

OREGON Watershed Enhancement Board



Sisters ODOT

2018-2028 Strategic Plan

Quarterly Report to the Board | July, 2023



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



Priority 1

Broad awareness of the relationship between people and watersheds

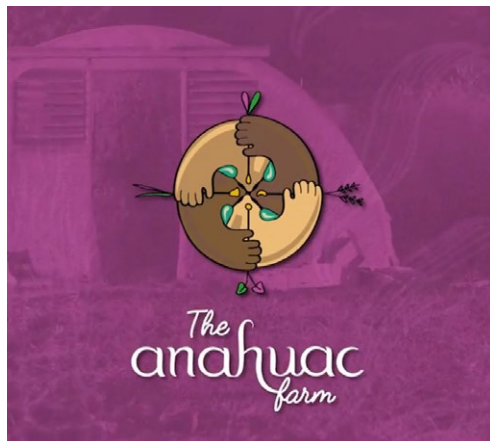


Poster from the 4-H Youth Voices in Action Conference.

This past quarter, OWEB leadership continued to **connect with key organizations that can help build awareness about the relationship between people and watersheds.** Leadership met with four organizations active in connecting youth with Oregon’s cultural and natural resources:

- At the [Oregon 4-H Youth Voices in Action Leadership Conference](#), youth presented on a question from OWEB: should grantmaking focus on habitat and species most vulnerable or most resilient to climate change?
- [Capaces Leadership Institute Anahuac Farm Program](#) provides a bridge for youth to connect with plants, farming, food, and ceremonies from indigenous cultures throughout Mexico, Central, and South America. The Anahuac Program is currently being offered in partnership with both the Farmworker Housing Development Corporation (FHDC) and MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility.
- The [USDA Farm Service Agency \(FDA\)](#) recently hired staff to focus on Urban Agriculture, a growing area of emphasis in Northwest Oregon.
- At [Chemeketa Community College](#), OWEB leadership met with the Director of Apprenticeship, as the program is exploring the work force needs among local partners and contractors, including those working in watershed restoration.

In addition to the groups above, OWEB leadership also continued regular meetings with other partner organizations and groups, including the Oregon Conservation Partnership, agricultural and conservation organizations, and the Oregon Organic Coalition.

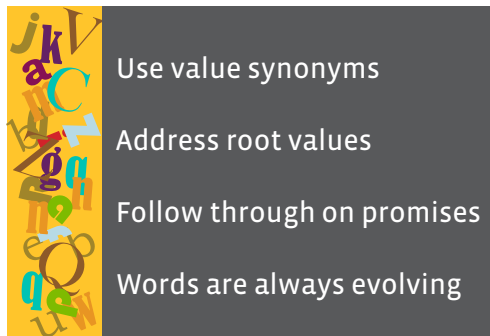


Video from the Anahuac Farm.



Priority 2

Leaders at all levels of watershed work reflect the diversity of Oregonians



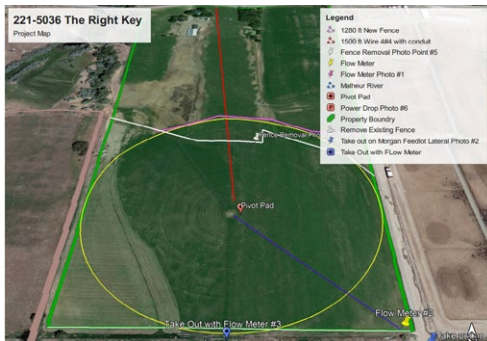
Training points from the training.

OWEB staff engaged in **training focused on communication strategies to bridge the urban-rural divide.** Through an interactive workshop format, staff developed understanding about the similarities and differences between urban and rural attitudes on environment and conservation values, and discussed the implications for OWEB’s work.



Priority 3

Community capacity and strategic partnerships achieve healthy watersheds



Example of a project map on an OWRI report for an improved irrigation system.

Staff regularly **train and provide guidance** to newer watershed councils, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, or other grantee staff **on how to navigate the Oregon Watershed Restoration Inventory** and the project completion reporting on their grants.



Engagement materials from the East Cascade Oaks Partnership.

The **newest cohort of Focused Investment Partnership (FIP)** grantees are engaging with OWEB staff to establish technical review teams for grant proposals submitted under each FIP. This is a critical part of OWEB's administration of FIP grants.



Priority 4

Watershed organizations have access to a diverse and stable funding portfolio



Wood River wetlands: Greg Shine, BLM.

OWEB **accepted applications for Water Acquisitions**, with funding awards anticipated at the July board meeting. Water acquisition grants support the planning and implementation of an interest in water from a willing seller in Oregon. The grants can support a range of project activities including instream leases; conserved water projects; and water use agreements. The purpose is to increase flow to address conservation needs and improve water quality.



Restoring Riverscapes Workshop Advancing Process-Based Actions

NOAA Restoring Riverscapes Workshop: Advancing Process-Based Actions.

Staff **presented at NOAA's virtual Restoring Riverscapes Conference** on The Structure of Salmon Funding with more than 8,000 attendees. Riverscape restoration is a broad-scale, systems approach to restoration.



Priority 5

The value of working lands is fully integrated into watershed health

ASPEN VALLEY RANCH

[Virtual tour of Aspen Valley Ranch video](#) on YouTube: Deschutes Land Trust.

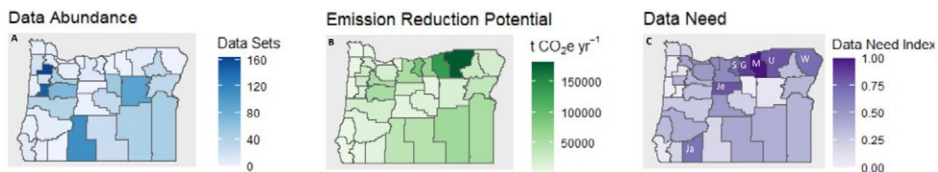
OWEB's Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program staff evaluated applications, convened technical review teams, conducted site visits, and prepared recommendations for the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission. The Commission voted to recommend 9 projects for funding to the OWEB board and the board voted to **fund all 9 projects OAHF projects** at it's April meeting.

- **Conservation Easement Grants:** [Wahl Ranch](#), [Aspen Valley Ranch –Rim Tract](#), [Seely Farm Phase 1](#), [Pitchfork T](#), O'Keefe Ranch, Justin and Janya Ferrell, Hagan.
- **Conservation Management Plan Grants:** Baker & EOARC, and Branch Road.

OWEB continued to participate in discussions about how to support practices that **enhance and quantify carbon sequestration** to inform the states' natural and working lands goal.



Soil mapping in Gilliam County, an area where more data will be collected in a research grant project. Photo by Jenni Moffitt, NRCS.



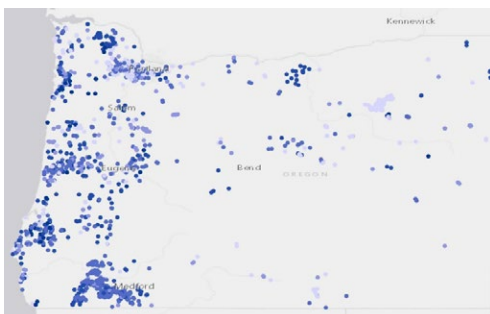
Priority 6

Coordinated monitoring and shared learning to advance watershed restoration effectiveness



Snorkel survey on Mosby Creek: CFWWC YCC

Staff held several **monitoring application consultations** with interested applicants to learn about their monitoring interests and provide guidance to help them submit proposals that meet OWEB's evaluation criteria.



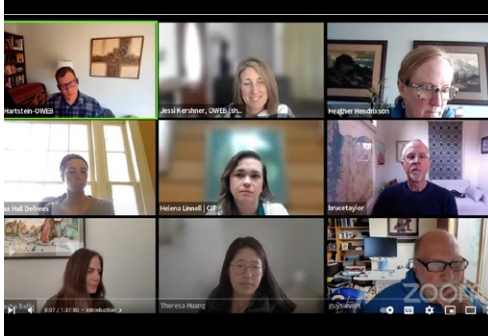
Map of riparian reforestation evaluation sites: TNC

OWEB supported a grant with The Nature Conservancy to **evaluate the climate benefits resulting from riparian reforestation projects**. The statewide effectiveness monitoring project will use a post-treatment method to assess the effectiveness of riparian reforestation on increasing carbon storage and riparian function.



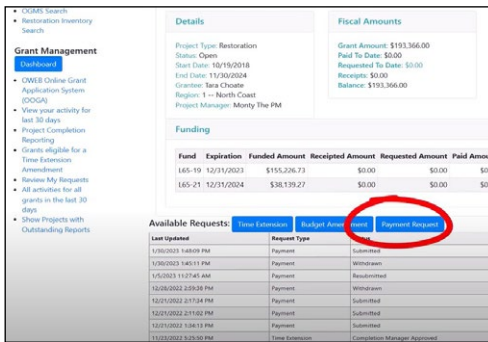
Priority 7

Bold and innovative actions to achieve health in Oregon's watersheds



Efforts to integrate climate considerations into OWEB's grant-making continued, as the agency **convened a 12-member Rules Advisory Committee** including applicants, grantees, review team members, and non-traditional partners to provide input into evaluative criteria. The final recommended [climate criteria](#) will be considered by the board at their July 2023 board meeting.

Climate Criteria Rulemaking Advisory Committee meeting.



OWEB staff **launched a new Online Payment Request function** within our online grant management system. This system is a result of years of collaboration between OWEB IT, fiscal staff, and OWEB project management staff, and is in direct response to grantee feedback on their needs. Staff provided training workshops, [videos](#), Q&A, and written instructions.

Screenshot of the Online Payment Request function.



accomplishments
 highlighted in quarterly update

October
 January
 April
 July

Strategies Chart October 2022 - July 2023

1 Broad awareness of the relationship between people and watersheds

1.1 Develop and implement broad awareness campaigns and highlight personal stories to tell the economic, restoration, and community successes of watershed investments.				
1.2 Increase involvement of non-traditional partners in strategic watershed approaches.				

2 Leaders at all levels of watershed work reflect the diversity of Oregonians

2.1 Listen, learn and gather information about diverse populations.				
2.2 Create new opportunities to expand the conservation table.				
2.3 Develop funding strategies with a lens toward diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)				

3 Community capacity and strategic partnerships achieve healthy watersheds

3.1 Evaluate and identify lessons learned from OWEB's past capacity funding.				
3.2 Champion best approaches to build organizational, community and partnership capacity.				
3.3 Accelerate state/federal agency participation in partnerships.				

4 Watershed organizations have access to a diverse and stable funding portfolio

4.1 Increase coordination of public restoration investments and develop funding vision.				
4.2 Align common investment areas with private foundations.				
4.3 Explore creative funding opportunities and partnerships with the private sector.				
4.4 Partner to design strategies for complex conservation issues that can only be solved by seeking new and creative funding sources.				

5 The value of working lands is fully integrated into watershed health

5.1 Implement the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program.				
5.2 Strengthen engagement with a broad base of working landowners.				
5.3 Enhance the work of partners to increase working lands projects on farm, ranch and forestlands.				
5.4 Support technical assistance to work with owners/managers of working lands.				
5.5 Develop engagement strategies for owners and managers of working lands who may not currently work with local organizations.				

6 Coordinated monitoring and shared learning to advance watershed restoration effectiveness

6.1 Broadly communicate restoration outcomes and impacts.				
6.2 Invest in monitoring over the long term.				
6.3 Develop guidance and technical support for monitoring.				
6.4 Increase communication between and among scientists and practitioners.				
6.5 Define monitoring priorities.				
6.6 Develop and promote a monitoring framework.				

7 Bold and innovative actions to achieve health in Oregon's watersheds

7.1 Invest in landscape restoration over the long term.				
7.2 Develop investment approaches in conservation that support healthy communities and strong economics.				
7.3 Foster experimentation that aligns with OWEB's mission.				