

OREGON Watershed Enhancement Board



Wildflowers, Columbia Gorge, Linda Repplinger

2018-2028 Strategic Plan

Quarterly Report to the Board | April, 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



Follow the Water is an outreach program of Clean Rivers Coalition.

OWEB leadership **met with three organizations** active in building coalitions to foster watershed health.

- The [Clean Rivers Coalition](#) focuses on community engagement around water and includes representatives from watershed councils, SWCDs and local city/regional governments.
- [Columbia Riverkeeper](#) works to restore and protect the water quality of the Columbia River.
- [The Intertwine Alliance](#) focus on preserving and nurturing a healthy regional system of parks, trails, and natural areas.
- OWEB leadership continues regular meetings with other partner organizations and groups, including the [Oregon Conservation Partnership](#), organic agriculture organizations, agriculture and conservation organizations.

The recipients of the Jefferson County Soil Conservation grant **highlighted the community and watershed benefit of the program.** Informational sheets describing community successes were distributed for Klamath Off-Channel Livestock Watering and Jefferson County Soil Conservation grant offerings. These fact sheets were also distributed at the Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation Board meeting.

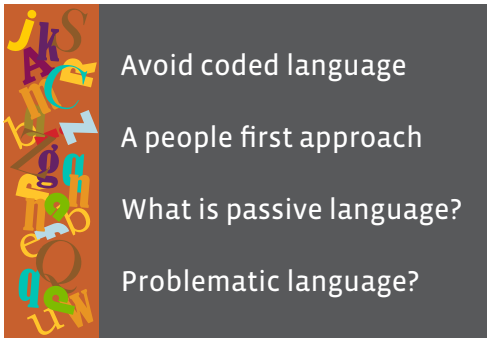


Off-Channel Livestock and Soil Conservation grant [handouts](#).



Priority 2

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



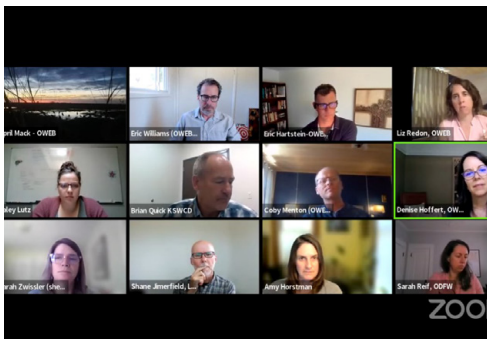
Training points from the training.

All OWEB staff continue to **participate in dynamic sessions** led by EcoNorthwest to reflect **on diversity, equity and inclusion values** in the work of the agency. 2023 discussions explored the importance of language and communications.

OWEB **conducted Division 5 rulemaking** for OWEB grant program's overarching rules. The rulemaking will:

- Provide better clarity for OWEB applicants and grantees.
- Remove blanket match requirements that have been noted as an equity concern.
- Make OWEB grant-making more accessible.

Rules were approved by the board at their January 2023 meeting, and are now in effect.



[Division 5 Rulemaking Committee Meeting](#).



Priority 3

Community capacity and strategic partnerships achieve healthy watersheds



Continued compliance items include areas to be restored, cleaned up, and management plan approvals. BLM photo.

As part of OWEB's responsibility as a land acquisition funder, the agency **continued working with land trust partners to ensure that habitat values are sustained** on properties acquired with OWEB funding. OWEB either holds an easement or retains a third party right of enforcement on all acquisitions that OWEB funds. Continued stewardship is part of this responsibility.



Post-2020 Fire Riparian Restoration project on the North Santiam River, August 2022.

Post-fire Recovery grant programs provide assistance for restoration implementation, technical assistance, and stakeholder engagement activities related to fire recovery in eligible areas.

- **2020 Post-Fire Recovery grants** closed a fourth cycle in January. Initial funding decisions were determined later that month.
- **2021 Post-Fire Recovery grants** opened a second offering in January 2023 and closed in February 2023.
- **2022 Wildfire Recovery Immediate Response grants** opened and are ongoing.



Priority 4

Watershed organizations have access to a diverse and stable funding portfolio



Restoration and ecological opportunities to provide avian habitat after post-fire logging.

The post-fire recovery and drought-relief programs **utilized general funds from the Oregon Legislature to support locally driven projects.** These projects complement investments made under OWEB's traditional Measure 76, PCSRF, and other investments.



Headworks diversion gates to be updated at Sheirbon Hill Water Conservation Project.

The Drought Program **helped to leverage significant federal funds**—such as those available through Natural Resources Conservation Service's Public Law 566 program—by providing non-federal match to support irrigation modernization projects.



Priority 5

The value of working lands is fully integrated into watershed health



The OSU Extension Small Farms Program includes farming recourses for dry farming, organic farming, farm tourism, beginner farmers, and farm management.

OWEB leadership continued meetings with agricultural stakeholders. In February 2023, leadership met with the Oregon State University (OSU) Extension Small Farms Program and discussed opportunities for small farms to benefit from some of the grant programs recently funded at OWEB, including drought resiliency grants and Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program grants.



Salvage logging underway on industrial timberland affected by the Riverside fire. Photo by Samuel Leininger, Clackamas SWCD.

The Post-fire Recovery program provided grants to support on-the-ground natural resource recovery of working agricultural and timber lands following the 2020 and 2021 wildfire seasons. OWEB staff's continued work to operate these grant programs and project-managing the grants includes:

- Convene technical review team
- Prepare grant award documents and grant agreements
- Review and approve requests for reimbursement
- Review project status reports and completion reports
- Issue payments



Priority 6

Coordinated monitoring and shared learning to advance watershed restoration effectiveness



Call for Data announcement. OWRI now has over 20,000 projects reported.

In early 2023, OWEB opened the annual Oregon Watershed Restoration Inventory (OWRI) Call for Data. OWEB also completed the annual export of OWRI data to the Oregon Explorer online platform.

Stories of on-the-ground watershed restoration projects are continuously updated and synthesized. This information informs policymakers about the economics, measurable outcomes, and community successes of restoration.



Middle Fork John Day River Intensively Monitored Watershed.

OWEB continues to participate in the Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership (PNAMP)—a forum for tribal, state and federal agency partners who work throughout the Columbia Basin to coordinate science-based, aquatic monitoring and identify areas of shared learning.

In the first quarter of 2023, OWEB participated in the PNAMP Steering Committee meeting. The meeting outlined PNAMP priorities for the year, including continued progress on Intensively Monitored Watersheds and updated monitoring resources online.



Priority 7

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



[Ashland Dry-type Forest Priority FIP](#)

Staff are actively engaged in opportunities for **continuous improvement with the Focused Investment Partnerships (FIPs)** grant program. The program is now entering its 4th biennium.

In early 2023, OWEB leadership and staff re-engaged with the Bonneville Environmental Foundation for a full-day retreat to reflect on the evolution of FIPs. This discussion—and public input from recent board and committee meetings—identified many short-and-long-term opportunities to adapt the program.

ALERT!
Protect our Forests and Trees.
Help Stop the Movement of Exotic Pests.

DO NOT MOVE FIREWOOD!
Exotic pests like the emerald ash borer can be spread when infested firewood is transported to new areas.

- Do not bring firewood from home.
- Use local sources of firewood.
- If you have brought firewood from home, DON'T take it with you. DON'T leave it. BURN IT!

REPORT!
If you think you have found emerald ash borer, contact one of these offices in your area:

State Department of Agriculture
State Forestry or
Natural Resource Agency
Cooperative Extension Office
USDA National and
Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S. Forest Service

Call Toll free:
1-866-322-4512
For more information about emerald ash borer please visit:
www.emeraldashborer.info

What is the Emerald Ash Borer?

USDA United States Department of Agriculture



USDA Forest Service
Department of Agriculture
Protect and Restore Forestry
Rebuilding Oregon's Future
www.fs.fed.us

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Brochure about the Emerald Ash Borer from ODA. [Additional ODA resources](#).

The Water/Climate committee invited the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODA) to give a presentation about the recent discovery of the **Emerald Ash Borer in Oregon**. This invasive species damages and destroys ash trees, which threatens wetland and riparian habitats throughout the state. The committee discussed the potential impacts, policy considerations, and next steps.










 accomplishments
 highlighted in quarterly update

 July
 October
 January
 April

Strategies Chart July 2022 - April 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.				