



OREGON
WATERSHED
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Hybrid Board Meeting
Burns, OR
October 27-28, 2026



OREGON
WATERSHED
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Public Comment

Agenda Items B and F

Submitted written public comment will be published in a supplemental document after the board meeting and posted on OWEB's website: [October 27-28, 2026 meeting](#)



Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

October 27-28, 2026 | Burns, OR | Meeting Agenda

OWEB Board meetings are open to the public. This meeting can be attended both in-person and virtually.

In-person Location: The Central Hotel (171 N Broadway Ave, Burns, OR 97720)

YouTube: [Watch Meeting Livestream](#). Please note that there may be a slight delay when streaming the meeting live. The recording can be found on YouTube and linked on the meeting website after the meeting.

Zoom

October 27: [Attend Meeting Virtually: Tuesday](#)

October 28: [Attend Meeting Virtually: Wednesday](#)

Meeting Materials: Available online at [October 27-28, 2026, meeting webpage](#).

Public Comment

OWEB welcomes public comment on any agenda item.

The deadline for submitting written comments or signing up to provide verbal comments is **5:00 pm Thursday, October 22, 2026**.

Written comments should be submitted using [OWEB's Public Comment Form](#) and will be provided to the Board before the meeting.

Verbal comments can be made virtually or in-person, are limited to three minutes, and will be heard in the public comment periods. You should sign up to give verbal comments using [OWEB's Public Comment Form](#), including the following items:

- Your preferred timeslot (Agenda Item B or E) – if your schedule is flexible, please say so and you will be assigned a time
- Topic of your comments
- Do you plan to join us virtually or in-person

For additional information on [ways to provide public comment and tips for commenting in person](#), please refer to our website. If you have any questions, contact [Nicole Bettinardi](#).

Timing of Agenda Items

Generally, agenda items will be taken in the order shown. Though the times are approximate, every effort is made to follow the timing as listed. In certain circumstances, the Board may elect to take an item out of order or the agenda may shift to account for board discussion.

More Information

If you have any questions about this agenda or the board's procedures, please contact Nicole Bettinardi, OWEB Executive Assistant and Board Liaison, at 503-428-1804 or Nicole.BETTINARDI@OWEB.oregon.gov.

If physical, auditory, language, or other accommodations are needed for this meeting, please contact Nicole Bettinardi as soon as possible, and at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Tuesday, October 27, 2026

Board Tour: 7:45 am – 11:45 am, The Central Hotel (171 N Broadway Ave, Burns, OR 97720)

OWEB has made significant investments to improve habitat in the in big landscapes with multiple land management jurisdictions of Harney County. High Desert Partnership, Harney Soil and Water Conservation District, and Harney County Watershed Council coordinate along with many other partners to tackle a multitude of habitat concerns and issues. Tour stops will include the Malheur Nation Wildlife Refuge and Buena Vista Overlook. The public is welcome to join the tour. Be prepared to provide your own transportation and for inclement weather

Meeting Agenda

Time	Agenda Item
1:00 pm	Welcome and agenda overview
1:15 pm	Item A. Director's Updates Executive Director Sara O'Brien and staff will update the board on agency business. <i>Information item.</i>
2:00 pm	Item B. Public Comment This time is reserved for the board to hear public comments and review the written public comment submitted for the meeting. <i>Information item.</i>
2:30 pm	Break
2:40 pm	Item C. 2027-2029 Spending Plan Executive Director Sara O'Brien and staff update the board on the process and timeline for the development of the 2027-2029 biennial spending plan and will seek board feedback. <i>Information item.</i>
3:50 pm	Break
4:00 pm	Item D. Land Acquisition Grant Program Modernization Update and Recommendations Acquisitions & Special Programs Manager Renee Davis and Executive Director Sara O'Brien will provide an update on the land acquisition grant program modernization process in progress and seek board approval on staff recommendations. <i>Action item.</i>
5:00 pm	Adjourn

Board Reception: 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm, The Pine Room (543 W Monroe St, Burns, OR 97720)

The OWEB Board will host an informal reception at The Pine Room in Burns. The public is welcome to attend. Light appetizers will be provided.

Wednesday, October 28, 2026

Meeting Agenda

Time	Agenda Item
8:30 am	Welcome and agenda overview
8:35 am	Item E. Board Member Comments Board representatives from state and federal agencies will provide updates on issues related to the natural resource agency they represent. This is also an opportunity for public and tribal board members to report on their recent activities and share information and comments on a variety of watershed enhancement and community conservation-related topics. <i>Information item.</i>
10:00 am	Break
10:10 am	Item F. Public Comment This time is reserved for the board to hear public comments and review the written public comment submitted for the meeting. <i>Information item.</i>
10:30 am	Item G. General Board Business This time is reserved for the board to act on routine items. Items for board action include the meeting minutes from the previous board meeting and grant deadline extensions for 3 Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program projects. <i>Action item.</i>
10:40 am	Item H. Executive Order 25-26 Workplan Water & Climate Coordinator Alexa Schmidt will provide an overview of OWEB's workplan to implement Executive Order 25-26 for the 2027-2029 biennium, developed in partnership with 14 state agencies and the Columbia River Gorge Commission. <i>Information item.</i>
11:10 am	Item I. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds (PCSRF) Monitoring & Reporting Manager Courtney Shaff and ODFW Fish Screening & Passage Program Manager Greg Apke will update the board on how the ODFW uses its annual portion of the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds (PCSRF), with a highlight on the Fish Screens and Passage program. <i>Information Item.</i>
11:55 am	Lunch
1:00 pm	Item J. Telling the Restoration Story: Plants for People Conservation Outcomes Coordinator Audrey Hatch and Monitoring & Reporting Manager Courtney Shaff will present to the board on the technical and outreach products resulting from OWEB's Telling the Restoration Story project featuring the Plants for People restoration efforts. <i>Information Item.</i>
1:30 pm	Item K. Watershed Council Panel Regional Program Representative Liz Redon will introduce staff from a four Watershed Councils to discuss with the board their experiences and challenges around organizational capacity. <i>Information item.</i>
2:40 pm	Item M. Other Business This item is reserved for other matters that may come before the board. <i>Information item.</i>
3:00 pm	Adjourn

Meeting Rules and Procedures

Meeting Procedures

Generally, agenda items will be taken in the order shown. However, in certain circumstances, the board may elect to take an item out of order. Additionally, topics not listed on the agenda may be introduced during the meeting.

Oregon's Public Meetings Law requires disclosure that board members may meet for meals when OWEB meetings are convened.

Voting Rules

The OWEB Board has 18 members. Of these, 11 are voting members and 7 are non-voting advisory members. For purposes of conducting business, OWEB's voting requirements are divided into 2 categories – general business and action on grant awards.

Action on General Business

For general business, a quorum is **6 voting members**. General business requires a majority of **all** voting members to pass a resolution (not just those present), so general business resolutions require affirmative votes of **at least 6 voting members**. Typical resolutions include adopting, amending, or appealing a rule, providing staff direction, etc. These resolutions cannot include a funding decision.

Action on Funding Decisions

Per ORS 541.900(4), special requirements apply when OWEB considers action on funding decisions such as grant awards. This includes a special **quorum of at least 8 voting members** present to act on grant awards, and affirmative votes of at least six voting members. Regardless of the number of members present, **if 3 or more voting members** object to an award of funds, the proposal will be rejected.

Executive Session

The board may also convene in a confidential executive session where, by law, only press members and OWEB staff may attend. Others will be asked to leave the room during these discussions, which usually deal with current or potential litigation. Before convening such a session, the presiding board member will make a public announcement and explain necessary procedures.

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Membership

Voting Members

Chad Allen, *Board of Agriculture*
Zavier Borja, *Public*
Raija Bushnell, *Public*
Kelly Coates, *Board Co-Chair, Public, Tribal Representative*
Sarah Dyrdaahl, *Public*
Russ Hoeflich, *Public*
Mark Labhart, *Fish and Wildlife Commission*
Lindsay McClary, *Board Co-Chair, Public*
Mark Webb, *Environmental Quality Commission*
Woody Wolfe, *Water Resources Commission*
Vacant, *Board of Forestry*

Non-voting Members

Annie Birnie, *National Marine Fisheries Service*
Dan Brown, *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*
Aaron Curtis, *U.S. Bureau of Land Management*
Jessi Kershner, *Oregon State University Extension Service*
Dirk Renner, *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*
Brian Staab, *U.S. Forest Service*
Claire Tachella, *U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service*

Contact Information

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Sara.E.OBRIEN@OWEB.oregon.gov

OWEB Executive Assistant & Board Liaison –
Nicole Bettinardi
Nicole.BETTINARDI@OWEB.oregon.gov

2026 Board Meeting Schedule

January 27-28 – Virtual
April 28-29 – Canyonville
July 28-29 – The Dalles
Oct 27-28 – Burns

2027 Board Meeting Schedule

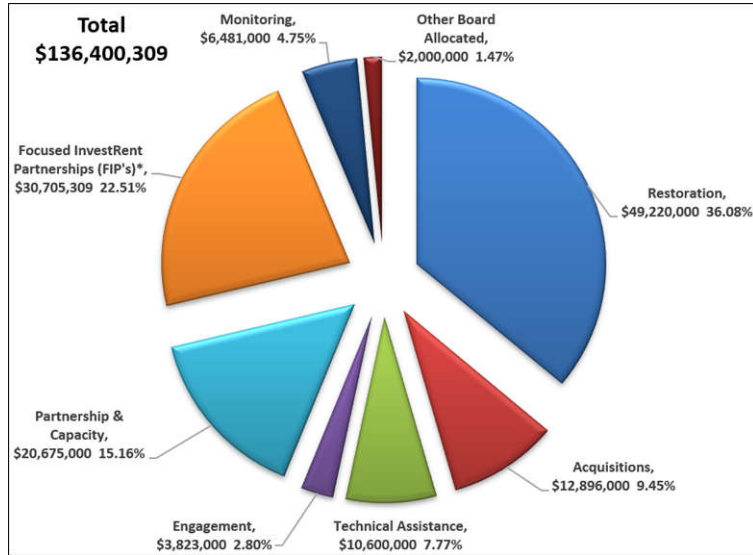
January 26-27 – Virtual
April 27-28 – TBD
July 27-28 – TBD
Oct 26-27 – TBD

For online access to staff reports and other
OWEB publications, visit our website:
www.oregon.gov/OWEB.

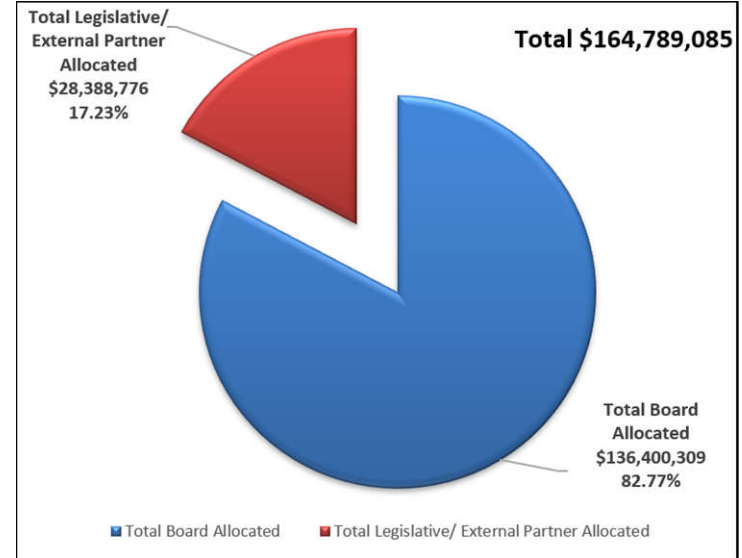
OWEB 2025-2027 GRANT FUNDS SPENDING PLAN

OCTOBER 2026 Board Meeting

**2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan -
Grant Types in Board Allocated Funding**



**2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan - Board Allocated Funding and
Legislative/External Partner Allocated Funding**



	GRANT PROGRAMS	2025-2027 Spending Plan (As of July 2026)	October 2026 Proposed Additions	2025-2027 Spending Plan	Awarded to Date	October 2026 Proposed Awards	TOTAL Awards To-Date & Proposed Awards	Remaining Spending Plan after Awards
Board Allocated Funding								
1	Restoration							
2	Open Solicitation	39,880,000		39,880,000	\$ 24,477,081	\$ -	\$ 24,477,081	\$ 15,402,919
3	Weed Grants	3,500,000		3,500,000	\$ 3,500,000	\$ -	\$ 3,500,000	\$ -
4	Small Grants	4,760,000		4,760,000	\$ 4,760,000	\$ -	\$ 4,760,000	\$ -
5	Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership	330,000		330,000	\$ 330,000	\$ -	\$ 330,000	\$ -
6	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Prog (CREP)-Cost Share	750,000		750,000	\$ 750,000	\$ -	\$ 750,000	\$ -
7	Total Restoration	\$ 49,220,000	\$ -	\$ 49,220,000	\$ 33,817,081	\$ -	\$ 33,817,081	\$ 15,402,919
8	Acquisitions							
9	Land and Water Acquisition	12,896,000		12,896,000	\$ 5,668,273	\$ -	\$ 5,668,273	\$ 7,227,727
10	Total Acquisitions	\$ 12,896,000	\$ -	\$ 12,896,000	\$ 5,668,273	\$ -	\$ 5,668,273	\$ 7,227,727
11	Technical Assistance							
12	Open Solicitation	8,000,000		8,000,000	\$ 5,382,010		\$ 5,382,010	\$ 2,617,990
13	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) TA ⁽²⁾	1,600,000		1,600,000	\$ 1,629,961		\$ 1,629,961	\$ (29,961)
14	Tribal Project Development	1,000,000		1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -
15	Total Technical Assistance	\$ 10,600,000	\$ -	\$ 10,600,000	\$ 8,011,971	\$ -	\$ 8,011,971	\$ 2,588,029

	GRANT PROGRAMS	2025-2027 Spending Plan (As of July 2026)	October 2026 Proposed Additions	2025-2027 Spending Plan	Awarded to Date	October 2026 Proposed Awards	TOTAL Awards To-Date & Proposed Awards	Remaining Spending Plan after Awards
16	Engagement							
17	Open Solicitation	2,323,000		2,323,000	\$ 1,472,847		\$ 1,472,847	\$ 850,153
18	Strategic Implementation Areas ⁽¹⁾	1,500,000		1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ -	\$ 1,500,000	\$ -
19	Total Engagement	\$ 3,823,000	\$ -	\$ 3,823,000	\$ 2,972,847	\$ -	\$ 2,972,847	\$ 850,153
20	Partnership & Capacity							
21	Capacity grants - Watershed Councils (WC)	9,900,000		9,900,000	\$ 9,899,792	\$ -	\$ 9,899,792	\$ 208
22	Capacity grants - Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD)	8,700,000		8,700,000	\$ 8,700,000	\$ -	\$ 8,700,000	\$ -
23	Statewide Organizational Conservation Partnership Support	525,000		525,000	\$ 525,000	\$ -	\$ 525,000	\$ -
24	Partnership Technical Assistance	1,200,000		1,200,000	\$ 590,048	\$ -	\$ 590,048	\$ 609,952
25	Sage Grouse Conservation Partnership	350,000		350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ -	\$ 350,000	\$ -
26	Total Partnership & Capacity	\$ 20,675,000	\$ -	\$ 20,675,000	\$ 20,064,840	\$ -	\$ 20,064,840	\$ 610,160
27	Focused Investment Partnerships (FIP) ⁽¹⁾ :							
28	Cohort 3 - 3rd Biennium							
29	Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network	2,959,837		2,959,837	\$ 2,959,837	\$ -	\$ 2,959,837	\$ -
30	East Cascades Oak & Fire Partnership	2,177,000		2,177,000	\$ 2,177,000	\$ -	\$ 2,177,000	\$ -
31	Siuslaw Coho Partnership	4,000,000		4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -
32	Coos Basin Coho Partnership	3,747,408		3,747,408	\$ 3,747,408	\$ -	\$ 3,747,408	\$ -
33	Oregon Central Coast Estuary Collaborative	2,390,250		2,390,250	\$ 2,390,250	\$ -	\$ 2,390,250	\$ -
34	Cohort 4 - 2nd Biennium							
35	Hood River Basin Partnership	3,503,414		3,503,414	\$ 3,503,414	\$ -	\$ 3,503,414	\$ -
36	Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership	4,000,000		4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -
37	Oregon Sage-Grouse Partnership	4,000,000		4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -
38	Harney Basin Wetlands Collaborative	3,927,400		3,927,400	\$ 3,927,400	\$ -	\$ 3,927,400	\$ -
39	Total FIP's	\$ 30,705,309	\$ -	\$ 30,705,309	\$ 30,705,309	\$ -	\$ 30,705,309	\$ -
40	Monitoring							
41	Open Solicitation	5,381,000		5,381,000	\$ 2,880,536		\$ 2,880,536	\$ 2,500,464
42	Quantifying Conservation Outputs and Outcomes	600,000		600,000	\$ 64,979	\$ -	\$ 64,979	\$ 535,021
43	FIP Effectiveness Monitoring	500,000		500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ 500,000	\$ -
44	Total Monitoring	\$ 6,481,000	\$ -	\$ 6,481,000	\$ 3,445,515	\$ -	\$ 3,445,515	\$ 3,035,485
45	Other Board Allocated							
46	Governor's Priorities	2,000,000		2,000,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -
47	Total Other	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -
48	TOTAL BOARD ALLOCATED	\$ 136,400,309	\$ -	\$ 136,400,309	\$ 106,685,836	\$ -	\$ 106,685,836	\$ 29,714,473
49	Percent (%) of OWEB Grant Funds Spending Plan total	82.77%						
50	Recommended Board Unallocated Funds = 5%			7,179,116				

	GRANT PROGRAMS	2025-2027 Spending Plan (As of July 2026)	October 2026 Proposed Additions	2025-2027 Spending Plan	Awarded to Date	October 2026 Proposed Awards	TOTAL Awards To-Date & Proposed Awards	Remaining Spending Plan after Awards
Legislative/External Partner								
51	Restoration							
52	Bureau of Land Management-Good Neighbor Authority ⁽¹⁾	5,000,000		5,000,000	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -
53	US Fish & Wildlife-Coastal Wetlands Project (TBD)	-		-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
54	Upper Klamath Water Quality Improvements-PacifiCorp IM11	5,709,407		5,709,407	\$ 5,709,407	\$ -	\$ 5,709,407	\$ -
55	Watershed Natural Climate Solutions Fund ⁽³⁾	1,497,476		1,497,476	\$ 1,497,476	\$ -	\$ 1,497,476	\$ -
56	Total Restoration	\$ 12,206,883	\$ -	\$ 12,206,883	\$ 12,206,883	\$ -	\$ 12,206,883	\$ -
57	Acquisitions							
58	Water Acquisition - Flexible Incentive Account	5,000,000		5,000,000	\$ 3,670,764	\$ -	\$ 3,670,764	\$ 1,329,236
59	Drinking Water Source Protection Program	1,000,000		1,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000
60	Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP)	1,760,000		1,760,000	\$ 1,610,216	\$ -	\$ 1,610,216	\$ 149,784
61	Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) - Watershed Natural Climate Solutions Fund ⁽³⁾	752,524		752,524	\$ 752,524	\$ -	\$ 752,524	\$ -
62	Total Acquisitions	\$ 8,512,524	\$ -	\$ 8,512,524	\$ 6,033,504	\$ -	\$ 6,033,504	\$ 2,479,020
63	Technical Assistance							
64	USDA-NRCS Farm Bill Technical Assistance Amendment	363,722		363,722	\$ 363,722	\$ -	\$ 363,722	\$ -
65	Total Technical Assistance	\$ 363,722	\$ -	\$ 363,722	\$ 363,722	\$ -	\$ 363,722	
66	Partnership & Capacity							
67	Forest Health Collaborative-Oregon Department of Forestry	370,048		370,048	\$ 370,048		\$ 370,048	\$ -
68	Total Partnership & Capacity	\$ 370,048	\$ -	\$ 370,048	\$ 370,048	\$ -	\$ 370,048	\$ -
69	Monitoring							
70	Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission-(PSMFC) Intensively Monitored Watersheds	264,597	-	264,597	\$ 264,597	\$ -	\$ 264,597	\$ -
71	Total Monitoring	\$ 264,597	\$ -	\$ 264,597	\$ 264,597	\$ -	\$ 264,597	\$ -
72	Other Legislative/External Partner Allocated							
73	Oregon Dept of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW)-PCSRF(Federal Funds)	6,671,002	-	6,671,002	\$ 6,671,002	\$ -	\$ 6,671,002	\$ -
74	Total Other	\$ 6,671,002	\$ -	\$ 6,671,002	\$ 6,671,002	\$ -	\$ 6,671,002	\$ -
75	TOTAL LEGISLATIVE/EXTERNAL PARTNER ALLOCATED	\$ 28,388,776	\$ -	\$ 28,388,776	\$ 25,909,756	\$ -	\$ 25,909,756	\$ 2,479,020
76	Percent (%) of OWEB Grant Funds Spending Plan total	17.23%						
TOTAL OWEB 2025-2027 Grant Spending Plan								
		\$ 164,789,085	\$ -	\$ 164,789,085	\$ 132,595,592	\$ -	\$ 132,595,592	\$ 32,193,493

⁽¹⁾ This program may include a variety of grant types (e.g. Restoration, Engagement, Technical Assistance, and Acquisition, etc.)

⁽²⁾ This includes NRCS CREP TA funds awarded of \$162,532

⁽³⁾ These funds total \$2.25M from the 2023-2025 OCAC allocation to OWEB



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Committee Updates



Committee Members

Chad Allen, Dan Brown (co-chair), Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich (co-chair), Dirk Renner, Mark Webb.

Meeting Summary

The Acquisitions, Restoration, and Emerging Topics (ARE) committee met on [September 10, 2026](#).

After a welcome by the co-chairs and introductions of participants, the committee received public comment. No written public comment was received. Karsyn Kendrick, Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts, provided verbal public comment.

Land Acquisition Program Modernization – Final recommendations

Sara O'Brien, Executive Director, and Renee Davis, Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager, reviewed the final set of program recommendations for the land acquisition modernization process. These recommendations address several topics that were previously discussed by the committee and then refined based on committee feedback; these include:

- Expectations around ecological function
- Changes to conservation easement (CE) and interaction with associated documents relative to past practice
- Management plan process
- Use of areas of impact
- Approach to multiple uses

Staff requested input from the committee about the refined recommendations, which will be presented to the OWEB board in October. Final recommendations approved by the board then will inform an internal/external workgroup that will delve into detailed work in preparation for more significant program updates prior to the 2027 land acquisition grant cycle. The use of a workgroup will ensure that the agency's decisions related to major changes in program implementation and requirements are conducted in a manner that includes information and perspectives of those entities that utilize OWEB funding. An overarching goal will be to work with partners to determine a shared understanding about what accountability looks like, with the intent of building a collaborative relationship and focusing on accountability from a place of partnership.

Overall, the committee was very supportive of the revised recommendations and plan for subsequent work by the workgroup. Regarding the first bullet, committee feedback underscored several expectations: 1) applicants will clearly describe why a proposed project is important and timely from a fish and wildlife habitat perspective; 2) OWEB should not include detailed information about exactly how applicants will deliver future habitat benefits in a CE; 3) the agency is increasing its risk tolerance by enabling applicants/grantees to provide a higher level roadmap about their plans for property management and stewardship; and 4) a collaborative partnership with grantees is important to understand progress on funded projects. The committee encouraged staff to rely on Constitutional language and the state wildlife action plan to the maximum degree possible. They also requested an update about the Tribal workstream, for which staff will begin scheduling meetings with federally

recognized Tribes this fall. Staff will provide periodic updates about both the internal/external workgroup process and the Tribal workstream follow-ups to the ARE committee.

Open Solicitation Awards Discussion

The second half of the meeting was dedicated to a discussion with the committee about how best to prepare the board for making Open Solicitation award decisions. Liz Redon, Willamette Regional Program Representative, described how Open Solicitation is the grant program that was created when OWEB became an agency in 1999 and is a high-volume grant offering with typically 100 to 200 applications received each cycle that occur twice a year. This results in a high volume of material provided to the Board through the staff report and presentations at Board meetings.

The purpose of the committee conversation was to brainstorm ideas for how staff might deliver information to best support the Board's decision process. Three questions were posed to the committee: 1) What is missing in either the staff report or presentation that would help you with your decision? 2) What elements of the Open Solicitation staff presentation should we keep? 3) How might staff better describe the funding line recommendation to the Board? The committee discussion focused on the following topics:

- a) Presentation content currently includes components that are helpful context by providing information about process when there are new Board members, reminding the Board of the spending plan, and providing examples of projects when there is not time to review every project. It may be challenging to eliminate content from the presentation and provide Board members with enough context for understanding the Open Solicitation recommendation, especially when new members join the Board. Staff can look for areas to streamline the presentation content and maybe move portions of the background process information to the Board report.
- b) Additional information describing how staff determined where to draw funding lines would provide helpful context for the Board deliberation of Open Solicitation awards. Staff will look for opportunities in the staff report and presentation where information can be provided to describe how funding lines were determined for each of the grant types.
- c) It is challenging to consider new project information during Board deliberation of Open Solicitation awards in an equitable way. New project information is not considered by review teams or OWEB staff because administrative rules state applications will be considered final as submitted and new information not requested by OWEB will not be accepted after the application deadline. There is currently not a process for OWEB to ask for additional information from applicants because the current review process requires the full six-month timeline to be completed in time for the Board award, an additional step to incorporate new information equitably across applicants will require additional time. If OWEB wants to explore additional process to accept and consider new information as part of the grant review and staff recommendation to the Board, further discussion is needed to determine options and tradeoffs, such as moving to one-cycle a year to allow for additional process steps for new information.



Committee Members

Zavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Lindsay McClary (co-chair), and Woody Wolfe (co-chair)

Meeting Summary

The Partnerships and Capacity committee met on [September 8, 2026](#).

The committee conducted an election for committee co-chair, heard an update on the Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) Grants solicitation and a status update on Operating Capacity Rulemaking. The committee received no public comments for this meeting.

Co-Chair Election

Zavier Borja nominated Raija Bushnell to serve as co-chair of the committee, Sarah Dyrdaahl seconded the motion. The committee voted unanimously to elect Raija Bushnell as co-chair.

FIP Solicitation

Eric Hartstein, Senior Policy Coordinator, provided an overview of the FIP Cohort Five applications that were submitted. OWEB received 12 applications covering ecological priorities for Aquatic Habitat for Native Species, Dry-Type Forest Habitat, Oak & Prairie Habitat, and Sagebrush-Sage/Steppe Habitat. The committee was informed how to access the applications and discussed initial preparation for the applicant interviews that will be held November 18-19. The committee reviewed and discussed preliminary options for the number of Cohort Five applications that may be funded considering the board spending plan (see Agenda Item C).

Operating Capacity Rulemaking

Eric Hartstein, Senior Policy Coordinator, provided an update on Operating Capacity Rulemaking including the development of a rulemaking advisory committee and the preliminary RAC meeting schedule. The RAC will meet roughly monthly, October through March.

Upcoming Agenda Items

The committee will conduct interviews with Cohort Five FIP initiative partnerships November 18-19 in Salem. Following the interviews, the committee will make a recommendation to the board on selecting Cohort Five FIP partnerships for funding at the January 26-27 meeting.



Committee Members

Mark Labhart, Brian Staab, Annie Birnie, Aaron Curtis, Claire Tachella (co-chair), and Jessi Kershner (co-chair)

Meeting Summary

Tracking and Communicating Outcomes, Mission, and Values committee met on [September 9, 2026](#).

Courtney Shaff, Monitoring and Reporting Manager provided an overview of the Strategic Implementation Area (SIA) Program and Jordan Anderson, Yamhill SWCD Conservation Projects Manager, shared lessons learned and outcomes from SIA program implementation and monitoring.

Courtney Shaff and Ken Fetcho, Effectiveness Monitoring Coordinator, provided an overview of Quantifying Conservation Outputs and Outcomes investments from previous biennia and discussed board priorities for the 2027-2029 biennium related to monitoring and tracking outcomes.

Upcoming Committee Agenda Items

At the next committee meeting, we will continue to talk about committee priorities for the 2027-2029 biennium, the board-adopted spending plan and begin reviewing open solicitation monitoring program ahead of possible program adjustments for the 2027-2029 biennium.



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Agenda Item A

Director's Updates

Board Meeting October 27-28, 2026



This report provides the board updates on upcoming OWEB rulemaking efforts.

Background

Grant programs at OWEB are guided by administrative rules. Rules cover topics such as project eligibility, application requirements, evaluation criteria, technical review processes, and funding decisions for OWEB grant programs/types.

OWEB regularly conducts rulemaking to update existing rules and establish rules for new programs. Generally, rulemaking takes 12 months from board initiation to rule adoption. During those 12 months, OWEB staff recruit a Rulemaking Advisory Committee (RAC) through a process consistent with Oregon Administrative Procedures law (ORS 183.333) that requires the committee to be made up of entities most likely to be impacted by the rules, develop draft rule language, hold several RAC meetings to discuss rule language, and provide formal tribal and public notification to receive comments on draft rules. The schedule may be abbreviated in instances where a RAC is not involved in rulemaking.

The process begins when staff requests the board initiate rulemaking in an [OWEB rules division](#). At that time, staff will provide a high-level overview of what is intended to be accomplished with rulemaking and describe the draft schedule. For rulemaking efforts that involve a RAC, staff will provide the board a progress update on key emerging themes of the draft rules at a second meeting near the middle of the rulemaking. At a third board meeting, staff will bring a final draft set of rules for board consideration for adoption.

Rulemaking Schedule

The following table describes the tentative schedule for current and future OWEB rulemaking. It does not include the ongoing rulemaking associated with the Oregon Environmental Restoration Council established in SB 1561 (2024). The timeframes in the table below may be adjusted due to workload.

Administrative Rules	Board Initiate Rulemaking	Board Consideration for Adoption - Proposed
Operating Capacity Grant Program Rulemaking (including Division 40)	July 2026	July 2027
Land Acquisition Grants (Division 45) (tentative)	July 2027-October 2027	July 2028-October 2028



October 27-28, 2026, OWEB Board Meeting
Executive Director Update Item A-2: Interim Measure 11, Klamath Water Quality Improvements Grant Program Update

This report provides the board with an update on the status of OWEB's investment in the Interim Measure 11, Klamath Water Quality Improvements Grant Program.

Background

Interim Measure 11 (IM11) from the Amended Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement (KHSA), includes funding to address water quality improvements in the Klamath River via restoration and conservation actions in the Klamath Basin in Oregon. The emphasis of IM11 is nutrient reduction projects. PacifiCorp, in consultation with the Interim Measures Implementation Committee, developed a list of project categories to be implemented to fulfill the objective of IM11. PacifiCorp provided funding of up to \$6,433,500 million for design/engineering and implementation of projects. This funding is administered by OWEB through the Klamath Water Quality Improvements Grant Program.

A Steering Committee, facilitated by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ), was established to assist OWEB with the program implementation. OWEB is the Fiscal Agent and will award IM11 funds for projects approved by the Steering Committee until the funds are exhausted.

The Steering Committee is comprised of members from the following organizations: Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD), ODEQ, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Bureau of Reclamation (vacant), Yurok Tribe, Karuk Tribe, Klamath Tribes, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, and Aquatic Ecosciences.

Eligible applicants include Tribes, watershed councils, soil and water conservation districts, not-for-profit institutions, schools, Oregon institutions of higher education, independent not-for-profit institutions of higher education, or political subdivisions of Oregon that are not a state agency. A state agency or federal agency may partner with one of the eligible entities.

Status Update

The most recent update provided to the OWEB Board was in July 2025. At that time, staff reported the completion of two grant cycles, with four projects funded totaling \$1,480,362.

In the winter of 2025-2026, OWEB staff worked with the IM11 Steering Committee to make refinements to the grant solicitation and application review process. Refinements made to the grant solicitation process included replacing the pre-application step with a required pre-application consultation with staff from OWEB, OWRD, and ODEQ. Refinements made to the application review process include required field-based site visits with IM11 Steering Committee members for Restoration applications (instead of virtual based site visits).

In the spring of 2026, OWEB launched its third grant solicitation cycle. Nine pre-application consultations were conducted, and six applications were submitted. The IM11 Steering Committee members recommended all six applications for funding, totaling \$995,827. Collectively the projects will take diverse approaches to address water quality issues and reduce nutrient inputs into the Klamath River. At this time, after three grant cycles, \$3,957,311 in funding remains. OWEB anticipates launching a fourth grant cycle in

winter/spring 2027.

The following projects were funded during the spring 2026 cycle; the first five projects listed are restoration grants, and the last project is a technical assistance grant:

Grantee	Project Name	Funding Amount	Description	Status
Sustainable NW	Vieira Livestock Well and Riparian Protection	\$75,370	Restore riparian function and water quality along a Sprague River tributary and Smokey Lake by excluding livestock from the riparian corridor via an off-stream well and exclusion fencing.	Open Grant Agreement
Willamette Partnership	Lost River Stock Water Well Project 1	\$55,348	Protect riparian function along the Lost River by installing an off-channel livestock well, coupled with riparian fencing and planting.	Open Grant Agreement
Rusted Gate Farm	Fringe wetland and water quality improvements on Ball Bay - continuation	\$298,746	Restore and reconnect a ~32-acre fringe wetland on Upper Klamath Lake that promotes nutrient reduction through treating winter and spring agricultural discharge from a 663-acre grazing operation.	Grant Agreement pending signatures
The Klamath Tribes	Trout Creek Watershed Restoration	\$373,810	Install low-tech, process-based restoration actions along 9.3 miles within the Trout Creek subbasin, tributary to the Sprague River.	Grant Agreement pending signatures
The Klamath Tribes	Copperfield Draw Restoration	\$73,803	Install low-tech, process-based restoration actions along 1.1 miles of the Copperfield draw, tributary to the Sprague River.	Grant Agreement pending signatures
The Klamath Tribes	Dry Creek Design and Compliance	\$118,750	Produce engineered designs and obtain all necessary permits for two hardened riffle structures and two levee removal/fill floodplain reconnection locations on Dry Creek, tributary to the Sycan River.	Grant Agreement pending signatures

Tina Kotek
Governor



Natural Resource Agency Memo

To: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

From: Chandra Ferrari, Natural Resources Policy Advisor, Office of Governor
Tina Kotek

Date: September 22, 2026

Topic: Governor's Priorities Funding

The Governor's Natural Resource team appreciates your consideration of its proposal for the Governor's priorities line item in OWEB's grant spending plan. These recommended investments will further priority programs and initiatives related to building the resilience of ecosystems, watersheds and communities in Oregon and are consistent with the directives in Governor's Executive Order 25-26.

Brief Overview:

OWEB's grant spending plan includes a line item for Governor's priorities which currently stands at \$2,000,000 (\$1,000,000 allocated for the current and past biennium). This line item supports work within the sideboards of Ballot Measure 76 that furthers priority programs and initiatives related to restoration in Oregon.

Typically, these investments address landscape-scale or emerging issues related to restoration needs of importance as identified by the Governor's Office. Grant investments are targeted and catalyze broad-scale, multi-organizational work. These types of investments are unique in that they address both technical assistance and restoration needs while focusing on areas of importance to the Governor.

Work supported by these funds must fall within the sideboards of Ballot Measure 76 which broadly means they must directly or indirectly contribute to fish and wildlife, habitats, and watershed functions within the state of Oregon. Additionally, they must be directed to an eligible grantee, which includes non-profit organizations, Tribes, special districts and local governments, but does not include state or federal agencies or individual landowners.

Recommended actions for funding are described in detail below. Once a spending decision is finalized, OWEB staff will work directly with grantees to develop a non-competitive application process,

including a detailed scope of work that ensures all activities implemented with the funding are eligible for OWEB lottery funding.

Recommended Actions for Funding

1. Building Resiliency of our Ecosystems to Drought/Water Scarcity

Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems in Harney: \$500,000 in funds for High Desert Partnership to support the Harney Water Collaborative to facilitate reductions in groundwater usage, in alignment with OWRD rules, for the benefit of groundwater-dependent ecosystems, where there is a clear link to habitat benefit. The community's goal is a 10% decrease in groundwater use within 2 years, as a pre-compliance effort to limit the need for regulatory measures.

The scope of the grant could include monitoring (e.g. installation of flow meters), technical assistance (e.g., planning and design of water use efficiency efforts) engagement (e.g., landowner outreach), or restoration activities that would support landowner reductions in groundwater use for the benefit of groundwater-dependent habitat.

Freshwater Ecosystems Impacted by Drought: \$500,000 in additional funds for OWEB's existing water acquisition program in priority areas where sensitive resources are most likely to experience acute and long-term stress from drought conditions. OWEB would work with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Oregon Water Resources Department staff to identify priority areas based on streamflow restoration needs, drought resiliency opportunities, and listed species (e.g., locations where migrating STE salmon/steelhead are experiencing barriers to migration or will need to hold over the summer). Funding would be incorporated into upcoming water acquisition grant cycles, providing important resources to target investments in identified priority areas.

2. Build Climate Resiliency in Coastal Ecosystems

Coastal Resilience Workshop and White Paper: \$75,000 in funds would support 1-2 workshops and a resulting white paper focused on Oregon's coastal blue carbon habitats (i.e., forested tidal swamps, marshes, wetlands), and their contribution to coastal resilience, consistent with Executive Order 25-26. The project will use the recently finalized resilience attributes to assess opportunities and constraints for conservation and restoration across Oregon's estuarine ecosystems and prioritize actions that strengthen ecosystem resilience and associated community, economic, and environmental co-benefits.

The findings will support state agencies' efforts to identify and advance programs, processes, and practices that protect and promote stewardship of Oregon's working lands and waters and provide valuable guidance to restoration practitioners by helping identify actions that can deliver the greatest ecological and community benefits.

Complementary funding from the California Ocean Science Trust and other partners will help support this effort as well as a separate workshop component and analysis focused on marine carbon dioxide removal approaches, including ocean alkalinity enhancement and other emerging technologies in both ocean and estuarine ecosystems.



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Ross' Geese at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge by Dan Dzuris, cc

2025-2028 Strategic Plan

Quarterly Report to the Board | October 2026



Mission: To help protect and restore healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies.

Each quarterly report describes key accomplishments under Strategies that have been identified for each of the six Strategic Plan priorities. See the last page for the full list of Strategies, and a summary of when accomplishments were reported throughout the calendar year.



Priority 1

Build awareness of the relationship between people and watershed protection and restoration.



Heather Medina, NRCS (left) and Heidi Hartman, OWEB Federal Programs Specialist host and [informational webinar](#).

The Purpose and Value of Strategic Action Plans

A Strategic Action Plan (SAP) serves as the road map, or blueprint, for a partnership's work.

Excerpt from the [Strategic Action Plan Guidance document](#).

Strategy 1.2 / 5.1 OWEB coordinated with NRCS on an informational webinar on the [NRCS Farm Bill grant program](#) which was offered in August.

Strategy 1.2 / 3.2 OWEB Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) staff meet with Partnership Technical Assistance grantees every other month to provide opportunities for OWEB information sharing, and grantees to share lessons learned, successes, and challenges as they work to develop their Strategic Action Plans.



Priority 2

Engage the diversity of Oregonians in watershed enhancement work.



Strategy 2.1 Director O'Brien and Regional Program Representative Greg Ciannella participated in the [Deschutes Basin Board of Control \(DBBC\) Deschutes Basin Agricultural Water Infrastructure Tour](#) in August.

This field tour offered a firsthand look at how state and federal investments in irrigation modernization are improving water reliability for agriculture, increasing drought resilience, enhancing fish and wildlife habitat, supporting wildfire suppression, and strengthening communities across Central Oregon.

Participants included irrigation district managers, local elected officials, and partners visiting key water infrastructure projects. The tour showed how modernization is delivering lasting benefits for farmers, ranchers, rivers, local economies, and the communities they serve.

Strategy 2.3 Director O'Brien also met with the following:

- [Wy'East Resource Conservation & Development](#)
- [Union County Commissioner](#)
- [Rural Engagement and Vitality \(REV\) Center](#)



Deschutes Basin Agricultural Water Infrastructure Tour.



Priority 3

Strengthen and leverage people and organizational capacity to achieve healthy watersheds.



OWEB maintains an [interactive map](#) of Watershed Councils and list of contact information online.

Strategy 3.2 OWEB staff are meeting with Watershed Councils and the Network of Oregon Watershed Councils to **discuss capacity constraints, needs, and opportunities.**

Strategy 3.2 OWEB began to hold [Rulemaking Advisory Meetings for Operating Capacity grants](#) in mid-October to discuss draft rule revisions. The previous update to Capacity grant rules was completed in 2014.



Priority 4

Advance learning about watershed restoration effectiveness through coordinated monitoring.



Macroinvertebrate stonefly (Photo by Rogue River Watershed Council).

Strategy 4.1 OWEB began a series of meetings with monitoring grantees and key agency partners—who are monitoring water quality, including macroinvertebrates—to create an opportunity to **share, discuss and learn from each other about common monitoring successes and challenges.**

The first session was held in September and may continue to meet virtually approximately twice a year to explore certain water quality monitoring topics and engage with a diverse audience of monitoring grantees and agency partners to promote tools and best practices.



Annual meeting with the Middle Fork Intensively Monitored Watershed and John Day Basin Partnership included presentations, discussion, and a field tour.

Strategy 4.1 / 4.3 OWEB assisted in planning and attended the **Annual meeting with the [Middle Fork Intensively Monitored Watershed](#) and the [John Day Basin Partnership](#)** to share monitoring results with river restorationists. This meeting occurred in September in John Day and included a field trip in the afternoon to visit a site where future river restoration projects will occur.



Priority 5

Increase connection of urban and working lands to watershed health.



Panelist Darian Lightfoot, Executive Director of the Long Tom Watershed Council (center) with OWEB staff Alexa Schmidt, Water and Climate Coordinator (left) and Liz Redon, Region 3 Program Representative (right).

Strategy 5.1 A [panel of grantees and partners](#) discussed the **unique opportunities and challenges of urban restoration** with the Board at the July 2026 Board Meeting. A staff-oriented learning session was held after the board meeting, followed by a social media campaign that demonstrated key aspects of urban restoration.



Priority 6

Take bold and innovative action toward climate resilience.



Clear Lake, Drinking Water Source for the City of Reedsport—a current Drinking Water Source Protection grantee.

Strategy 6.1 OWEB received **\$1 million in funding for the [Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program](#)** through the Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund. A grant offering was opened in mid-October, and Audrey Squires, Drinking Water Source Protection Specialist, shared information about the program at the Source Water Protection Workshop for Coastal Communities, as well as with eligible applicants, including Tribal public water suppliers, through direct email messages.



(left) [Source Water Protection Week](#) highlighting OWEB's partnership with NRCS and the benefits of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) projects. (right) [WaterWise Pollinator Parkway](#) projects in Bend focus on drought resiliency.

Strategy 6.2 OWEB created outreach messaging to shine a light on the climate and community benefits of **projects that support drought resilience, and conserve and protect water supplies.**

Strategies Chart

January 2026 - October 2026

 accomplishments
 highlighted in quarterly update

 January
 April
 July
 October

1 Through our grantmaking, build awareness of the relationship between the people of Oregon and watershed protection and restoration

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1 Elevate the story of how protection and restoration promote healthy watersheds |  |  |  |  |
| 1.2 Connect people around watershed work |  |  |  |  |
| 1.3 Increase use of OWEB's engagement grant offering to support grantees doing community engagement |  |  | | |

2 Leverage our position as an anchor funder to engage the diversity of Oregonians in watershed enhancement

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.1 Enhance OWEB presence throughout Oregon |  |  |  |  |
| 2.2 Increase diversity and inclusion through improving access to our programs |  |  |  | |
| 2.3 Engage organizations, entities, and communities that have not traditionally been involved in watershed restoration work |  | |  |  |

3 Use our funding to strengthen and leverage people and organizational capacity to achieve healthy watersheds

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1 Support diverse funding opportunities to sustain the capacity of partners |  | |  |  |
| 3.2 Expand training for partners |  |  |  |  |

4 Advance learning about watershed restoration effectiveness through coordinated monitoring

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 4.1 Facilitate learning through monitoring |  |  |  |  |
| 4.2 Learn, share and support efforts to integrate indigenous knowledge |  |  |  |  |
| 4.3 Communicate data-driven outcomes to guide restoration investments |  |  |  |  |

5 Increase investment connecting urban and working lands to watershed health

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 5.1 Promote value of multi benefit watershed projects |  |  |  |  |
| 5.2 Increase investment connecting of urban and working lands to watershed health |  | |  | |
| 5.3 Support and fund grantees building or expanding partnerships with urban constituencies |  | |  |  |

6 Take bold and innovative action toward funding projects that advance climate resilience

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 6.1 Increase support for bold and innovative grant making in service to watershed restoration and protection |  |  |  |  |
| 6.2 Articulate the benefits of watershed protection and restoration for climate resiliency |  |  |  |  |



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Agenda Item C

2025-2027 Spending Plan



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor



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October 27-28, 2026 OWEB Board Meeting

Staff report – Agenda Item C. 2027-2029 Spending Plan

MEMORANDUM

To: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

From: Sara O'Brien, Executive Director

Supports all of OWEB's Strategic Plan priorities.

I. Introduction

The OWEB Board is responsible for adopting a biennial grant funds spending plan (spending plan), which guides the agency's grantmaking for the biennium and provides critical support for state, federal, and local natural resource priorities. This is a unique responsibility that is consistent with direction in the Oregon Constitution and statute for Measure 76 lottery grant funds.

This report updates the board on the process and timeline for development of the 2027-2029 spending plan. Our work will begin earlier than usual in the biennial cycle to make space for more robust board discussions, anticipate upcoming decisions related to the Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) solicitation cycle, and plan for delayed award of federal Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Funds (PCSRF).

At the October board meeting, staff will introduce key concepts and considerations, propose a process and timeline for spending plan development and adoption, and ask board members to share feedback, questions, and initial reflections in advance of a more robust discussion in January.

II. Background

After the Oregon Legislature approves OWEB's next biennial budget, the board will consider and approve a spending plan for the distribution of grant funding. At its July 2025 meeting, the board adopted a 2025-2027 Spending Plan totaling approximately \$153 million. The board also regularly amends the plan to accept additional grant funds allocated to OWEB by the Oregon Legislature or other funding partners, shift funding to address emerging needs, and to record grants awarded. The total currently adopted 2025-2027 spending plan amount is \$164.8 million.

While the spending plan includes all OWEB-managed grant funding for transparency purposes, the board's primary decision space focuses on board-allocated fund sources, as opposed to those that are legislatively allocated or administered on behalf of partner agencies. Available board-allocated funding in the spending plan primarily includes

Measure 76 Lottery, PCSRF, and salmon license plate revenues. The amount of board-allocated funds in the current spending plan is \$136.4 million.

2027-2029 Funding Outlook

Based on currently available information, OWEB estimates that the total amount of board-allocated grant funds (lottery, PCSRF and Salmon Plate) available for 2027-2029 will be approximately the same as those available for 2025-2027 when it was developed (approximately \$131 million). While there may be a small increase in lottery funding for grants, staff anticipate a reduction in Oregon's PCSRF award compared with the last few biennia.

III. 2027-2029 Spending Plan Timeline

The 2027-2029 Spending Plan will be approved by the board in July 2027. In preparation for that approval, the following steps will occur:

- In October 2026, staff will introduce key concepts and considerations in spending plan development and request feedback and questions from board members.
- In January 2027, the board will discuss preferences around the proportion of amounts across spending plan categories and identify any questions they have related to specific spending plan line items that warrant further conversation in April 2027. Also at this meeting, the board will select FIP initiatives to begin in July 2027 under the 2027-2029 spending plan
- Between the October, January, and April meetings, staff may seek more input on board members' perspectives on funding priorities through surveys (with results reported back at public meetings) and/or additional conversations with board committees.
- In April 2027, staff will present to the board information about the categories of the spending plan and propose an investment amount for each line item through a draft spending plan. The board will provide feedback on the funding amounts for each line item.
- In July 2027, based on all input received, staff will present the staff-recommended 2027-2029 spending plan for board vote. The spending plan will include funding for the first year of the biennium and anticipated additions in the second year of the biennium (which would occur at the mid-biennium rebalance in July 2028). The amounts will be based available funds through final lottery fund allocation for the 2027-2029 biennium, previously uncommitted funds, funding that is recaptured from closed grants that came in under budget or cancelled grants, and estimates of anticipated PCSRF awards. The board will also review and approve recommended spending plan policies and delegations of authority.
- If PCSRF funds are not awarded to OWEB in time for the July 2028 mid-biennium rebalance, any additional funding would be recommended for addition at a later meeting, based on board priorities identified with the initial adoption of the 2027-2029 plan and any emerging needs. Throughout the biennium, the board may adopt

other additions or adjustments to the spending plan to reflect legislative allocations or other new funding sources.

IV. Spending Plan Categories

The current spending plan is included in Attachment A for the board to review in considering whether changes are warranted or to highlight questions for staff response at the January board meeting. Attachment B provides a brief description of each board-designated category in the 2025-2027 spending plan.

V. Recommendation

This is an information item only for the board.

Additional discussion questions:

- With flat or slightly reduced funding available for our grant programs, how should we think about balancing different funding priorities?
- What do you think our next spending plan should communicate about OWEB's priorities in the next biennium?
- What other information or background do you think would be helpful for the spending plan conversations to come?

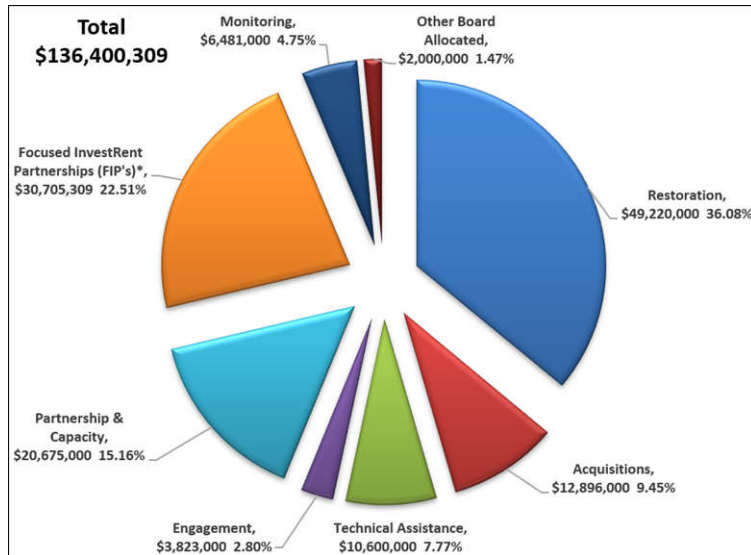
VI. Attachments

- A. 2025-2027 Spending Plan as of October 2026
- B. Spending Plan Category Summaries from the April 2025 board meeting

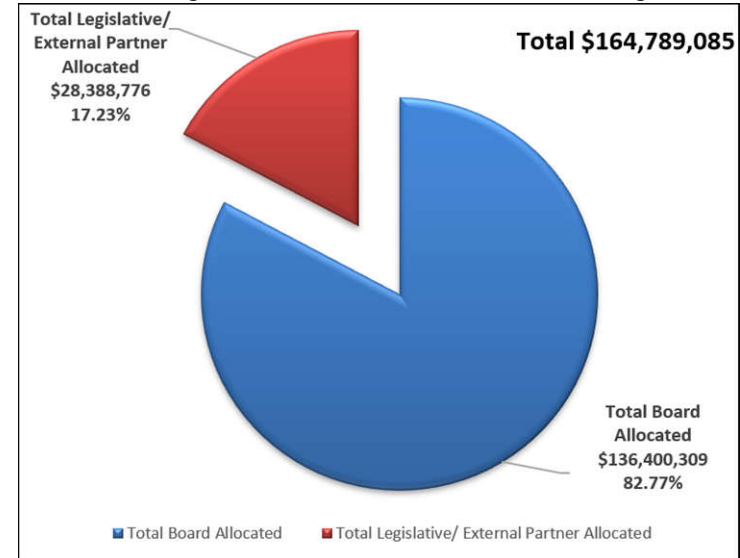
OWEB 2025-2027 GRANT FUNDS SPENDING PLAN
OCTOBER 2026 Board Meeting

Attachment A

**2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan -
Grant Types in Board Allocated Funding**



**2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan - Board Allocated Funding and
Legislative/External Partner Allocated Funding**



	GRANT PROGRAMS	2025-2027 Spending Plan (As of July 2026)	October 2026 Proposed Additions	2025-2027 Spending Plan	Awarded to Date	October 2026 Proposed Awards	TOTAL Awards To-Date & Proposed Awards	Remaining Spending Plan after Awards
Board Allocated Funding								
1	Restoration							
2	Open Solicitation	39,880,000		39,880,000	\$ 24,477,081	\$ -	\$ 24,477,081	\$ 15,402,919
3	Weed Grants	3,500,000		3,500,000	\$ 3,500,000	\$ -	\$ 3,500,000	\$ -
4	Small Grants	4,760,000		4,760,000	\$ 4,760,000	\$ -	\$ 4,760,000	\$ -
5	Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership	330,000		330,000	\$ 330,000	\$ -	\$ 330,000	\$ -
6	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Prog (CREP)-Cost Share	750,000		750,000	\$ 750,000	\$ -	\$ 750,000	\$ -
7	Total Restoration	\$ 49,220,000	\$ -	\$ 49,220,000	\$ 33,817,081	\$ -	\$ 33,817,081	\$ 15,402,919
8	Acquisitions							
9	Land and Water Acquisition	12,896,000		12,896,000	\$ 5,668,273	\$ -	\$ 5,668,273	\$ 7,227,727
10	Total Acquisitions	\$ 12,896,000	\$ -	\$ 12,896,000	\$ 5,668,273	\$ -	\$ 5,668,273	\$ 7,227,727
11	Technical Assistance							
12	Open Solicitation	8,000,000		8,000,000	\$ 5,382,010		\$ 5,382,010	\$ 2,617,990
13	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) TA ⁽²⁾	1,600,000		1,600,000	\$ 1,629,961		\$ 1,629,961	\$ (29,961)
14	Tribal Project Development	1,000,000		1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -
15	Total Technical Assistance	\$ 10,600,000	\$ -	\$ 10,600,000	\$ 8,011,971	\$ -	\$ 8,011,971	\$ 2,588,029

	GRANT PROGRAMS	2025-2027 Spending Plan (As of July 2026)	October 2026 Proposed Additions	2025-2027 Spending Plan	Awarded to Date	October 2026 Proposed Awards	TOTAL Awards To-Date & Proposed Awards	Remaining Spending Plan after Awards
16	Engagement							
17	Open Solicitation	2,323,000		2,323,000	\$ 1,472,847		\$ 1,472,847	\$ 850,153
18	Strategic Implementation Areas ⁽¹⁾	1,500,000		1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ -	\$ 1,500,000	\$ -
19	Total Engagement	\$ 3,823,000	\$ -	\$ 3,823,000	\$ 2,972,847	\$ -	\$ 2,972,847	\$ 850,153
20	Partnership & Capacity							
21	Capacity grants - Watershed Councils (WC)	9,900,000		9,900,000	\$ 9,899,792	\$ -	\$ 9,899,792	\$ 208
22	Capacity grants - Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD)	8,700,000		8,700,000	\$ 8,700,000	\$ -	\$ 8,700,000	\$ -
23	Statewide Organizational Conservation Partnership Support	525,000		525,000	\$ 525,000	\$ -	\$ 525,000	\$ -
24	Partnership Technical Assistance	1,200,000		1,200,000	\$ 590,048	\$ -	\$ 590,048	\$ 609,952
25	Sage Grouse Conservation Partnership	350,000		350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ -	\$ 350,000	\$ -
26	Total Partnership & Capacity	\$ 20,675,000	\$ -	\$ 20,675,000	\$ 20,064,840	\$ -	\$ 20,064,840	\$ 610,160
27	Focused Investment Partnerships (FIP) ⁽¹⁾ :							
28	Cohort 3 - 3rd Biennium							
29	Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network	2,959,837		2,959,837	\$ 2,959,837	\$ -	\$ 2,959,837	\$ -
30	East Cascades Oak & Fire Partnership	2,177,000		2,177,000	\$ 2,177,000	\$ -	\$ 2,177,000	\$ -
31	Siuslaw Coho Partnership	4,000,000		4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -
32	Coos Basin Coho Partnership	3,747,408		3,747,408	\$ 3,747,408	\$ -	\$ 3,747,408	\$ -
33	Oregon Central Coast Estuary Collaborative	2,390,250		2,390,250	\$ 2,390,250	\$ -	\$ 2,390,250	\$ -
34	Cohort 4 - 2nd Biennium							
35	Hood River Basin Partnership	3,503,414		3,503,414	\$ 3,503,414	\$ -	\$ 3,503,414	\$ -
36	Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership	4,000,000		4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -
37	Oregon Sage-Grouse Partnership	4,000,000		4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -
38	Harney Basin Wetlands Collaborative	3,927,400		3,927,400	\$ 3,927,400	\$ -	\$ 3,927,400	\$ -
39	Total FIP's	\$ 30,705,309	\$ -	\$ 30,705,309	\$ 30,705,309	\$ -	\$ 30,705,309	\$ -
40	Monitoring							
41	Open Solicitation	5,381,000		5,381,000	\$ 2,880,536		\$ 2,880,536	\$ 2,500,464
42	Quantifying Conservation Outputs and Outcomes	600,000		600,000	\$ 64,979	\$ -	\$ 64,979	\$ 535,021
43	FIP Effectiveness Monitoring	500,000		500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ 500,000	\$ -
44	Total Monitoring	\$ 6,481,000	\$ -	\$ 6,481,000	\$ 3,445,515	\$ -	\$ 3,445,515	\$ 3,035,485
45	Other Board Allocated							
46	Governor's Priorities	2,000,000		2,000,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -
47	Total Other	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -
48	TOTAL BOARD ALLOCATED	\$ 136,400,309	\$ -	\$ 136,400,309	\$ 106,685,836	\$ -	\$ 106,685,836	\$ 29,714,473
49	Percent (%) of OWEB Grant Funds Spending Plan total	82.77%						
50	Recommended Board Unallocated Funds = 5%			7,179,116				

	GRANT PROGRAMS	2025-2027 Spending Plan (As of July 2026)	October 2026 Proposed Additions	2025-2027 Spending Plan	Awarded to Date	October 2026 Proposed Awards	TOTAL Awards To-Date & Proposed Awards	Remaining Spending Plan after Awards
Legislative/External Partner								
51	Restoration							
52	Bureau of Land Management-Good Neighbor Authority ⁽¹⁾	5,000,000		5,000,000	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -
53	US Fish & Wildlife-Coastal Wetlands Project (TBD)	-		-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
54	Upper Klamath Water Quality Improvements-PacifiCorp IM11	5,709,407		5,709,407	\$ 5,709,407	\$ -	\$ 5,709,407	\$ -
55	Watershed Natural Climate Solutions Fund ⁽³⁾	1,497,476		1,497,476	\$ 1,497,476	\$ -	\$ 1,497,476	\$ -
56	Total Restoration	\$ 12,206,883	\$ -	\$ 12,206,883	\$ 12,206,883	\$ -	\$ 12,206,883	\$ -
57	Acquisitions							
58	Water Acquisition - Flexible Incentive Account	5,000,000		5,000,000	\$ 3,670,764	\$ -	\$ 3,670,764	\$ 1,329,236
59	Drinking Water Source Protection Program	1,000,000		1,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000
60	Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP)	1,760,000		1,760,000	\$ 1,610,216	\$ -	\$ 1,610,216	\$ 149,784
61	Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) - Watershed Natural Climate Solutions Fund ⁽³⁾	752,524		752,524	\$ 752,524	\$ -	\$ 752,524	\$ -
62	Total Acquisitions	\$ 8,512,524	\$ -	\$ 8,512,524	\$ 6,033,504	\$ -	\$ 6,033,504	\$ 2,479,020
63	Technical Assistance							
64	USDA-NRCS Farm Bill Technical Assistance Amendment	363,722		363,722	\$ 363,722	\$ -	\$ 363,722	\$ -
65	Total Technical Assistance	\$ 363,722	\$ -	\$ 363,722	\$ 363,722	\$ -	\$ 363,722	
66	Partnership & Capacity							
67	Forest Health Collaborative-Oregon Department of Forestry	370,048		370,048	\$ 370,048		\$ 370,048	\$ -
68	Total Partnership & Capacity	\$ 370,048	\$ -	\$ 370,048	\$ 370,048	\$ -	\$ 370,048	\$ -
69	Monitoring							
70	Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission-(PSMFC) Intensively Monitored Watersheds	264,597	-	264,597	\$ 264,597	\$ -	\$ 264,597	\$ -
71	Total Monitoring	\$ 264,597	\$ -	\$ 264,597	\$ 264,597	\$ -	\$ 264,597	\$ -
72	Other Legislative/External Partner Allocated							
73	Oregon Dept of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW)-PCSRF(Federal Funds)	6,671,002	-	6,671,002	\$ 6,671,002	\$ -	\$ 6,671,002	\$ -
74	Total Other	\$ 6,671,002	\$ -	\$ 6,671,002	\$ 6,671,002	\$ -	\$ 6,671,002	\$ -
75	TOTAL LEGISLATIVE/EXTERNAL PARTNER ALLOCATED	\$ 28,388,776	\$ -	\$ 28,388,776	\$ 25,909,756	\$ -	\$ 25,909,756	\$ 2,479,020
76	Percent (%) of OWEB Grant Funds Spending Plan total	17.23%						
TOTAL OWEB 2025-2027 Grant Spending Plan		\$ 164,789,085	\$ -	\$ 164,789,085	\$ 132,595,592	\$ -	\$ 132,595,592	\$ 32,193,493

⁽¹⁾ This program may include a variety of grant types (e.g. Restoration, Engagement, Technical Assistance, and Acquisition, etc.)

⁽²⁾ This includes NRCS CREP TA funds awarded of \$162,532

⁽³⁾ These funds total \$2.25M from the 2023-2025 OCAC allocation to OWEB

Grant Funds Spending Plan Program Summaries

Introduction

The programs in the OWEB grant funds spending plan support watershed health across the state. Regardless of the scale or the focus of the program, projects supported under each program are strategically identified. Each program supports state, federal, and local priorities, and OWEB’s review process ensures each project funded under these programs is evaluated for connections with those priorities.

This attachment describes the major categories of grant funds spending plan programs and lists the individual line items within each category.

Board-Allocated Funding

Category: Restoration

OWEB restoration programs support predominantly on-the-groundwork to protect and enhance watershed health. This category includes competitive grants administered by OWEB as well as grant programs that OWEB administers in partnership with other agencies.

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Restoration – Open Solicitation	Lottery, federal funds, other funds	Open Solicitation restoration grants deliver support for watershed projects that restore and enhance watershed functions. Restoration grants are offered twice per year through a competitive grant program.
Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon State Weed Board	Lottery	Awarded annually through the Oregon State Weed Board (OSWB). Grant projects protect watershed health, water quality, native fish, and wildlife habitat from the negative impacts of State Listed noxious weeds.
Small Grants	Lottery	OWEB Small Grant Program funds are allocated biennially to cooperative teams of local partners who recommend projects to OWEB for funding. This is an easy-to-engage-in, competitive grant program that awards small grants for restoration practices principally carried out on private lands. Starting in the 25-27 biennium, local small grant teams will be eligible for one administration grant per team in addition to the funding available for small grants.
Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership Technical Assistance	Lottery	In 1995, the lower Columbia River was designated as an “Estuary of National Significance” by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), recognizing the river’s important to the Pacific Northwest and the entire United States. The governors of Oregon and Washington, along with the EPA, needed an organization to further study the lower river and coordinate its restoration. They created the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership (LCEP) to study and care for the lower river, and in 1999 the organization was incorporated as a non-profit organization. Since 2003, Oregon has provided state matching funds via OWEB in support of LCEP.

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Cost-Share Payments	Lottery	Cooperative venture between the US Department of Agriculture and the State of Oregon, with OWEB covering the state's portion of the program costs. The purpose of this long-standing program is to restore, maintain, and enhance streamside areas along agricultural lands to benefit fish, wildlife, and water quality. As part of the state's commitment to the program, OWEB pays for 25% of restoration costs for lands enrolled in CREP, and the USDA pays 50%, as well as annual rental payments and other program incentives.

Category: Acquisitions

Oregon’s approach to watershed restoration depends upon local grassroots partner organizations to develop and maintain relationships in their communities and plan, design, implement, and monitor projects. Grant programs in the Operating Capacity category support local partner organizations, helping them to plan and develop projects that address state, federal, and local priorities.

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Land and Water Acquisition	Lottery	OWEB funds several types of land and water acquisitions: the purchase of property in fee simple, conservation easements, water rights leases and transfers, and contractually protected instream flow. OWEB-funded interests in land and water may be held by a variety of entities including, but not limited to, local, state and federal agencies, tribes, and not-for-profit conservation organizations and land trusts.

Category: Technical Assistance

Technical assistance grant programs support project coordination, development and design. They can provide support to grantees as they navigate complex permitting processes and cultural resource review requirements.

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Technical Assistance - Open Solicitation	Lottery, federal funds	These competitive grants play a key role in developing future restoration and acquisition grant proposals and increase the capacity of OWEB’s local partners to engage in project development, planning, design, coordination and permitting.
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Technical Assistance	Lottery, federal funds	These competitive grants support costs associated with local CREP implementation including staffing, travel, training, outreach, and planning.
Tribal Project Development	Federal funds, lottery	This offering was developed in 2023-2025 in recognition of the critical work that federally recognized tribes do to advance watershed restoration and land and water acquisition. The grants operate similar to open solicitation TA grants where funds are used to complete necessary assessment, design, and landowner engagement to get projects on the ground.

Category: Engagement

Engagement funds are invested through local grantees to communicate and engage with landowners, organizations, and the community about the need for, feasibility, and benefits of a specific eligible restoration or acquisition project or program that leads to the development of eligible projects within an identified geography.

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Engagement – Open Solicitation	Lottery	Engagement funds are invested through local grantees to communicate and engage with landowners, organizations, and the community about the need for, feasibility, and benefits of a specific eligible restoration or acquisition project or program that leads to the development of eligible projects within an identified geography.
Strategic Implementation Areas*	Lottery	The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), Agricultural Water Quality Management Program, is leading the “Strategic Implementation Area” (SIA) initiative. Select areas around the state receive focused stakeholder engagement, technical assistance, monitoring, and where necessary, compliance follow-up to address water quality concerns in agriculturally influenced areas. Local partners work with landowners and managers to meet and exceed water quality requirements, and ODA follows up as needed to address compliance concerns.

*May include a variety of grant types (restoration, technical assistance, engagement, monitoring, etc)

Category: Partnerships & Capacity

Oregon’s approach to watershed restoration depends upon local grassroots partner organizations to develop and maintain relationships in their communities and plan, design, implement, and monitor projects. Grant programs in the Operating Capacity category support local partner organizations, helping them to plan and develop projects that address state, federal, and local priorities.

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Watershed Council Capacity	Lottery	Capacity grants are awarded biennially and help support the operations of effective watershed councils (WCs) that engage people in their communities to participate in collaborative, voluntary restoration of watersheds and conservation of natural resources.
Soil and Water Conservation District Capacity	Lottery	Capacity grants are awarded biennially and help support Oregon’s 45 soil and water conservation districts to work in their communities to conserve natural resources and lend support to the Oregon Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Water Quality Management Program.
Statewide Organizational Conservation Partnership Support	Lottery	The Conservation Partnership includes The Network of Oregon Watershed Councils (NOWC), Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD), Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT), and Oregon Conservation Education & Assistance Network (OCEAN). OWEB’s funding has supported various deliverables in past biennia, including conferences, trainings, one-on-one work with local organizations, and youth activities.
Organizational Collaboration	Lottery	Organizational Collaboration grants support new or expanded strategic collaborations in order to build resilient, sustainable, local partners that achieve ecological outcomes and engage local communities.
Partnership Technical Assistance	Lottery	This grant program helps support existing partnerships to create or enhance and existing strategic action plans, to elevate the partnership’s current level of performance, and to support partnership capacity. Some are just forming and might be future applicants to the FIP program or other programs investing in partnerships.
SageCon Partnership	Lottery	The SageCon Partnership is a collaborative partnership focused on the ecological, social, and economic resilience in Oregon’s sagebrush country. The partnership’s work spans across science, policy, communication, and on-the-ground restoration, addressing challenges that operate at a landscape scale where no single agency or organization can make a big enough difference alone.

Category: Focused Investment Partnerships (FIP)

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Focused Investment Partnerships	Lottery, federal funds	Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) – Implementation investments address a board-identified priority of significance to the state; achieve clear and measurable ecological outcomes; use integrated, results-oriented approaches as identified through a strategic action plan; and are implemented by high-performing partnerships. Existing FIPs included in the 2025-2027 spending plan are: • Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network (lottery) • East Cascades Oak & Fire Partnership (lottery) • Siuslaw Coho Partnership (lottery/federal) • Coos Basin Coho Partnership (lottery/federal) • Oregon Central Coast Estuary Collaborative (lottery/federal) • Hood River Basin Partnership (lottery/federal) • Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership (lottery) • Oregon Sage-Grouse Partnership (lottery) • Harney Basin Wetlands Collaborative (lottery)

Category: Monitoring

Monitoring grants support assessment and monitoring of watershed health conditions,

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Monitoring – Open Solicitation	Lottery	Open Solicitation Monitoring Grants are awarded once per year. Grants can be used to assist local partnerships with assessing watershed conditions to determine the quality of the existing environment; identifying causes for changes in trajectory (either up or down) in habitat, fish and wildlife populations and water quality; and developing plans to guide future monitoring efforts.
Quantifying Conservation Outputs and Outcomes	Lottery	This item includes OWEB-led initiatives that evaluate specific types of restoration actions at the project scale as well as larger programmatic scale. Examples include a comprehensive evaluation of floodplain and channel restoration projects funded by OWEB and Telling the Restoration Story grants.
FIP Effectiveness Monitoring	Lottery	Focused Investment Effectiveness Monitoring (EM) evaluates FIP funding to help board, staff, and partners to adaptively manage partnership investments in the future. The approach employed by Focused Investment Partnerships (FIPs) provides an opportunity to learn about the progress and outcomes possible under six-year investments.

Category: Other

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Governor’s Priorities	Lottery	The Governor’s Priorities spending plan line item supports work within the sideboards of Ballot Measure 76 that furthers priority programs and initiatives related to restoration in Oregon. Typically, these investments address landscape-scale or emerging issues related to restoration needs of importance as identified by the Governor’s Office. Grant investments are targeted and catalyze broad-scale, multi- organizational work.

Legislative/External Partner-Allocated Funding

Category: Restoration

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Upper Klamath water quality improvements	Other funds	OWEB administers this program on behalf of PacifiCorp and the State of Oregon to support grants for water quality improvements in the Upper Klamath Basin.
Watershed Natural Climate Solutions Fund*	Other funds	These funds came to OWEB as a result of legislation in the 2023 regular legislative session. These funds are intended to support natural climate solutions on natural and working lands, with priority given to environmental justice communities and tribes. Funds may be awarded to restoration and technical assistance projects.

*May include multiple grant types (restoration, technical assistance)

Category: Acquisitions

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Water acquisitions	Other funds	OWEB received \$10 million for water acquisitions in the 2022 regular legislative session, with the understanding that water acquisitions are complex projects that take several years to develop. The funding in this program will support several years worth of projects that help restore streamflows in Oregon.
Drinking Water Source Protection	To Be Determined-- Will depend upon 25-27 Legislatively Adopted Budget	This new program came to OWEB as a result of legislation in the 2023 regular legislative session. This program provides grants for drinking water suppliers to acquire land to protect drinking water sources. For the 2023-2025 biennium, the legislature provided OWEB two types of initial grant funding for the program, general funds and lottery bonds.
Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program	Legislatively allocated General Funds to Other Funds	This program provides grants for several types of projects that provide dual benefits to farms and ranchlands and to natural resources. Project types include conservation easements and covenants, conservation management plans and payments for practices, technical assistance, and farm transition planning.

Category: Technical Assistance

Program	Fund Sources	Description
USDA Farm Bill Technical Assistance	Federal funds	OWEB administers these funds on behalf of the USDA-NRCS and grants them out to local partners to support Farm Bill program delivery.

Category: Partnership & Capacity

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Forest Collaboratives	Other Funds (TBD depending on ODF legislatively adopted budget)	OWEB administers this program through an agreement with the Oregon Department of Forestry. Grants help collaborative groups increase restoration efforts on federal forests statewide by enhancing and strengthening the effectiveness of local collaboratives.

Category: Monitoring

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Intensively Monitored Watersheds	Other funds	OWEB administers funding on behalf of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Council (PSMFC) to support long-term monitoring in the Upper Middle Fork John Day River Intensively Monitored Watershed. Funds support collaborative monitoring efforts by ODFW, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and the North Fork John Day Watershed Council.

Category: Other Legislative/Partner-Allocated

Program	Fund Sources	Description
ODFW PCSRF Funding	Federal funds	OWEB is the state's designated applicant for PCSRF funds. A portion of the funds support anadromous fish recovery and monitoring efforts at ODFW.



OREGON
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ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item D

Program Updates and Recommendations

Land Acquisition Grant Program

Board Meeting October 27-28, 2026

October 27-28, 2026 OWEB Board Meeting

Staff report – Agenda Item D. Land Acquisition Modernization Recommendations

MEMORANDUM

To: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

From: Sara O'Brien, Executive Director

Renee Davis, Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager

Miriam Forney, Land Acquisitions Coordinator

Robin Meacher, OAHP Conservation Easement Specialist

Audrey Squires, Drinking Water Source Protection Specialist

Supports OWEB's Strategic Plan priority # 6: Take bold and innovative action toward funding projects that advance climate resilience.

I. Introduction

OWEB's Measure 76 (M76) Land Acquisition grant program implements key statutory components including "Securing long-term protection for lands and waters that provide significant habitats for native fish and wildlife" (Oregon Revised Statute [ORS] 541.941) and "Acquiring from willing owners interests in land or water that will protect or restore native fish or wildlife habitats" (ORS 541.956).

This staff report describes final recommendations from the land acquisition grant program modernization process conducted by the Acquisitions, Restoration, and Emerging Topics (ARE) committee. These build upon preliminary recommendations in several topical areas for which the board signaled support at its July meeting. At the October meeting, staff will review these final recommendations and proposed next steps, then engage in a dialogue with the board prior to requesting board approval of the recommendations and direction to staff to incorporate these into the land acquisition grant program materials and process moving forward.

II. Background

The land acquisition modernization process was launched in early 2025 in response to both direction from Governor Kotek and interest from Executive Director O'Brien. The approach to this process was informed by touchpoints with applicants, grantees, and interested parties, including listening sessions co-convened by OWEB and the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT) to obtain feedback about persisting issues and concerns related to the land acquisition grant program and multiple coordination points with federally recognized Tribes. The modernization process includes two primary workstreams: the Acquisitions, Restoration, and Emerging Topics (ARE) committee, and

the Tribal workstream. This report focuses on final recommendations emerging from the ARE committee workstream. Next steps for both workstreams are described in Section IV.

The ARE committee heard extensive input from and engaged in dialogue with representatives from the land trust community and federally recognized Tribes, in addition to feedback from other interested parties via staff outreach. The process addressed four foundational topics: 1) use of conservation easements by OWEB to meet the statutory requirement for a title restriction; 2) significant habitat and future conditions; 3) other uses such as recreational, cultural uses, and working lands; and 4) risk tolerance (which connects to the cultural and process categories noted above). All committee meeting agendas, materials, and recordings can be found on [OWEB's website](#).

At the July 2026 board meeting, staff outlined preliminary recommendations from the ARE committee workstream and both near and longer-term recommendations from the Tribal workstream. The board signaled support for both sets of recommendations. At that board meeting, staff described a subset of topics that required additional staff work and ARE committee input prior to deliberation by the full board at the October meeting.

III. Final ARE Workstream Recommendations

Following the July board meeting, staff considered how several remaining topics could be framed to balance flexibility and accountability in preparation for convening an internal-external workgroup to delve into detailed work in preparation for more significant program updates prior to the 2027 land acquisition grant cycle. These topics, which were discussed with the ARE committee on [September 10, 2026](#), include:

- Expectations around ecological function,
- Changes to conservation easement (CE) and interaction with associated documents relative to past practice,
- Management plan process,
- Use of areas of impact, and
- Approach to multiple uses

Attachment A summarizes the final ARE workstream recommendations for these remaining land acquisition modernization topics.

IV. Next Steps

Following final direction from the board in October regarding the final ARE workstream recommendations, staff will initiate larger scale program changes in advance of the 2027 grant cycle. An important step in this process is to convene the internal-external work group of representative applicants to scope changes to program materials and processes that then will be implemented by the agency.

Next steps for the Tribal workstream were discussed with the board in July and include meeting with Oregon's federally recognized Tribes that are interested in discussing the Tribal workstream recommendations. These meetings will provide an opportunity for each Tribe to share their feedback about priorities for follow-up work. Outreach to Tribes will begin in October.

Staff will provide periodic updates to the ARE committee about progress on both of these efforts.

V. Recommendation

Staff request the board approve the land acquisition modernization recommendations in Attachment A and direct staff to initiate the work group process and subsequent changes to the land acquisition grant program materials and process based on these recommendations.

VI. Attachments

A. Final ARE Workstream Recommendations

Final ARE Workstream Recommendations for Remaining Land Acquisition Modernization Topics

During the Acquisition, Restoration, and Emerging Topics (ARE) committee's work on land acquisition modernization, themes that arose include a desire to have a trust-based and collaborative approach to land acquisitions – from application to post-acquisition obligations. Program participants urged OWEB to approach accountability from a perspective of shared goals to provide meaningful conservation outcomes for protected fish and wildlife habitats. The ARE committee discussions echoed these considerations, reinforcing a desire for OWEB to explore increased flexibility, while ensuring durability of the habitat protected with OWEB funding.

Following final direction from the board in October, staff will begin planning for larger scale program changes in advance of the 2027 grant cycle. This process will include convening an internal-external work group of representative applicants to scope changes to program materials and processes that then will be implemented by the agency.

This document summarizes final recommendations regarding focus areas for the work group efforts and examples of discussion topics within these areas. The following recommendations focus on:

- 1) Expectations around ecological function of properties proposed for investment;
- 2) OWEB's use of a conservation easement (CE) to secure the land acquisition investment, the interaction of that CE with the management plan obligation, the identification and description of conservation values in the CE and accompanying documents, and the overall concept of using Description of Restored Conditions¹ and Desired Future Conditions² to drive management and restoration obligations as OWEB has used in the past;
- 3) The management plan development and approval process;
- 4) Considerations around areas of impact within an OWEB-funded property; and
- 5) Approach for multiple uses on a property.

The recommendations outline content that will be explored with the work group. Use of an internal-external work group will help to ensure that the agency's decisions related to major changes in program implementation and requirements are conducted in a manner

¹ A Description of Restored Conditions was previously established and used by OWEB. A Description of Restored Condition is required for highly altered properties and demonstrates the grantee and landowner's intent and willingness to pursue the restoration described in the grant application and documented in the baseline and incorporated in the CE.

² Desired Future Conditions were also previously established and used by OWEB. These are the conditions that describe what the property is expected to look like at the end of the term of the management plan, and do not necessarily entail restoration.

that includes information and perspectives of those entities that utilize OWEB funding. An overarching goal will be to work with partners to determine a shared understanding about what accountability looks like, with the intent of building a collaborative relationship and focusing on accountability from a place of partnership.

Important note: ARE recommendations and discussion to date have focused on the land acquisition program's approach to projects where OWEB provides funding to support a grantee's acquisition of the property in fee simple. This focus is due in large part to the vast majority of OWEB's grants to date supporting fee-simple properties. Though many of the considerations and recommendations may be applicable in the context of the program funding the acquisition of a CE, it is important to explicitly acknowledge this focus thus far. The intent is to also bring these concepts forward into how OWEB approaches projects that involve the purchase of a CE by OWEB's grantee.

1) Expectations around Ecological Function of Properties Proposed for Investment

Staff discussed with the ARE committee if there are any expectations about habitat function for projects being proposed to the program. Based on the ARE discussions, staff's understanding of the recommended approach is that applicants should be directed to review the land acquisition program materials and consider fit of their project relative to the program intent of protecting habitat for native fish and wildlife, evaluation criteria in administrative rule, and more detailed information requested of applicants (e.g., connections to the State Wildlife Action Plan) in grant applications. After applications are submitted, the agency will complete the review process, with each application being reviewed relative to the evaluation criteria and ranked relative to other applications received that grant cycle. Staff raised this topic with the committee to ensure transparency for our applicants.

Specifically, it is important to have clarity from the board about expectations around ecological function and how to evaluate properties with lower existing function and higher potential function with restoration. The ARE committee discussed the following question and options: "If a project with limited existing habitat value is awarded funding on the basis of potential future habitat, what should we ask of grantees?"

Option 1: Describe anticipated future state in easement and/or management plan and track progress. Collaborative approach to addressing challenges and changes.

Option 2: Limit easement to protection of existing conservation values. Acknowledge management plan as guide to future restoration plans. Collaborative approach to revision of management plan as needed.

The ARE recommends a somewhat blended approach that a) expects applicants to articulate in grant applications why a property is important for OWEB investment from a habitat perspective, both now and into the future; b) documents in the CE the intended habitat and conservation values that are intended for protection, including space for aspirational work into the future; c) uses a grantee-driven management plan to recognize that stewardship and land management into the future is inherent to an acquisition and describe expectations for stewardship, including a general sense of aspirational restoration that is planned; and d) outlines a collaborative process for following up on projects that were funded by the board with lower existing function and an expectation of higher potential function with future restoration, if this is exceedingly slow to occur. The committee recommended additional thought—in particular about Item d—by the workgroup.

2) OWEB's Use and Implementation of a Conservation Easement

OWEB will continue to require a CE on properties acquired in fee as a condition of grant funding to meet the title restrictions requirement in statute. Three overarching purposes are met with the use of a CE, including guaranteeing the property is used consistent with OWEB funding (i.e., “securing long-term protection for lands and waters that provide significant habitats for native fish and wildlife” per the Oregon Constitution), ensuring the property is not sold for a profit, and capturing other administrative rights necessary to facilitate and ensure durability of OWEB meeting the above requirements.

Specific to the interplay among the content and use of a CE and other documents such as the baseline documentation and management plan, the workgroup will explore the following changes:

- A. Review the administrative rights and provisions for allowable and prohibited property uses in the OWEB CE to ensure the language strikes the right balance between meeting the needs of OWEB's legal obligations and recognition of the agency's role as a grant funder, not an active participant in property ownership or management. Administrative rights that will be reviewed for potential revisions include granting of access to the property for monitoring, funds recovery provisions, and distribution of proceeds in condemnation or termination, among others. The workgroup will also explore how language can better facilitate consistency with match funders and reduce administrative burden for both OWEB and grantees.
- B. Revisit the approach to the identification and description of conservation values in CE and accompanying documents (such as the Baseline Documentation Report), including exploring and answering such questions as:

- Can conservation values be described in a manner that is accurate while also leaving room for significant restoration that will not require complicated processes for amendments or documentation of changes (e.g., baseline document)?
 - For highly altered properties, how can OWEB balance the need to identify conservation values present at time of acquisition while effectively capturing general expectations about future restoration that is not yet planned and for which funding is not yet secured (harking back to the recommendation above 1) Expectations around Ecological Function of Properties Proposed for Investment)?
 - The recommendation from the ARE committee is to no longer require formal Descriptions of Restored Conditions in CEs. For properties requiring significant restoration, can the conceptual intent around previously used Description of Restored Conditions be moved entirely to the management plan? This change would remove detailed Description of Restored Conditions from the baseline (and CE by reference). Instead, the CE would acknowledge the management plan will guide future restoration without explicitly tying easement compliance to detailed content that is required in a management plan. This work aims to create flexibility while ensuring the high-level expectations of ecological outcomes intended by OWEB's investment occur. This work also will involve the acknowledgement by both the board and program participants that in the absence of guaranteed funding and a secure pathway to subsequent restoration work, OWEB will need to use its discretion at the time of funding recommendation and award deliberation to consider what level of uncertainty is acceptable for if/when important future habitat conditions would be provided.
- C. Reconsider the relationship between the CE and management plan, including reframing the approach to prohibited and allowable property uses by the grantee as follows:
- How can CE language be simplified to a statement that the uses will be consistent with the purpose of the funding, which is focused on habitat for native fish and wildlife, and conservation values, instead of stating that uses can occur only if described in an approved management plan? This work aims to ensure management plans capture a shared understanding by the grantee and OWEB about intentions for a property's management, without the management plan being a document that is enforceable in the manner that a CE is. It very likely would leverage other concepts outlined in this document (see below regarding Considerations around areas of impact

within a proposed investment area, which would isolate impacts and allow for conservation of important fish and wildlife habitat on the rest of the property). **Note:** This work will be a major change from how OWEB currently administers acquisition grants. Careful consideration will need to be given to ensure the agency's legal obligations are met and obligations important to the board are durable, while creating a more predictable and less cumbersome space for management and stewardship of properties.

- What types of uses need to be addressed specifically in the CE and with what level of sideboards?
- Is it possible to change to a general notification requirement to OWEB if a change in the uses of the property is contemplated by the grantee and meets certain requirements? This work connects to content below (under Evaluation approach for multiple uses on a property) and also would benefit from looking at other programs' approaches (e.g., State of Washington Recreation and Conservation Office).
- How can CE language be edited to create flexibility in circumstances where parts of a property experience chronic issues, but otherwise the property continues to enable conservation of important fish and wildlife habitat? (See below regarding Considerations around areas of impact within a proposed investment area.)

The workgroup process will review the OWEB CE template and associated companion documents and processes (including grant agreement template, program guidance, etc.), consider CE approaches used by other funders and learn from these, complete research to ensure feasibility of proposed changes, and identify revisions and modifications to OWEB's documents and processes. The ultimate outcome of this work is to create a more flexible and collaborative CE process while delivering high-level ecological outcomes intended by the OWEB board when funding was provided.

3) The Management Plan Development and Approval Process

The workgroup will scope and propose approaches for implementation of the following needed changes that have been flagged:

- A. Recommend that OWEB continue to require management plans for fee land stewardship, but propose revisions that center management plan requirement on supporting grantees in starting off in a strong position regarding land stewardship. The approach would be adjusted to focus on supporting all grantees (both Land Trust Alliance accredited entities such as land trusts, and other grantees such as

Tribes, municipalities, and others) in addressing the following important considerations for fee land stewardship:

- Grantees need to understand the resources on their properties and be alert to threats to their conservation values to facilitate proper protection;
 - Without proper management, sites can become degraded to a condition that fails to achieve the funding's requirements and the project's conservation goals; and
 - A lack of management that results in a chronic failure to protect the conservation values of the land can lead to lack of public support for conservation acquisition and reduced funding opportunities, among other challenges and risks.
- B. Review and propose revisions to the management plan development process. This work will involve exploring different land management planning methods and requirements our participants may already utilize, including Land Trust Alliance's guidance and requirements on management planning for properties. This work will consider how the development and implementation of management plans can be adjusted to be useful for grantee and less burdensome, while ensuring the important considerations described above are addressed.
- C. Reduce level of detail—including about desired future conditions—that is required in management plan documents to facilitate an adaptive-management mindset.
- D. Utilize an iterative, collaborative process for review, and explore the necessary characteristics of either an acknowledgement or approval process by OWEB of initial management plan.
- E. While grantee-driven management plans will still include a monitoring section, OWEB's CE compliance monitoring will be adjusted to no longer assess aspirational restoration for which OWEB does not provide funding.

The workgroup process will review the OWEB management plan requirements and associated documents (e.g., management plan outline of required content, references to management plan in the grant agreement template, program guidance, etc.) and propose revisions, including ideas informed by review of how other funders approach management planning. The ultimate outcome of this work is to create a situation in which OWEB's implementation of the management plan requirement focuses on a shared understanding of grantees' stewardship—and, if appropriate, restoration—plan needs and reducing the CE's reliance on the management plan for compliance and allowable uses. For future restoration, the management plan would guide the restoration work and support enhanced habitat conditions, but in a way that empowers grantees in decision-making and reduces OWEB approval requirements.

4) Considerations around Areas of Impact within an OWEB-Funded Property

The workgroup will scope and propose approaches for implementation of changes that would account for ‘areas of impact’ within an OWEB-funded property. The ARE recommendation is that the concept of focusing small portions of the property as impacted areas that are not providing significant habitat (e.g., utility line, trails, parking lots) could help to isolate impacts and allow for conservation of important fish and wildlife habitat on the rest of the property. Protected properties can produce important ecological outcomes without the entire property functioning as significant habitat. The workgroup will explore:

- A. Scenarios that result in an ‘area of impact’ such as i) a property’s configuration and infrastructure that may not be a negotiable in the acquisition, given land use considerations and needs of the seller; ii) grazing or harvest that is not being applied as a stewardship or restoration tool occurring on a portion of a property while other areas are focused on habitat conservation; iii) trail use in one part of the property while leaving other areas without recreational use; and iv) isolated area that faces chronic challenges with invasive weeds, among others.
- B. Based on these scenarios, suggested revisions to CE language that enable and manage circumstances where an ‘area of impact’ exists, but otherwise the property continues to enable conservation of important fish and wildlife habitat.

The workgroup products will inform subsequent updates to land acquisition program materials (e.g., OWEB CE template and associated companion documents such as grant agreement template, program guidance, etc.) and processes. Staff will complete research to ensure feasibility of proposed changes, then identify revisions and implement changes. The ultimate outcome of this work is to create more flexible program requirements while delivering high-level ecological outcomes intended by the OWEB board when funding was provided.

5) Approach for Multiple Uses on a Property

The analysis of whether a use is acceptable on an OWEB-funded property will be the same regardless of when the request is made (e.g., at time of application, during 18-month due diligence, after closing of transaction). To ensure a functional process, the ARE committee recommends that multiple uses continue to be included in OWEB required management plans and/or post-acquisition documents.

The approach recommended below will be incorporated as questions about anticipated multiple uses in future grant applications for applicants to answer. If the applicant is uncertain about the type and/or extent, if any, of uses unrelated to protecting, maintaining or enhancing the fish and wildlife habitat it intends for the property at the time of

application, grantees will be requested to provide the same level of detail and analysis of the proposed use to OWEB staff during the acquisition due-diligence phase or post-acquisition management planning period. If the desire or need for a use occurs after these timeframes, then the grantee will be responsible for contacting OWEB and providing detail to complete the approach below. OWEB will use this approach to determine whether the proposed use continues to meet the purpose of the funding and, if so determined, will ask that the grantee provide an updated management plan that describes the use for documentation in OWEB's records. A grantee's implementation of multiple uses determined inconsistent with the funding could result in compliance concerns and/or impact the grantee's capacity evaluation in review of any pending or future applications.

The ARE committee recommends the following approach for evaluation of multiple uses. Overall, the use of an OWEB-funded property should support and/or enhance the habitat values of the property, or not cause a demonstrable overall impairment to the habitat values of the property. To that end, certain uses of properties, including grazing, timber management, limited public and private use for low-impact activities, and limited development of facilities such as trails, roads, parking, restrooms, signs and kiosks, and fences, may be allowed, as long as the use is managed in a way that prioritizes the protection of the habitats and species the grant is designed to protect.

OWEB will employ a "no overall impairment" standard when evaluating whether a proposed use is consistent with the OWEB grant. Applicants and grantees must demonstrate that the use will meet this standard by describing the following:

- 1) Will the use support or benefit conservation objectives of the property? If so, how?
- 2) How does the use and any associated infrastructure minimize overlap with important habitat for species sensitive to the use?
- 3) Will there be buffer zones for sensitive species and habitats?
- 4) How will areas of use and infrastructure be planned to avoid areas important to migration and population connectivity and to maintain connectivity between habitat patches?
- 5) Will measures be incorporated to reduce noise and visual disturbance to sensitive wildlife? If so, what are they?
- 6) Will the use and infrastructure be consolidated to reduce impacts? If not, describe why the use is necessary to be conducted in a dispersed manner and how that will meet the "no overall impairment" standard.
- 7) How will the grantee/applicant monitor and mitigate the use and infrastructure to ensure no overall impairment from any resulting negative impacts of the use?

Examples of detail that could be provided by applicants and grantees to demonstrate their analysis of appropriateness of the multiple uses include: maps that show known or potential key habitat and/or key corridors for species of concern overlaid with map of potential use and infrastructure; and description of consultations with experts in the habitat and the species impacted, with detail specific to the proposed use on the property. Applicants should conduct preliminary assessments, refer to relevant literature from reliable sources, and consult with partners who are subject matter experts, being sure to engage OWEB early on in those conversations to ensure the proposal is something that is likely to meet the expectations of OWEB.

If a project is funded that includes multiple uses, the grantee will be required to include the above details in the property management plan specific to the use. For example, if the use is recreation, the grantee will be required to provide a recreation plan, or, if the use is grazing, the grantee will be required to include a grazing plan.

The workgroup will review and provide feedback on the staff recommendation above, to inform program changes in advance of the 2027 grant cycle. Staff will complete research to ensure feasibility of proposed changes and identify revisions and modifications to OWEB's documents and processes. The ultimate outcome of this work is to create a more flexible and collaborative process for evaluating multiple uses on OWEB-funded properties while delivering high-level ecological outcomes intended by the OWEB board when funding was provided.



OREGON
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ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item G

General Board Business

Board Meeting October 27-28, 2026



MINUTES ARE NOT FINAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD

July 28-29, 2026, Board Meeting Minutes

Hybrid Board Meeting

Recording at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0dL-TOWlt4Sp--i1KEa_OA

ATTENDANCE

BOARD MEMBERS

Liz Agpaoa
Chad Allen
Annie Birnie
Zavier Borja
Dan Brown
Raija Bushnell
Kelly Coates
Aaron Curtis
Sarah Dyrdaahl
Russ Hoeflich
Jessi Kershner
Mark Labhart
Lindsay McClary
Dirk Renner
Brian Staab
Claire Tachella
Mark Webb
Woody Wolfe

OWEB STAFF

Nicole Bettinardi
Amy Charette
Greg Ciannella
Renee Davis
Katie Duzik
Gina Flores
Miriam Forney
Mark Grenbemer
Heidi Hartman
Eric Hartstein
Clare Lanusse
Robin Meacher
Coby Menton
Sara O'Brien
Liz Redon
Linda Repplinger
Miriam Scharer
Alexa Schmidt
Courtney Shaff
Eric Williams

OTHERS

Chase Antonovich
Jed Arnold
Lucille Ausman
Kelley Beamer
Kurt Berning
Ken Bierly
Joe Buttafuoco
Haley Case-Scott
Jason Clark
Mike Collier
Regan Coordes
Kevin Fenn
Abbie Forrest
Tom Gaskill
Sarah Gorseigner
Drew Grabacki
Sandi Hiatt
Karsyn Kendrick
Leslie King
Kris Knight
Andrea Kreiner

OTHERS

Lily Leitermann
Darian Lightfoot
Allie Marker
Michael Marlow
Aubrey May
Dale McCabe
Mark McLaughlin
Angela Parada
Melissa Petschauer
Terri Preeg Riggsby
Whitney Rohner
Terry Ruitter
Isaac Sanders
Karin Stutzman
Kyle Sullivan-Astor
Vanessa Taylor
Cindy Thieman
Nancy Toth
Herb Winters
Kelsey Wymore
Ken Yates

Minutes, July 28

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am by Kelly Coates: [Recording](#)

Timestamp | Agenda Item

[00:05:00](#)

Item A. Board Member Comments

Board representatives from state and federal agencies provided updates on issues related to the natural resource agency they represent. Public and Tribal board members also reported on their recent activities, shared information, and commented on various watershed enhancement and community conservation-related topics. *Information item.*

Timestamp	Agenda Item
01:53:30	Item B. General Board Business This time was reserved for the board to act on routine items. <i>Action item.</i> Motion #1. Xavier Borja moved the board approve the minutes from the April 28-29, 2026, board meeting. Motion was seconded by Mark Labhart. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed. Motion #2. Liz Agpaoa moved the board award \$64,979 to the Mid John Day Watershed Council for the Telling the restoration story: Reconnecting Floodplains in Bridge Creek grant number 227-7001-25214, with an award date of July 28, 2026. Motion was seconded by Mark Webb. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.
01:57:57	Item C. Director’s Updates Executive Director Sara O’Brien and staff updated the board on agency business. <i>Information item.</i>
02:24:20	Item D. Rule Revisions: Water Acquisitions Senior Policy Coordinator Eric Hartstein, Water Acquisitions & Capacity Coordinator Brian Wolcott and Acquisitions & Special Programs Manager Renee Davis provided an overview of proposed revisions to OWEB’s Water Acquisitions Grants administrative rules for board approval. <i>Action Item.</i> Motion: Mark Webb moved the board approve the Water Acquisition Grant Program administrative rules found in Attachment D. Motion was seconded by Woody Wolfe. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.
04:27:50	Item E. Public Comment This time was reserved for the board to hear public comments and review the written public comment submitted for the meeting. Written comments were included with the board materials on the meeting website. <i>Information item.</i> The following people provided verbal comments: • Andrea Kreiner, Oregon Association of Conservation Districts • Terri Preeg Riggsby, Network of Oregon Watershed Councils • Dale McCabe, City of The Dalles • Jed Arnold, Hood River SWCD • Kurt Berning, Pudding River WC • Joe Buttafuoco, Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts • Mark McLaughlin, North Coast Land Conservancy

Timestamp	Agenda Item
03:04:52	Item F. Spending Plan Rebalance Business Operations Manager/Fiscal Officer Miriam Scharer presented an overview of the mid-biennium 2025-2027 spending plan for board adoption. <i>Action Item.</i>
05:02:39	After a break, the board continued discussion and deliberation. Motion: Mark Webb moved the board adopt the updated 2025-2027 Grants Funds Spending Plan adding \$11,120,048 in available funding to the grant programs detailed in Table 3 for a biennial Spending Plan total of \$164,789,085. Motion was seconded by Woody Wolfe. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.
05:49:27	Item G. Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program Drinking Water Source Protection Specialist Audrey Squires and Acquisitions & Special Programs Manager Renee Davis provided an update on the Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) Grant Program and requested approval of staff recommended changes. <i>Action Item.</i> Scope Chage Motion: Mark Labhart moved the board approve a project scope change for Neskowin Regional Water District (Grant #225-8016-24163) to drop parcel 6500 and to add parcels 800, 6600, and 6601. Motion was seconded by Mark Webb. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed. Extensions Motion: Liz Agpaoa moved the board approve extensions to the grant end dates to April 23, 2027, to Neskowin Regional Water District (Grant #225-8016-24163), City of Rockaway Beach (Grant #225-8016-24164), City of The Dalles (Grant #225-8016-24165), and City of Reedsport (Grant #225-8016-24166). Motion was seconded by Xavier Borja. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed. Additional Funds Motion #1: Russ Hoeflich moved the board award an additional \$146,187 to the City of The Dalles’ existing Drinking Water Source Protection Grant #225-8016-24165 as detailed in Table 2 of the staff report. Motion was seconded by Mark Labhart. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed. Additional Funds Motion #2: Xavier Borja moved the board award an additional \$342,813 to the City of Rockaway Beach’s existing Drinking Water Source Protection Grant #225-8016-24164 as detailed in Table 2 of the staff report. Motion was seconded by Lindsay McClary. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.

Timestamp	Agenda Item
06:26:11	Item H. Forest Collaboratives Grant Awards Senior Policy Coordinator Eric Hartstein, Federal Programs Specialist Heidi Hartman, and ODF Federal Forest Restoration Program Lead Kyle Sullivan-Astor reviewed the Spring 2026 Forest Collaborative grant offering and staff recommendations. <i>Action item.</i> Motion: Mark Webb moved the board award \$231,149 for staff-recommended projects, as shown in Attachment C with an award date of July 28,2026. Motion was seconded by Liz Agpaoa. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.
07:03:45	Item I. Land Acquisition Grant Program Modernization Update and Initial Recommendations Acquisitions & Special Programs Manager Renee Davis and Executive Director Sara O'Brien provided an update on the land acquisition grant program modernization process in progress and initial staff recommendations. <i>Action item.</i> Motion: Mark Labhart moved the board signal support for a) the Table 1 recommendations in Attachment A and b) the Category 1 recommendations in Attachment B. Motion was seconded by Xavier Borja. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.
The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm by Lindsay McClary.	

Minutes, July 29

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 am by Kelly Coates: [Recording](#)

Timestamp	Agenda Item
00:02:24	Item J. Urban Watersheds Partner Panel Water & Climate Coordinator Alexa Schmidt and Regional Program Representative Liz Redon introduced a panel of grantees implementing urban restoration projects who shared their observations about the unique challenges and opportunities of working in this context. <i>Information item.</i> Panel members included: Darian Lightfoot, Long Tom Watershed Council, and Jason Clark, City of Talent

Timestamp	Agenda Item
02:00:54	Item K. Public Comment This time was reserved for the board to hear public comments and review the written public comment submitted for the meeting. Written comments were included with the board materials on the meeting website. <i>Information item.</i> The following people provided verbal comments: • Karsyn Kendrick, Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts • Darian Lightfoot, Long Tom Watershed Council • Kelley Beamer, East Multnomah SWCD • Abbie Forrest, Wasco SWCD • Ken Bierly, Bierly & Associates • Melissa Petschauer, High Desert Partnership • Michael Marlow, Baker SWCD • Whitney Rohner, Baker SWCD
02:30:28	Item L. Winter 2026 Open Solicitation Grant Offering Board Awards Restoration Grant Program Manager Eric Williams and Regional Program Representatives reviewed the Winter 2026 Open Solicitation grant offering and funding recommendations. <i>Action Item.</i>
03:48:10	After a break, the board continued discussion and deliberation. Motion #1: Mark Labhart moved the board award \$298,004 for project #227-3024 Kelly Creek Restoration Project TA with the award date of July 29, 2026. Motion was seconded by Mark Webb. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed. Motion #2: Lindsay McClary moved the board award funds for the staff-recommended projects listed in Attachment D, and with an award date of July 29, 2026, and delegate the award to McKenzie Watershed Alliance for project #227-3020-25030 to the OWEB Executive Director. Motion was seconded by Xavier Borja. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.
04:35:58	Item M. Rules Revisions: Initiate Operating Capacity Grant Program Rulemaking Senior Policy Coordinator Eric Hartstein, Water Acquisitions & Capacity Coordinator Brian Wolcott and Restoration Grant Program Manager Eric Williams provided an overview of the Watershed Council and Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Operating Capacity grant program and requested board authorization to initiate rulemaking for Operating Capacity Grants for watershed councils and SWCDs. <i>Action item.</i> Motion: Mark Webb moved the board initiate rulemaking for watershed council and SWCD operating capacity grants. Motion was seconded by Xavier Borja. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.

Timestamp	Agenda Item
05:23:32	Item N. Co-Chair Election OWEB Board Co-Chair Kelly Coates’ first term as co-chair ends after the July 2026 board meeting. Board members voted to reelect Co-chair Coates for a second two-year term beginning with the October 2026 meeting. <i>Action item.</i> Motion: Liz Agpaoa moved the board elect Kelly Coates to serve as co-chair for the next 2 years, beginning with the October 2026 meeting. Motion was seconded by Mark Labhart. Liz Agpaoa, Chad Allen, Xavier Borja, Raija Bushnell, Kelly Coates, Sarah Dyrdaahl, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.
05:32:25	Item O. Other Business This item was reserved for other matters that may come before the board. <i>Information item.</i>
	The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 pm by co-chair Lindsay McClary.



This report provides the board updates on the progress for three Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) Conservation Easement Grants and requests closing date extensions for these grants.

Background

The Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission (OAHC) recommends that the OWEB Board extend the closing date for the following Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) funded Conservation Easement projects: Box T Ranch (225-7106-23849), Country Heritage Farms (225-7105-23848), and Carman Ranch (225-7101-23837). All of these grants were awarded OAHP funding in early 2025.

OAHP Conservation Easement Grant Extension Requests

Box T Ranch (Grant No. 225-7106-23849) – Blue Mountain Land Trust (BMLT) was awarded funds for Box T Ranch to acquire a working lands conservation easement on approximately 3,697 acres in the John Day Basin to protect the property’s significant agricultural and natural resource values. The property hosts healthy rangeland and irrigated pasture, while supporting habitat for several terrestrial and aquatic species, including northwest white-tailed deer, mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep and bald eagles. This property includes approximately one mile of the John Day River, which is important habitat for anadromous fish such as summer steelhead, mid-Columbia Spring Chinook, and John Day River bull trout. The property also includes 4 miles of McClellan Creek, a historic salmon-bearing stream.

BMLT has worked diligently with the landowners on performing due diligence items, including conservation easement drafting with review and approval from OWEB, surveyor review of the property’s legal description to confirm the boundaries for the conservation easement, and completion of an environmental site assessment and mineral evaluation with satisfactory results. At the time of their request for this extension, BMLT had contracted an appraiser and was in the process of finalizing management plan and baseline documentation report details and resolving outstanding title issues in a manner acceptable to OWEB. Upon completion of these items, BMLT will complete final reviews of any remaining required due diligence items from NRCS. This project is matched with NRCS ACEP-ALE funds that expire March 31st, 2028, with the eligibility to request up to two additional 12-month extensions from NRCS. BMLT requests that the OWEB grant deadline be extended to June 1, 2027 to allow for the time it feels necessary to complete the last remaining due diligence items and allow for the 90-day NRCS review requirement.

The Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission reviewed this extension request and the staff recommendation on September 23, 2026 and recommends that the OWEB extend the grant deadline for the Box T Ranch project to June 1, 2027.

Country Heritage Farms (Grant No. 225-7105-23848) – Oregon Agricultural Trust (OAT) was awarded funds for Country Heritage Farms to acquire a working lands conservation easement on approximately 304 acres of significant farmland located immediately adjacent to the city of Dayton in Yamhill County. The property has prime farm soils with demonstrated farm viability and resiliency. The 62-acre riparian area consisting of mixed deciduous riparian forest, mixed conifer forest, and remnant mixed Oregon white oak protects the year-round

Palmer Creek. The farm is a recharge area for the Tualatin Basin aquifer, one of the four structural basins of the Willamette Lowlands regional aquifer.

The landowner engaged in succession planning with its family after the OAHP award was made, which included negotiation of the easement terms as part of an overall updated succession plan for the Country Heritage Farms property. This internal work with the family delayed progress on the overall project. OAT produced a conservation easement draft for OWEB review in August 2026, along with a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between OAT and the landowners outlining collaboration on completing the project. An appraiser has been engaged and will proceed once a final draft of the easement has been approved by OWEB. The remaining due diligence items, including environmental contamination reviews, final title work, and survey work are still to be completed.

OAT requested that the OWEB grant be extended into 2028 to mirror the NRCS parcel agreement for matching funding. OWEB staff recommended to the OAHC that the grant deadline for Country Heritage Farms be extended to September 30, 2027. This extension is shorter than the timeframe requested by OAT, but still an additional nine months beyond the 24-month grant window anticipated in administrative rule. The September 30, 2027 deadline would allow for a formal checkpoint on the grant's progress that falls early in the 2027-2029 biennium, when there is better understanding about overall resources and capacity of the OAHP program.

The Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission reviewed this extension request and the staff recommendation on September 23, 2026 and recommends that the OWEB board approve the staff's recommendation to extend the grant to September 30, 2027.

Carman Ranch OAHP Conservation Easement (Grant No. 225-7101-23837) – Wallowa Land Trust (WLT) was awarded funds for the Carman Ranch OAHP Conservation Easement project to acquire a working lands easement on approximately 1,946 acres in Wallowa County. The easement will preserve priority rangeland, critical for maintaining the long-term viability of the local livestock industry and the essential habitat provided by the property's grasslands. The property is adjacent to and part of the Zumwalt Prairie grassland system.

WLT has worked diligently to complete all required due diligence items (including a finalized appraisal), which have been reviewed and approved by OWEB, and reviewed and approved (in-part) by NRCS. Additional late-breaking adjustments to the conservation easement have been requested by NRCS, and WLT is in the process of working with NRCS to incorporate these into the easement deed, which OWEB then will review. Due to uncertainty around NRCS review timelines compounded by the upcoming transition between federal fiscal years, WLT and OWEB staff concurred it was prudent to provide additional time if necessary to accommodate NRCS review timelines. This project is matched with NRCS ACEP-ALE funds that expire March 31, 2027, with the eligibility to request one remaining 12-month extension available from NRCS. WLT requested an extension of the OWEB grant to March 31, 2027 to align with their NRCS deadline.

The Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission reviewed this extension request and the staff recommendation on September 23, 2026 and recommends that the OWEB board approve the staff's recommendation to extend the grant to March 31, 2027.

Staff Recommendation

Box T Ranch: Staff recommend extending the grant deadline for the Box T Ranch (225-7106-23849) project to June 1, 2027 as recommended by the OAHC.

Country Heritage Farms: Staff recommend extending the grant deadline for Country Heritage Farms (225-7105-23848) to September 30, 2027 as recommended by the OAHC.

Carman Ranch: Staff recommend extending the grant deadline for the Carman Ranch (225-7101-23837) project to March 31, 2027 as recommended by the OAHC.



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Agenda Item H

Executive Order 25-26

OWEB Workplan

Board Meeting October 27-28, 2026



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor



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October 27-28, 2026 OWEB Board Meeting

Staff report – Agenda Item H. Executive Order 25-26 Workplan

MEMORANDUM

To: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
From: Sara O'Brien, Executive Director
Alexa Schmidt, Water and Climate Coordinator

Supports OWEB's Strategic Plan priority #6: Take bold and innovative action toward funding projects that advance climate resilience.

I. Introduction

In October 2025, Governor Kotek signed Executive Order (EO) 25-26, directing state agencies to work together to advance climate resilience across the state's lands and waters. The EO focuses on protecting, connecting, conserving, and restoring natural and working lands so that they are able to mitigate and adapt to climate change, while continuing to provide social, environmental, and economic benefits to Oregonians.

Fourteen state agencies and the Columbia River Gorge Commission have outlined their plans to implement the EO in workplans for the 2027-2029 biennium, using existing resources and leveraging the work of other agencies and external partners to maximize resilience gains.

II. Background

The EO directs state agencies to collaborate on a statewide approach to climate resilience, with OWEB's work tying to four directives:

1. Define key resilience attributes for lands and waters;
2. Keep Oregon's working lands and waters working;
3. Conserve natural lands and waters/lead by example; and
4. Advance community and wildfire resilience.

Under the action *Define Key Resilience Attributes*, OWEB and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife convened a 3-day design workshop and conducted a subsequent feedback process to develop four resiliency attributes to guide the EO work. And under the action *Conserve Natural Lands and Waters*, the EO establishes a goal of protecting, conserving, connecting, or restoring at least 10% more of Oregon's lands and waters over the next 10 years. OWEB has supported the Governor's Natural Resources Office (GNRO) in establishing the qualifying actions and baseline metrics.

All agencies are bringing their workplans to partner and board or commission meetings. GNRO drafted an executive summary of the EO 25-26 workplan effort that accompanies the workplans being presented by agencies at these meetings. At the October board meeting, staff will present OWEB's workplan and engage in a discussion with the board.

III. Recommendation

This is an information item only.

IV. Attachments

- A. EO 25-26 Executive Summary
- B. OWEB EO 25-26 Draft Workplan



Office of Governor
TINA KOTEK

EO 25-26 AGENCY WORKPLANS: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prepared by

THE GOVERNOR'S NATURAL RESOURCE OFFICE

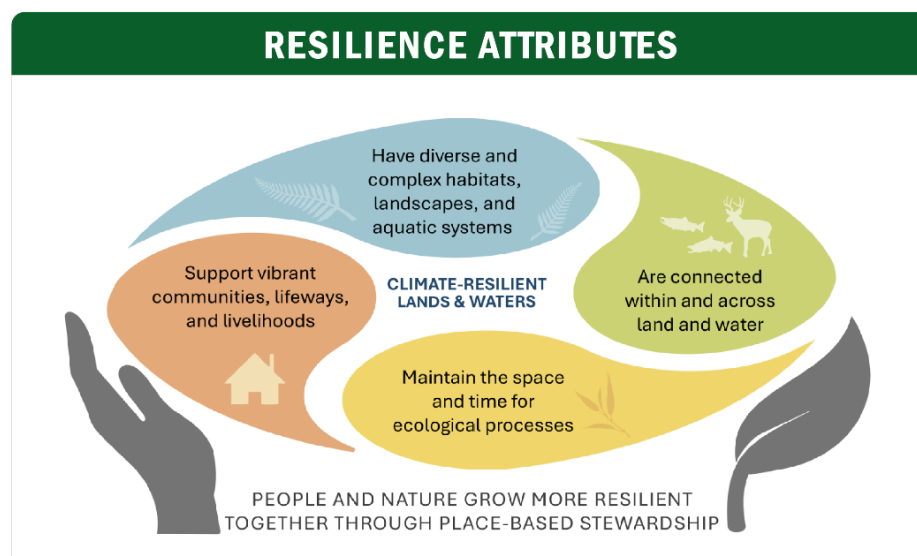
September 8, 2026

Executive Summary: Coordinated Action to Strengthen the Resilience of Oregon's Lands and Waters (EO 25-26)

Oregon's lands and waters form an interconnected system that supports ecosystems, communities and economies across the state. Forests, rangelands, estuaries, rivers, working farms, transportation corridors, and coastal shorelines each play essential roles. They store carbon, regulate water, support fish, wildlife and First Foods, sustain livelihoods, move people and goods, and buffer communities from the effects of a changing climate. Ecosystems, communities, and economies in Oregon face growing risks from climate-related impacts such as long-term drought, catastrophic wildfire and wildfire smoke, sea level rise, destructive flood events, as well as other stressors like habitat loss, invasive species, and disease.

In recognition of the importance of building the resilience of these systems and communities to climate-related disruptions, Governor Kotek issued Executive Order (EO) 25-26 on October 21, 2025. EO 25-26 directs Oregon's natural resource agencies to work collaboratively toward the shared goal of strengthening the resilience of Oregon's natural and working lands and waters. EO 25-26 recognizes that resilience does not mean preserving things exactly as they are; instead, it means protecting the ability of lands, waters and people to cope, adapt, and/or transform in response to a changing climate and to continue to support essential functions even as conditions change.

The first step in implementing EO 25-26 was to define key resilience attributes, i.e. the characteristics of lands and waters that are currently resilient to impacts from climate change and therefore able to deliver multiple benefits that are likely to persist under future climate conditions; or are capable of achieving multiple benefits of high resilience in the face of changing conditions if supported by restoration, enhancement or reconnection. After much conversation and deliberation, the following four resiliency attributes were developed to guide the implementation of EO 25-26 by natural resource agencies:



1. Connectivity within and across land and water to facilitate the movement of organisms and ecological processes.
2. Diverse and complex habitats, landscapes, and aquatic systems that provide options for native species and human communities to respond to change and disturbance.
3. Flood, fire, and other natural processes have the space and time to sustain key ecological functions.
4. Natural and working lands and waters support, and are supported by, vibrant human communities, lifeways, and livelihoods.

This executive summary distills core elements from workplans prepared by 14 state agencies and the Columbia Gorge Commission to implement the directives of EO 25-26. The summary provides a clear overview of shared priorities and demonstrates how agencies are aligning programs, tools and investments to advance the resilience of lands, waters and communities. The workplans focus on maximizing resilience gains from existing resources while positioning agencies to take advantage of new opportunities as they arise. The workplans focus on the existing and upcoming budget cycle (2026-2029) and will be updated in advance of the 2029-2031 budget development process.

While individual agency workplans vary based on each agency's mission and responsibilities (and may not include all elements noted below), together they reflect a coordinated statewide vision-- integrated, science driven, partnership centered and focused on building long-term resilience. Where possible, the work of Oregon's natural resource agencies leverages work done by others such as Tribal Nations, landowners, federal and local governments, universities, and non-governmental organizations and philanthropic partners. Collectively, these efforts strengthen Oregon's capacity to adapt to change while protecting the values Oregonians share and support the EO's goal to **protect, conserve, connect, or restore 10% of Oregon's lands and waters within ten years.**

Core Themes of 2027-2029 Agency Workplans

1. Advance Protection, Restoration and Stewardship Actions Across Priority Oregon Waters and Landscapes

Across forests, rangelands, farms, estuaries, rivers, near-shore environments, transportation corridors, state parks, coastal dunes, and wildlife habitats, agencies are implementing or preparing to implement large-scale actions that strengthen the four statewide resilience attributes.

Actions include:



Connectivity

Connectivity across land, sea, water, and sky

Protecting cold-water refugia, increasing fish passage, restoring riparian corridors and floodplains, protecting and restoring wildlife corridors, protecting coastal habitats, supporting healthy forest landscapes, and mitigating hazards in a key transportation corridor.

Diversity and complexity of habitats and landscapes

Restoring kelp ecosystems, sage-grouse habitat, oak and grassland systems, tidal wetlands, estuaries, beaver habitat, rangelands, and aquatic systems affected by contaminants, and systems affected by invasive species.



Ecological process function

Pursuing landscape-scale native plant restoration, prescribed and cultural burning, climate-aligned reforestation, groundwater and watershed protection, removal of structural barriers, and actions that allow rivers, forests, dunes, and estuaries to adjust naturally to disturbance.

Community and livelihood resilience

Respecting Tribal sovereignty and supporting the health, abundance, and access to First Foods. Supporting rural stewardship, transportation reliability, drinking-water resilience, smoke-readiness, wildfire-adaptation, hazard mitigation planning, and community leadership—ensuring communities can thrive while adapting to change.



2. Improve and Expand Access to Programs that Support Land and Water Managers in Building Resilience

Workplans show consistent agency commitment to addressing technical, regulatory, and financial barriers, reducing timelines, and modernizing rules and policies to enable restoration, stewardship, climate-smart forestry, water-quality protection, coastal resilience, and wildfire adaptation.

Efforts include:

- Enhancing outreach and communication with land and water managers seeking information on state technical and financial assistance to support resilience projects on natural and working lands;
- Streamlining removal-fill, fish passage, riparian and terrestrial restoration, and tidal project permitting;
- Increasing forest resilience by modernizing forest-practice and prescribed-fire policies;
- Integrating resilience attributes into grant making and planning;
- Expanding wetland and conservation mitigation banking;
- Innovating approaches for water reuse, aquifer storage and recovery and aquifer recharge;
- Collaborating with Tribal Nations to further the integration of Indigenous knowledge; and
- Supporting local governments and communities adapting to wildfire and smoke, flood, heat, drought, coastal hazards, and ecosystem change.

Building resilience at scale requires collaborating with partners and supporting their stewardship of Oregon's working lands and waters in ways that strengthen ecosystems, communities and

local economies. These actions will help Oregonians act quickly and confidently to build resilience, while maintaining environmental safeguards and community protections.

3. Target Resources toward Priority Needs and Programs that Deliver Results

Agency workplans embed EO 25-26 into existing programs that have a track record of delivering results — fish and wildlife habitat restoration, forest management, watershed enhancement grants, placed based water planning and investment, water-quality and quantity protection, mitigation banking, estuary and shoreline planning, land-use regulation, transportation resilience, emergency management, scenic-waterway protection, and wildfire programs. Agency workplans not only prioritize these programs but, in many cases, identify strategies to expand their reach and impact. By strengthening proven systems rather than building new ones, agencies increase impact while maintaining clarity for landowners, local governments, Tribal Nations, and community organizations.

Agency workplans direct resources toward areas of highest need that lay the foundation for our future. Collectively they center the following priority initiatives:

- **Build a Resilient Water Future through Strategic Monitoring, Protection, and Innovative Water Management Tools**

Monitor and implement groundwater quality strategies, advance drought preparedness, increase instream water protections particularly in cold-water habitats, and innovate approaches for water reuse, aquifer storage and recovery and aquifer recharge.
- **Accelerate Strategic Water Quality and Aquatic Habitat Restoration**

Drive integrated and prioritized restoration efforts—instream leasing, aquatic habitat restoration, fish passage barrier removal, mine reclamation—and incorporate multi benefit approaches to implementing water quality improvement plans (Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)) to ensure durable, adaptive watershed strategies.
- **Expand Wetland and Species Mitigation Capacity to Protect Critical Landscapes and Waters**

Increase wetland inventories, strengthen mitigation banking, modernize mitigation processes, and scale programs like Sage Grouse In Lieu Fee to protect sensitive species and landscapes under increasing climate pressure.
- **Advance Rangeland Resilience through Invasive Grass Management, Native Seed Capacity, and Fire-Adapted Strategies**

Address invasive annual grasses, protect and grow core sagebrush landscapes, expand native seed capacity, strengthen agricultural water quality partnerships, and support fire-adapted rangeland landscapes to stabilize ecosystem and community resilience.

- **Increase Coastal and Nearshore Resilience to Climate and Ocean Change**

Invest in kelp/rocky habitat resilience, support coastal science convenings, and support planning to safeguard nearshore ecosystems and coastal communities. Locate and prioritize high-risk erosion, landslide and flooding hazard sites along the State's most critical coastal lifeline route (Highway 101).

- **Protect and Restore Terrestrial Habitat Connectivity**

Invest in protection and habitat restoration within Priority Wildlife Connectivity Areas, remove barriers within big game migration corridors by supporting working lands transitions to virtual fence options and support highway wildlife crossing projects, provide technical and financial assistance to landscape restoration projects that facilitate movement of wildlife and climatic shifts in vegetation over time.

- **Advance Community and Wildfire Resilience**

Modernize and align Community Wildfire Protection Plans with statewide hazard mitigation planning, increase use of prescribed fire with public health protections, update the Smoke Management Program and expand landscape-scale fuel treatments, build fire-adapted communities and reduce risk to people, infrastructure, and lifeways, advance climate-smart forestry, ecological restoration, riparian protection, and long-term regenerative capacity.

4. Accelerate the Acquisition and Use of Data that Supports Resilience, Mapping, and Monitoring

Agency workplans prioritize funding and scaling actions that move toward informed, climate-smart decision-making,

Actions include:

- Statewide lidar and remote-sensing for forests, floodplains, estuaries, rangelands, shorelines, watersheds and landslides;
- Water-quality and groundwater monitoring networks;
- Air-quality and wildfire-smoke trend reporting;
- Forest inventory, carbon flux modeling, reforestation and climate adapted species alignment;
- Climate-hazard risk maps for wildfire, flooding, heat, landslides, and coastal erosion;
- Blue-carbon accounting tools for tidal wetlands;
- Vital Signs ecological and cultural monitoring in the Columbia River Gorge;
- Real-time transportation hazard monitoring along U.S. 101;
- Shared statewide data infrastructure for natural climate solutions; and
- Tribal-led integration of Indigenous Traditional Ecological and Cultural Knowledge.

These shared information sources and data sets dramatically increase Oregon’s ability to predict climate impacts, prioritize resilience investments, coordinate across jurisdictions, and measure progress statewide.

5. Identify Actions that Promote Collaboration and Shared Resources to Secure Stronger Resilience Outcomes

Agency workplans prioritize actions that build collaboration, support broad use of shared information and tools, and coordinate resources through shared strategies and plans.

Actions include:

- **Shared Science:** Where possible, develop common datasets and monitoring tools to support consistent, science-based decisions;
- **Shared Resources:** Develop tools, data, and guidance that can be shared amongst agencies and with partners to strengthen local planning, hazard readiness, and infrastructure resilience;
- **Shared Planning:** Support efforts to develop a long-term plan that integrates natural resources, infrastructure, public health, land use, emergency management, Tribal priorities, and community needs as part of a Plan for a Resilient Oregon;
- **Integrated Stewardship:** Identify cross-agency work on forests, watersheds, coasts, and habitats using shared strategies and plans and aligned funding; and
- **Partnership with Tribal Nations:** Consider Indigenous knowledge and priorities across key resilience efforts.

OWEB's Executive Order 25-26 Workplan

In October 2025, Governor Kotek signed Executive Order 25-26, directing Oregon state agencies to work together to advance climate resilience across the state's lands and waters by protecting, connecting, conserving, or restoring forests, grasslands, rangelands, farmlands, wetlands, river, lakes, coastal and marine waters, and parks and open spaces in urban areas.

OWEB submitted a detailed workplan in June 2026 describing how its grant programs and partnerships align with each part of the order. This document summarizes that workplan, organized to match the five directives in Section I of EO 25-26, "Foster Resilient Lands, Waters, and Communities."

1. Define Key Resilience Attributes for Lands and Waters

What the order asks: The EO asks agencies to use existing plans and strategies and the best available science to define key resilience attributes for Oregon's lands and waters.

OWEB's role	What OWEB is doing
Lead an interagency team to develop resilience attributes	In March 2026, OWEB and ODFW led a 3-day design workshop and subsequent public feedback process to bring together agencies and external partners to outline climate resilience attributes .
Establish baseline conditions	OWEB, ODFW, and the Governor's Office are currently working with ODOE to identify actions across all named agencies which advance the EO goal of protecting or restoring 10% more of Oregon's lands and waters over the next 10 years.

2. Keep Oregon's Working Lands and Waters Working

What the order asks: The EO asks agencies to make it easier — through funding, permitting, and grant processes — for farmers, foresters, fishers, and other landowners to manage lands and waters in climate-friendly ways.

OWEB's role	What OWEB is doing
Identify and improve programs, tools, and incentives that support stewardship and co-benefits	OWEB's existing grant programs already fund restoration, technical assistance, and land and water transactions. Several programs, including Oregon Ag Heritage Program, Drinking Water Source Protection Program (DWSP), and Natural & Working Lands Program also advance the EO, but the majority of that funding is now fully committed. The Environmental

OWEB's role	What OWEB is doing
	Restoration Council recently approved up to \$1.2 million for the DWSP program, which will allow OWEB to offer a second grant cycle later this year as well as to maintain staffing for an additional year.
Improve application and grant review processes	OWEB regularly streamlines its application and reporting systems to make grants easier to access and is coordinating with other state agencies to make reporting more consistent across programs.

3. Conserve Natural Lands and Waters/Lead by Example

What the order asks: The EO sets a statewide goal to protect, conserve, connect, or restore 10% of Oregon's lands and waters within 10 years; to develop innovative mitigation solutions; and to develop and implement strategies to enhance climate resiliency as a co-benefit of management objectives.

OWEB's role	What OWEB is doing
Agencies are directed to protect, conserve, connect, or restore 10% of lands and waters in Oregon as compared to 2025 baseline	OWEB's existing grant programs significantly support this action through funding, technical assistance, and partnership provided by our staff. OWEB has recently updated water acquisition grant program rules to clarify eligibility for activities related to project planning and development, project design, and outreach. OWEB anticipates this work will lead to additional eligible flow restoration projects by supporting development costs for these complex projects.
Agencies are directed to explore mitigation tools which support the long-term protection and resilience of land and water that contain key resilience attributes	While OWEB does not fund mitigation in our grant programs due to the intent of the funds to achieve uplift, we have frequently been a supportive partner to sister agencies and external partners in exploring and designing innovative mitigation approaches. We look forward to increasing this work under the EO and will continue exploratory conversations to support an enterprise-level approach.

OWEB's role	What OWEB is doing
Agencies that own or manage lands or waters are directed to develop and implement strategies to enhance climate resilience as a co-benefit of management objectives	OWEB grant programs help recipients implement a variety of management actions that enhance climate resiliency as a co-benefit. Resiliency co-benefits of projects funded by OWEB include enhanced stream flows and improved water quality, increased forest resiliency to wildfire, improved habitat connectivity, and increased resiliency of working lands to drought and wildfire. State and federal agencies are not eligible OWEB grantees but are frequent partners on OWEB-funded projects.

4. Community and Wildfire Resilience

What the order asks: The EO calls for agencies to implement Oregon's 20-Year Landscape Resiliency Plan by leveraging partnerships and using available programs and resources to reduce the risk of wildfire and public health impacts of smoke.

OWEB's role	What OWEB is doing
Implement Oregon's 20-Year Landscape Resiliency Plan	OWEB has been a consistent partner to ODF and the other state and federal partner agencies in development of this effort, and our grant programs support implementation, especially through restoration and technical assistance funding for forest and rangeland resiliency projects. OWEB has also served as a grantmaking partner to ODF on Forest Collaborative grants as funds are available.



OREGON
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Agenda Item I

ODFW and PCSRF

Board Meeting October 27-28, 2026

October 27-28, 2026 OWEB Board Meeting

Staff report – Agenda Item I. ODFW and PCSRF Funds

MEMORANDUM

To: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

From: Courtney Shaff, Monitoring and Reporting Manager

Greg Apke, Fish Screening & Passage Program Manager

I. Introduction

This report provides the board with an update on how the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) uses its annual portion of the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds (PCSRF). ODFW Fish Screening & Passage Program Manager, Greg Apke, will provide the board with an update on how the Fish Screens and Passage Program uses PCSRF funds.

II. Background

OWEB is the designated applicant for Oregon to the PCSRF grant program and applies annually for these funds along with ODFW. The amount of funding transferred each year to ODFW and the specific programs it supports depends on the successful receipt of funds through the competitive PCSRF grant program. The purpose of the PCSRF grant program is to provide benefits to threatened and endangered Pacific Salmon and steelhead and their habitats. Project and activities must fall within one of the three program priorities:

1. Projects benefiting threatened and endangered Pacific Salmon and steelhead that address limiting factors and actions identified in NOAA approved interim, or proposed Recovery Plans.
2. Watershed-scale or larger effectiveness monitoring and population-scale status and trend monitoring.
3. All other project types, including activities that build tribal capacity to participate in salmon recovery, planning and project development.

III. 2025-2027 ODFW PCSRF Program Activities

Oregon's PCSRF award for FFY25 was \$19 million, ODFW's portion of the award was \$6.671 million. OWEB and ODFW are still waiting to hear on our FFY26 award amount.

The following ODFW programs are supported by their portion of the PCSRF award.

- Priority 1: Fish Screen and Passage Program Implementation and Lower Columbia River Harvest Management Programs
- Priority 2: Oregon Plan Fish and Habitat Monitoring, including Klamath post-dam removal monitoring,

- Priority 3: Fish Screens and Passage Program Outreach, Conservation and Recovery Plan Implementation and Technical Support, and the Chum Recovery Program

IV. Recommendation

This is an informational item only.



OREGON
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Agenda Item J

Telling the Restoration Story

Plants for People

Board Meeting October 27-28, 2026



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor



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October 27-28, 2026 OWEB Board Meeting

Staff report – Agenda Item J. Telling the Restoration Story: Plants for People

MEMORANDUM

To: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
From: Audrey Hatch, Conservation Outcomes Coordinator
Courtney Shaff, Monitoring and Reporting Program Manager

Supports OWEB's Strategic Plan priority # 4: Advance learning about watershed restoration effectiveness through coordinated monitoring.

I. Introduction

This agenda item presents technical and outreach products resulting from OWEB's Telling the Restoration Story project featuring the Plants for People restoration efforts.

II. Background: OWEB's Telling the Restoration Story grant offering

OWEB's targeted Telling the Restoration Story grant offering helps grantees evaluate existing data from watershed restoration projects and produce outreach materials that describe the outcomes. Outreach materials include fact sheets, videos, and online content such as StoryMaps. The audience for these materials includes restoration practitioners, OWEB staff, board members, and legislators. Each grantee also identifies additional audiences who may include specific types of restoration practitioners; landowners; local partners; and natural resource managers.

Fourteen projects have been completed under this offering so far. Presentations have been provided at several board meetings, and all completed products are made available on OWEB's website. Additionally, four projects are currently funded and underway, including Bridge Creek in the Lower John Day basin, Kilchis acquisitions on the north coast, Rice Creek in the Umpqua basin, and the Sandy River basin near Mt. Hood.

III. Background: Plants for People

This 'Telling the Restoration Story' project was led by Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde (CTGR) with participation from the Institute for Applied Ecology (IAE) to use existing data to show how OWEB funds have supported the integration of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) into prairie restoration.

This 'Telling the Restoration Story' project summarizes three phases of collaboration on Plants for People efforts. Plants for People Project took place over a decade, across seven sites within the Willamette River Watershed, including: Champoeg State Park in Marion County; Herbert Farm Natural Area in Benton County; Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde (CTGR) Natural Resources Department in Yamhill County; Rattlesnake Butte in Lane County; and three sites in Polk County (South Yamhill, Thompson, and Tyee Preserve).

Awareness and recognition of the relevance of TEK and indigenous management to ecological restoration has increased significantly in the decade since Plants for People began, and there is increased interest from the restoration community and federal incentives to include TEK in restoration. Products resulting from this ‘Telling the Restoration Story’ project can help provide information and guidance for future restoration projects to build the integration of culturally important species and TEK into projects to improve both ecological and social outcomes. The products resulting from this project are anticipated to connect TEK with fish and wildlife habitat restoration, while also describing important cultural connections.

IV. Telling the Restoration Story Project Deliverables: Plants for People

This project resulted in a technical report, StoryMap, two infographic fact sheets, and three videos released with a phased social media strategy.

The technical report compiles past project reports and establishment data into a comprehensive document detailing actions, outcomes, and lessons learned from all three phases of the Plants for People Project. This report includes detailed data on plant materials, volunteer inputs, plant establishment, and nursery engagement, and it is intended for an audience familiar with habitat restoration and plant propagation.

The [StoryMap](#) incorporates information from the technical report and includes a history of project sites and their management practices, as well as a description of the change in extent of native habitat coverage. The StoryMap includes videos, narrative and photographs and is intended to reach an audience including the public, Tribal members, restoration practitioners, OWEB Board, and potential funders. The StoryMap is featured on the [CTGR Natural Resources Department website](#).

Highlights from the technical report were used to develop two fact sheets (Attachment A): (1) Plant Materials Accomplishments and (2) Restoration Overview. The fact sheets target the public, CTGR nursery visitors, the OWEB board and potential funders.

The project created a series of three videos, intended to highlight the human, social, and cultural impacts and motivations of the Plants for People Project. Filming locations were selected to highlight restoration work accomplished during the project. Interviews included nursery workers and project managers, and highlighted personal experience and Traditional Ecological Knowledge. Audiences for the videos include the public, Tribal members, restoration practitioners, OWEB Board, and potential funders. Videos were rolled out as a series on the Tribe’s social media. Appropriate partners were tagged in the social media posts to give credit and increase visibility. The full-length videos are featured on the CTGR Natural Resources Website, the Tribe’s YouTube channel, and within the StoryMap.

V. Recommendation

This is an informational item only.

VI. Attachments

A. Plants for People Infograph: Plant Materials Accomplishments and Restoration Overview

PLANTS FOR PEOPLE

Plant Materials Accomplishments

Attachment A.

OVERVIEW

The Grand Ronde Native Plant Materials Center (Nursery) was established in 2014, using funding from Phase I of the Plants for People Project. The Nursery was established to increase the availability of culturally significant plant materials for both restoration and cultural activities.

This page highlights achievements over the **3 phases of the grant, 2014-2024.**

Phase I (2014-2016)	Phase II (2017-2019)	Phase III (2021-2024)
✦ Raised beds, stooling beds, and seed collection beds for strawberry and cow parsnip established ✦ High-tunnel greenhouse installed ✦ First seed harvest in 2016	✦ Plants Materials Manager becomes full time position ✦ Deer fence installed ✦ Pollinator hedgerow installed	✦ Restoration begins on Natural Resources Campus ✦ Raised beds upgraded to reduce risk of plant pathogens

PLANT MATERIALS PRODUCTION (2016-2024)



45 TOTAL SPECIES

20 FORB SPECIES



17 SHRUB SPECIES



8 TREE SPECIES



83.42
POUNDS
OF SEED

61,349
BULBS &
ROOTS



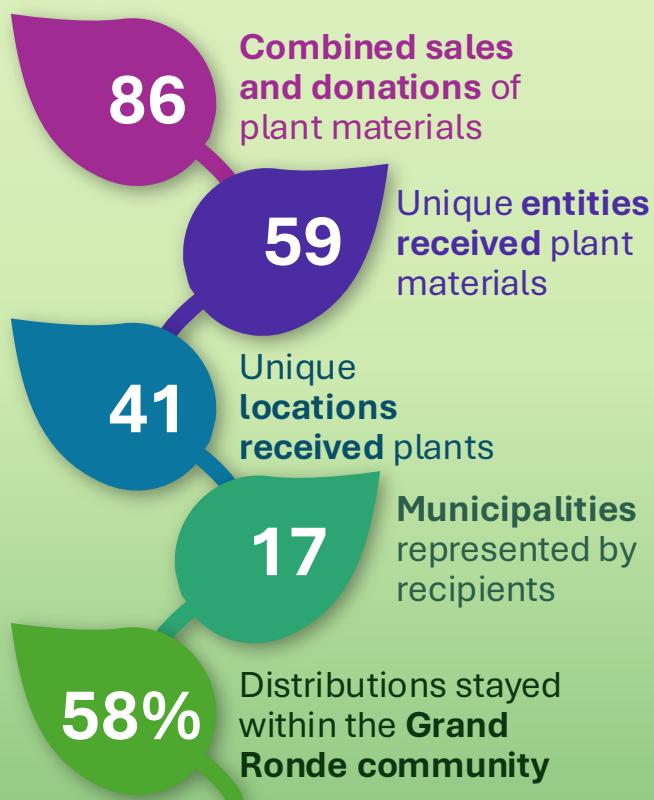
5,260
CUTTING
S



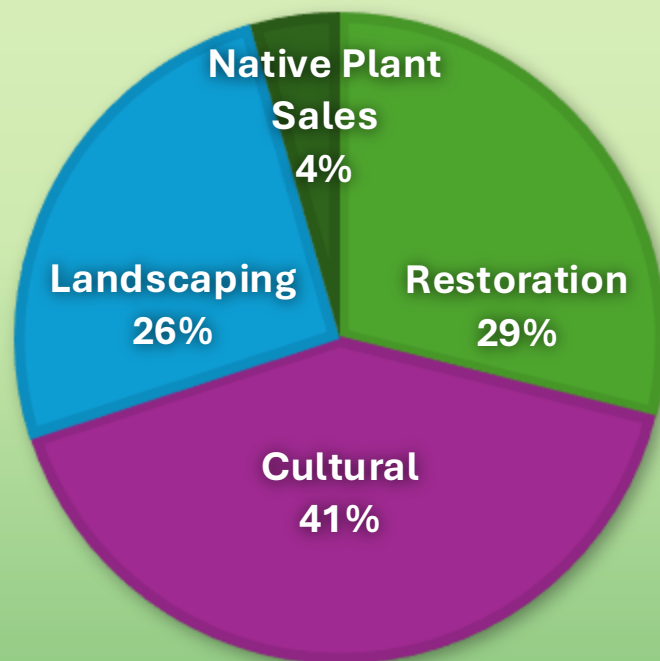
31,343
CONTAIN
R PLANTS



PLANT MATERIALS DISTRIBUTION (2016-2024)



End Use of Plant Materials by Project



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (2016-2024)



VISITORS

500-700 Estimated visitors per year

162 Organizations

55 Cities in Oregon and beyond

62 Groups from the local community

VOLUNTEERS

400 Volunteers since 2022

13 Routine “drop-In” volunteers

2 Volunteers receiving college credit

YOUTH EMPLOYEES

10 CTGR summer youth Interns

1 Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Pathways Intern

PLANTS FOR PEOPLE

Restoration Overview

The Plants for People Project was a collaborative 3 phase project between the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde (CTGR) and the Institute for Applied Ecology (IAE) to incorporate culturally significant species into restoration project.

Primary goals of the project included:



Increase Availability of Culturally Significant Plant Species for Traditional Use and Restoration

- ✦ Established CTGR Native Plant Material Program
- ✦ Established seed production beds with other producers to supplement availability of culturally significant species



Restore Diverse, Resilient Prairie and Oak Habitat that Supports Native Species, Including Culturally Significant Plants

- ✦ Restored 178 acres across 7 sites, 5 of which are owned and managed by CTGR
- ✦ Sites selected to be accessible for future gathering



Incorporate Traditional Indigenous Management Practices into Habitat Restoration

- ✦ Consultation with CTGR tribal members and elders in restoration planning
- ✦ Planted to create areas of abundant cultural species
- ✦ Managed areas with fire when it was an option



Improve Access to Appropriate Sites for Traditional Gathering and Harvest of Plant Materials by Tribal Members

- ✦ Establishment of herbicide free gathering areas
- ✦ Maintenance through volunteer pulling
- ✦ Testing for residual pesticides



178 acres
restored



7 prescribed burns
across **5** sites for a
total of **239** acres



3,060 pounds of
native seed planted



97,952 native
bulbs planted⁸⁶

PROJECT TIMELINE

2014

PHASE I BEGINS

- Raised bed and cutting beds installed at Nursery
- Restoration begins at Herbert and Champoeg

2015

- Restoration begins along Matt Creek at Herbert
- A tarweed bed is established at the NRCS Plant Material Center

2016

- Greenhouse constructed at Nursery
- Prescribed fire and seeding implemented over 2 acres at Herbert

2017

PHASE II BEGINS

- CTGR's Rattlesnake Butte, South Yamhill, and Thompson properties are added to the project
- Prescribed fire at Champoeg

2018

- Prescribed fire at Champoeg
- Cultural event at Champoeg

2019

- Pollinator plots installed at Thompson
- First cuttings harvested from CTGR Nursery

2021

PHASE III BEGINS

- CTGR's Tyee and Natural Resources Department (NRD) are added to the project
- CTGR restoration crew hand weeds Thompson and Tyee priority areas

2022

- 2,475 bulbs from CTGR Nursery are out-planted to restoration sites
- Removal of overgrown Christmas tree farm begins at NRD

2023

- CTGR staff planting event at Thompson
- Prescribed burns implemented at Rattlesnake Butte and Champoeg

2024 Phase III Ends

- Raised beds upgraded at nursery
- IAE & CTGR staff seed 12 acres of new prairie at NRD



VOLUNTEER CONTRIBUTIONS



Volunteers were essential in both planting bulbs and hand weeding harvest areas



16 Volunteer days were hosted at Champoeg and Herbert Farm



308 total volunteers assisted at Champoeg and Herbert Farm



12 Americorps National Civilian Conservation Corps (NCCC) Crew have assisted with the project for an additional **120** volunteers



OREGON
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Agenda Item K

Watershed Council Panel

Board Meeting October 27-28, 2026

October 27-28, 2026 OWEB Board Meeting

Staff report – Agenda Item K. Watershed Council Panel

MEMORANDUM

To: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB)

From: Eric Williams, Restoration Grants Program Manager

Brian Wolcott, Water Acquisitions and Capacity Coordinator

Liz Redon, Willamette Basin Regional Program Representative

Supports OWEB’s Strategic Plan priority #3: Use our funding to strengthen and leverage capacity of people and organizations to achieve healthy watersheds.

I. Introduction

OWEB’s Strategic Plan Priority 3 indicates OWEB will support watershed organizations and associated watershed work at all levels in the pursuit of a statewide watershed protection and restoration network that is resilient, sustainable, and capable of achieving ecological outcomes.

With rulemaking for the Operating Capacity Grant Program for soil and water conservation districts and watershed councils underway, executive directors of four watershed councils reached out to OWEB staff to share their perspectives on the evolution of the council model and current opportunities and challenges.

II. Background

The Oregon legislature unanimously passed House Bill 3441 in 1995, creating the Governor’s Watershed Enhancement Board and formalizing a model of voluntary local implementation of “land and water management” because “it is in the best interest of the state to restore and maintain and enhance its watersheds in order to protect the economic and social well-being of the state and its citizens.”

Watershed councils were envisioned as playing a key role in these activities: “Local watershed councils are highly effective in the implementation of plans to maintain and restore the biological and physical processes in the watersheds for the sustainability of our communities and all residents of Oregon.”

The 1997 Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds originated from a combination of an executive order and legislation describing an approach for restoring “the watersheds of Oregon and to recover the fish and wildlife populations of those watersheds to productive and sustainable levels in a manner that provides substantial ecological, cultural and economic benefits.”

The Oregon legislature provided the first financial commitment to the Oregon Plan in 1997. Language in that legislation indicates the Oregon Plan shall “rely on watershed councils and soil and water conservation districts, which are directed to cooperate in the development of local watershed plans that assess watershed conditions and create watershed action plans and strategies for the implementation of the local watershed action plans.” (ORS 541.898)

In 1999, the Oregon legislature approved House Bill 3225 that connected the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds, Watershed Councils, Oregon lottery funds, and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board. This bill declared the purpose of the Oregon Plan “to enhance, restore and protect Oregon’s native salmonid populations, watersheds, fish and wildlife habitat and water quality, while sustaining a healthy economy,” and identified a role for watershed councils in achieving this. At the same time, House Bill 3225 established OWEB as a state agency and the Watershed Improvement Operating Fund while also appropriating funds from the lottery through the “Restoration and Protection Subaccount” to OWEB as the administrator. Finally, the bill authorized OWEB to award watershed improvement grants.

OWEB has awarded capacity grants to watershed councils since 1999. There are now almost 90 watershed councils across Oregon, 55 watershed councils currently receive an OWEB capacity grant. This long-term investment and relationship with watershed councils provides an opportunity to learn what is needed to achieve a statewide network of organizations with long-term resilience and capability for achieving ecological outcomes in their local watersheds.

III. Watershed Council Panel

Four Watershed Council Executive Directors have engaged OWEB staff in conversation about organizational capacity challenges and constraints they have experienced. They share their perspectives today as a starting point for considering avenues to collaboratively identify opportunities for increasing sustainability of these organizations in serving as a delivery mechanism for the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds.

The panel includes:

- Darian Lightfoot, Executive Director, Long Tom Watershed Council
- Haley Lutz, Executive Director, Coos Watershed Association
- Kurt Berning, Executive Director, Pudding River Watershed Council
- Kristen Walz, Executive Director, North Fork John Day Watershed Council

IV. Recommendation

This is an information item only.