (ONSS)**
 - Native seedstock is critical to conservation and restoration of natural and working lands and the ecosystem services they provide
 - ONSS ensures access to reliable supply of ecologically appropriate native seed through collection, storage, production and technical assistance
 - \$125,000 to Tribal Native Plant Programs
- **\$360,000 for Rangeland Resilience/IAG**
 - Healthy, functional rangelands are crucial to carbon sequestration, resilience to wildfires, and climate change
 - 5-year project in partnership with NRCS
 - Two Rangeland Health Specialist positions
 - Technical assistance, strategic planning, funding to landowners/managers



NATIVE SEED STRATEGY

- Collaborative effort of the Oregon Native Seed Collective (ONSC)
- ONSC, led by ODA, is a partnership of state, federal, tribal and local governments. NGO's and academia
- United by common missions, common understanding of the importance of high-functioning native ecosystems
- ONSS is a guidance document that supports ecological restoration and conservation through the procurement, preservation, and production of native seed in Oregon



Oregon Native Seed Strategy

OREGON NATIVE SEED COLLECTIVE

2025

Oregon Ecoregion Map



Photo Credits

Nearshore: Troy Abercrombie
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Coast Range: Anna Ramthun

Columbia Plateau: Danielle Marshall
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- Native plant communities are resilient
- Numerous co-benefits
 - Ecosystem services & carbon storage
 - Habitat & biodiversity
 - Productivity
 - Cultural significance and value
- When restoring these lands, using ecologically appropriate seed stock is critical
 - Adapted to environmental conditions

2024 IMPLEMENTATION

- Collection and banking
- Producer trainings
- Farmer co-ops
- Shared infrastructure
- Tribal engagement and financial support
- Integration into existing restoration efforts

Goals of the Oregon Native Seed Strategy

GOAL 1:
Ensure Ecologically Appropriate Native Seed is Available in Oregon for Restoration, Rehabilitation, and Mitigation



GOAL 2:
Facilitate Research to Address Gaps in Native Seed Production and Use



GOAL 3:
Develop and Leverage Resources that Enable Land Managers and Growers to Make Timely and Informed Decisions



GOAL 4:
Develop and Implement a Conservation Seed Banking Program to Enhance Recovery of Priority Sensitive Species



GOAL 5:
Secure Reliable Funding and Develop and Implement Strategies for Internal and External Communications



AG AND THE ONSS

- Production Ag facilitates solutions to supply chain deficiencies
- Diversification Opportunity
- Value-Added Production
- Rural Economic Development
- Leverage Existing Expertise & Infrastructure
- Create Lasting Resiliency and Productivity





ODFW NATURAL & WORKING LANDS INVESTMENTS

- \$3.04 million to support diverse projects, including
 - Floodplain restoration with Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
 - Estuary restoration - Tillamook, Umpqua
 - Fire resilience in oak woodland with Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
 - Grassland Restoration - Wasco County
 - Natural Climate Solutions Biologists – 2.0 FTE

- Co-benefits for working lands, carbon, fish and wildlife

ODFW WORKING LANDS BIOLOGISTS

- 🦌 NWL Project Implementation
- 🦌 Partnerships
- 🦌 Technical Service Providers
- 🦌 Fundraising, grant writing
- 🦌 Monitoring
- 🦌 Tracking & sharing accomplishments



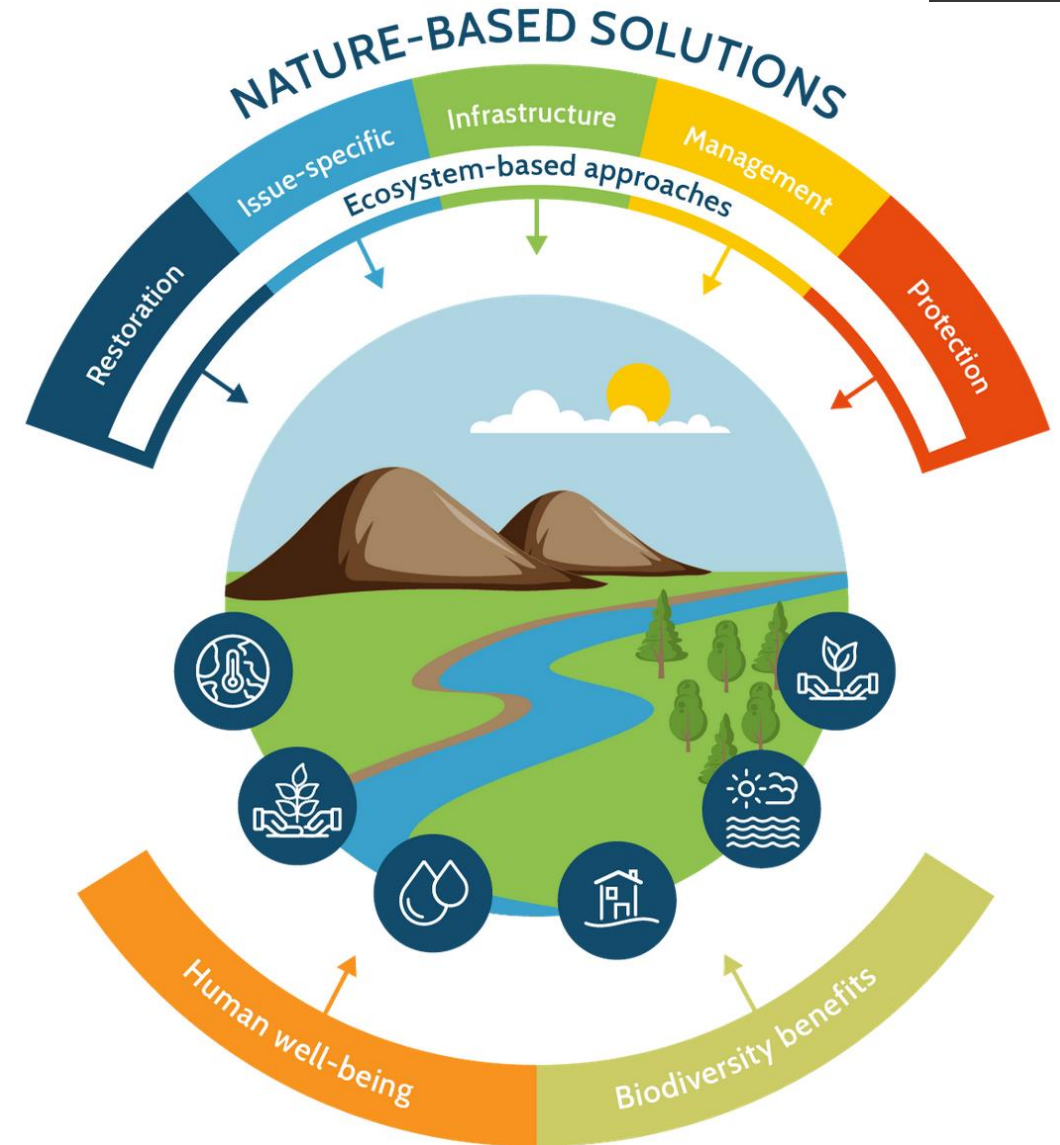


EXAMPLE: SAGEBRUSH STEPPE SEED STRATEGY

- ODA Native Seed Strategy
- ODFW Working Lands Biologists
- SageCon Partnership – Prineville Local Implementation Team
- Landscape scale habitat restoration, post-fire rehabilitation
- Develop a targeted native seed strategy

ENGAGEMENT & OPPORTUNITY

- Agencies accomplish missions through individual and collaborative efforts
- For landowners to increase productivity, safeguard well-being
- Development of new markets, to leverage existing strengths
- Identify common values, create shared understanding, develop relationships
- Restore, conserve and protect resilient natural and working lands and the services they provide



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