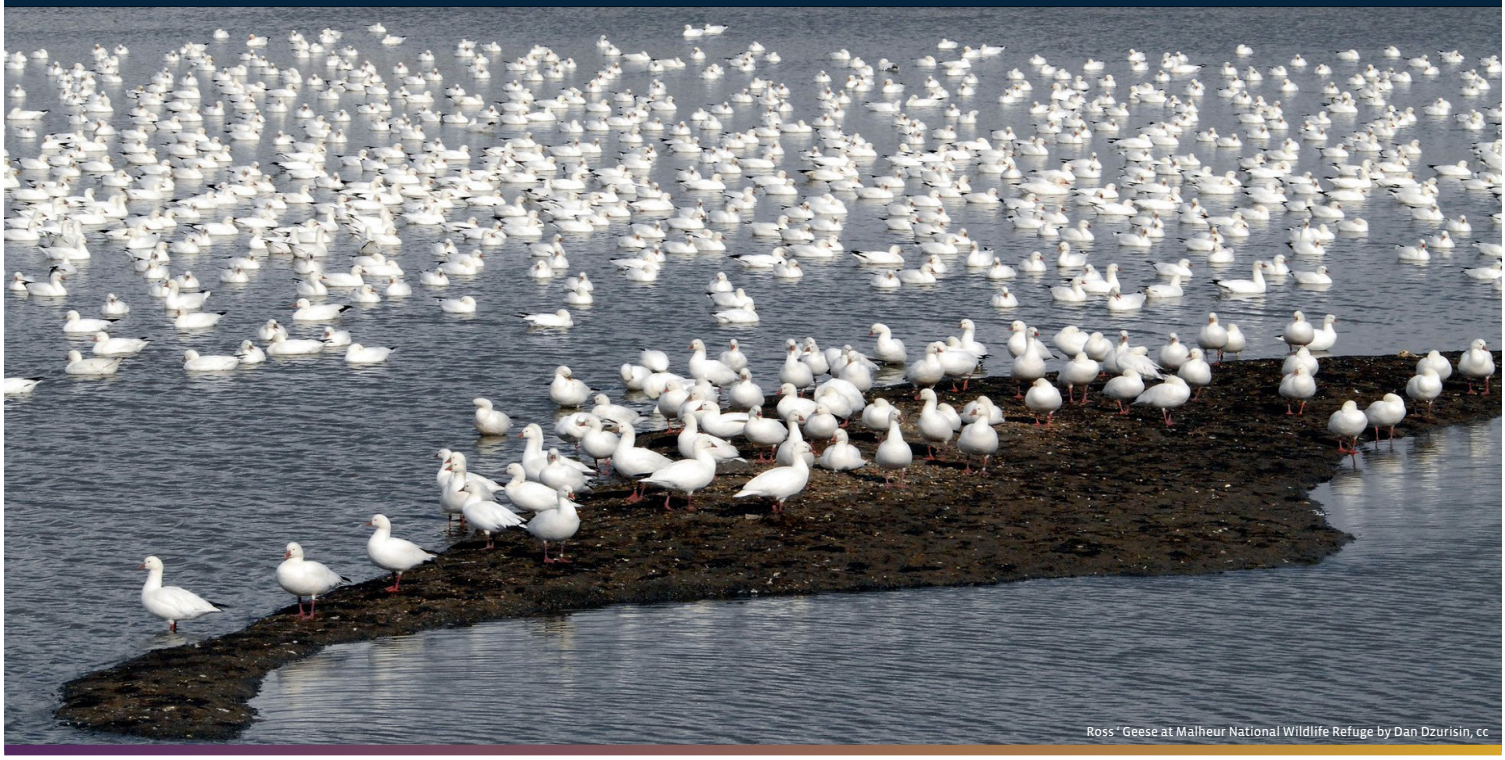
OREGON
WATERSHED
ENHANCEMENT BOARD



Ross' Geese at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge by Dan Dzurisin, 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.

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.



Excerpt from the Stategic Action Plan Guidance document.

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.





Deschutes Basin Agricultural Water Infrastructure Tour.

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.

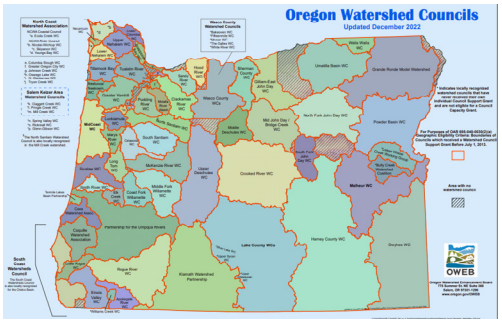
Participants included irrigation district managers, local elected officials, and partners visiting key water infrastructure projects. The tour showed how modernization is delivering lasting benefits for farmers, ranchers, rivers, local economies, and the communities they serve.

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

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

		January	April	July	October
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

		January	April	July	October
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

		January	April	July	October
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

		January	April	July	October
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

		January	April	July	October
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

		January	April	July	October
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	●	●	●	●