

OWEB CLIMATE RESOLUTION PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS SUMMARY REPORT

July 2022

In January 2022, the OWEB Board passed Resolution 01-2022 (“Climate Resolution”), which commits OWEB to integrate climate mitigation and adaptation into funding and policy decisions through an inclusive and equitable process (Box 1). Following the adoption of the Climate Resolution, OWEB staff led a public engagement process to gather feedback on how best to implement the resolution, including identifying potential challenges and opportunities as well as resources needed to help applicants integrate climate considerations into their projects. The following report summarizes the public engagement process and organizes feedback into key findings related to rulemaking as well as broader concerns and opportunities and provides summary input on resolution bullet points related to mitigation; adaptation; diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice principles; and engagement of traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities.

Box 1. Excerpt from Climate Resolution

Be it resolved that the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board will:

- Integrate climate mitigation and adaptation in their budgeting, investing and policy making decisions by:
 - Funding climate-smart adaptation and resilience for Oregon’s watersheds, natural resources, people, and communities.
 - Funding projects that include meaningful emissions reductions, carbon sequestration, and protection of carbon storage in enhancing watershed health and habitat restoration.
 - Valuing project co-benefits and assessing long-term sustainability of projects and acquisitions.
- Learn and apply diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice principles when making funding decisions to address challenges arising from climate change to traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities.
- Engage traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities in processes to craft meaningful solutions that are integrated into funding decisions.

Overview of Public Engagement Process

The public engagement process extended from mid-March to early June 2022, and included:

- A kick-off webinar with the Oregon Conservation Partnership (OCP) in March to share opportunities for engagement (e.g., listening sessions, survey) and the goals for the process;
- Six virtual listening sessions held in April and May;
- A tribal virtual listening session held in May;
- An online survey, open from mid-March to early June;

- Individual conversations with OWEB staff, as requested by partners; and
- Consultant interviews with non-traditional partners¹.

Public listening sessions

The agenda for the two-hour, virtual public listening sessions consisted of an opening presentation that provided an overview of the Climate Resolution, public engagement process including goals and opportunities to provide input, and rulemaking; an open opportunity to share concerns and opportunities presented by the Climate Resolution; small breakout group discussions to identify challenges and opportunities associated with resolution implementation as well as resources and support needed to successfully integrate climate considerations into projects; and breakout group report-back to share key points.

Small breakout group discussions focused on 4 questions:

1. What opportunities and challenges do you see with building greenhouse gas emissions reductions, carbon sequestration and storage into your projects?
2. What opportunities and challenges do you see with building climate-smart adaptation and resilience into your projects?
3. What can OWEB do to help current and prospective grantees build climate considerations, such as impacts, adaptation, and mitigation, into their projects?
4. What's one important thing that OWEB needs to know as they think about rulemaking to include climate-focused evaluation criteria in grantmaking?

In total, 77 unique participants attended the listening sessions, with some of those participants attending multiple sessions. The majority of those in attendance identified their role as Executive Director/Coordinator or Project/Program Manager (Figure 1) and affiliation as Soil & Water Conservation District/Watershed Council or Non-Profit Organization (Figure 2). Participants from all 6 of OWEB's regions attended, with the majority attending from Region 3 – Willamette Basin (Figure 3).

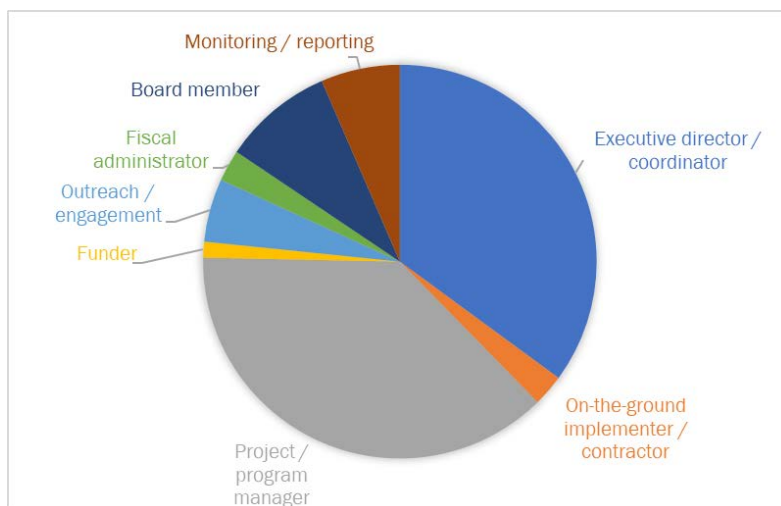


Figure 1. Role as selected by listening session participants.

¹ Input from these interviews is included in this report as part of the key findings. For more information about interview methods and participants, please see a separate report provided by the consultant, ECONorthwest.

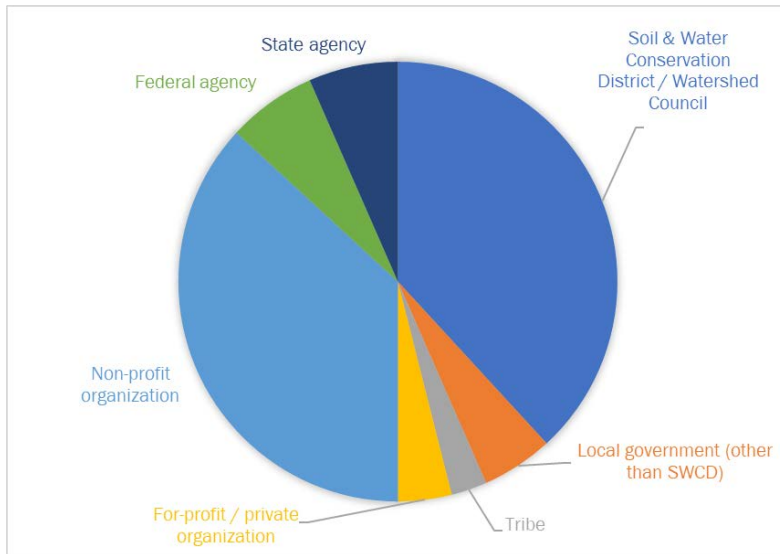


Figure 2. Affiliation as selected by listening session participants.

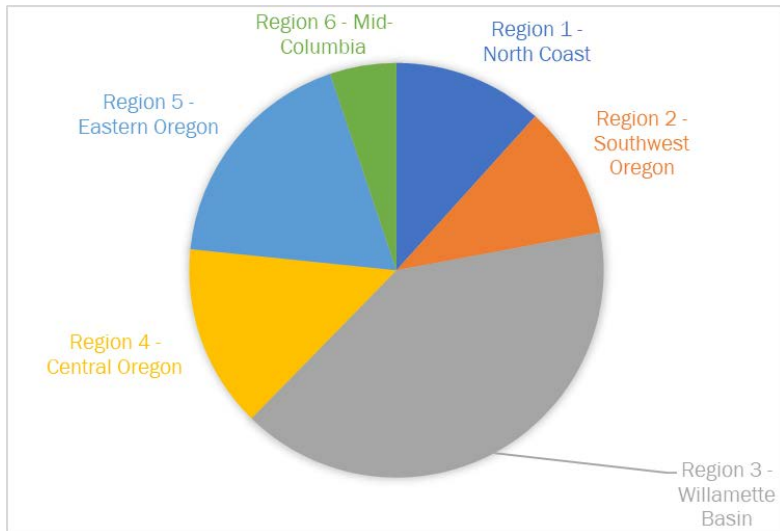


Figure 3. OWEB region affiliation selected by listening session participants.

Tribal Listening Session

The tribal listening session followed the same agenda as the public listening sessions (described above) however, all questions were discussed as a large group. Sixteen representatives from 8 Tribes attended, including the Burns Paiute Tribe; Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians; Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde; Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians; Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation; Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs; Coquille Indian Tribe; and Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

Online Survey

The online survey offered participants the opportunity to share feedback on implementation of the resolution anonymously and included the same questions as the virtual listening sessions.² A total of 44 survey responses were received.

Summary of Input Received

The following sections share summary input from the public listening sessions, tribal listening session, interviews with non-traditional partners, and online survey. Input is organized by:

1. [Key Findings: Rulemaking Considerations](#)
2. [Key Findings: Broader Concerns and Opportunities](#)
3. Summary Input on Climate Resolution:
 - a. [Opportunities and challenges related to building greenhouse gas emissions reductions, carbon sequestration and storage into projects](#)
 - b. [Opportunities and challenges associated with building climate-smart adaptation and resilience into projects](#)
 - c. [Opportunities and challenges related to incorporating diversity, equity, inclusion \(DEI\), and environmental justice principles when making funding decisions](#)
 - d. [What to consider as OWEB initiates outreach and engagement to traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities](#)

Rulemaking Considerations

Develop broad evaluation criteria. Criteria should be broad, allowing people to think outside the box to achieve goals in unexpected ways. Having more flexibility in terms of what kinds of improvements and enhancements are helpful will allow for a diversity of ways to achieve climate mitigation and adaptation benefits.

Maximize all project benefits. Climate change mitigation and adaptation are two project benefits that overlap with many others. Consider what criteria maximize natural resource, human community, and climate benefits while minimizing the burden on grant applicants. Participants recommended OWEB programs strike a balance between helping projects optimize and track beneficial mitigation and adaptation impacts without detracting from the ecological project benefits it has always prioritized.

Start qualitative and move to quantitative in grant applications and evaluation criteria.

Quantifying emissions reductions, carbon sequestration and storage, and adaptation and resilience benefits are a significant challenge. The available data, tools, and process vary by habitat and project type, making it difficult to standardize and therefore compare benefits across projects. Most applicants do not currently have the capacity or expertise to proactively identify emissions reduction or sequestration potential nor to develop and conduct the monitoring that would be required to track emissions and adaptation impacts over time. Qualitative descriptions of mitigation and adaptation benefits may be an appropriate first step, with quantitative estimates coming later as the science, tools, and data evolve. OWEB could develop a common tool to measure and track emissions reduction

² The survey did include specific questions related to the diversity, equity, and inclusion and engagement of traditionally impacted and underrepresented communities bullet points in the Climate Resolution.

or sequestration potential from a restoration project and quantify long-term adaptation and resilience benefits.

Consider tradeoffs associated with mitigation-based criteria. For example, some project activities will release significant carbon (e.g., prescribed fire and/or fuels reduction projects, oak release projects), but could prevent more carbon from being released in the future (e.g., prescribed fire lessens chance of catastrophic wildfire, which would ultimately release more carbon). Smaller-scale projects may be at a disadvantage if looked at from a mitigation perspective (i.e., when considering emissions generated from project activities compared with longer-term sequestration benefits, they may not translate benefits as well compared to larger projects with larger benefits). The ability to sequester carbon varies per property/geographic location and/or habitat type; for example, meadow or floodplain restoration projects may not ultimately sequester as much carbon as upland forest projects. Lastly, there may be projects for which emissions reductions are simply not possible (e.g., those in rural areas that require driving long distances to access project sites).

Re-examine potential project longevity and/or modify projects using a climate lens. How long will our investments be valid? Is there longevity in the efforts we make now? This is an opportunity to re-examine current practices and tweak projects to better address climate impacts, become more efficient, and/or revise priorities (e.g., one project component becomes more important to pursue given climate considerations).

Flexibility is key. Climate science, tools, and practices evolve and change rapidly, so it will be important to revisit, update, or revise rules and/or guidelines to account for our state of knowledge evolving over time. Establish a feedback loop to get input from partners to see what is working and what is not and make changes accordingly. OWEB programs should honor multiple ways to connect with and enjoy the natural world. Having more flexibility in terms of what kinds of improvements, and enhancements are helpful will allow for a diversity of ways to access nature.

Be clear about definitions and expectations of grant applicants. Build a shared understanding of what “climate-smart” and other terminology means and provide guidance and resources. Define expectations, including what are considered “good” answers to application questions.

Put traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities at the table with decision-making power. For example, the Tribes have understanding about resilience that should be centered in this work, and traditional practices offer a framework for climate solutions.

Develop and apply a predetermined equity lens. This can help prioritize funding to community members who are being impacted first and most significantly by climate change. Consider ecosystem services for those communities: their loss(es) or those they need to be replaced or enhanced.

Broader Concerns and Opportunities

Restoration equipment transitions will be challenging. Electric options for heavy equipment used in restoration projects are non-existent or extremely limited and expensive. Statewide, there is a lack of access to charging equipment/infrastructure to support electric equipment. Larger contractors with more funds may be able to adopt climate-smart changes more quickly, leaving local, small contractors at a disadvantage.

Applicant capacity varies. These are new skills and grant applicants will need information, guidance, trainings/classes, and tools to respond and engage in these new parameters effectively.

Be aware of unintended consequences. For example, some culturally significant plants could fall under the carbon sequestration umbrella, which could prevent Tribes from harvesting.

Emissions reductions opportunities may be possible. There may be opportunities to cut emissions in everyday tasks and projects (e.g., driving less/shorter distances, localizing work, coordinate with other grantees when hauling materials) or purchase less carbon-intensive materials (i.e., reducing carbon intensity of a project through materials if transition to electric equipment is not possible).

New funding opportunities could arise. This may be an opportunity to attract new climate-centric funders or funding partners and could lead to opportunities to leverage additional funds for grant applicants. There may be opportunities to align evaluation criteria with federal funding programs also defining or requiring consideration of climate adaptation, resilience, and/or mitigation.

Best practices, case studies, and demonstration projects are effective tools to help applicants integrate climate-smart considerations into projects. Develop a suite of best practices and guidance for low-carbon restoration (e.g., guidance on construction materials, vehicles, and tools), including the benefits of cleaner fuels and project gains, that helps applicants understand and evaluate options. Develop examples of climate-smart practices and management measures, including those that do/do not work in different regions (i.e., a how-to manual that includes things *not* to do). Tailor climate change information to the project level to aid grant applicants in understanding local impacts and adaptation options. Highlight organizations implementing emissions reductions, carbon sequestration and storage, and/or adaptation and resilience in their projects and spread know-how to others.

Invest time in developing long-term relationships. OWEB will need staff capacity to build relationships and trust and shared purpose for engaging. Be careful that incorporation of diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice principles does not unintentionally promote transactional or extractive relationships between OWEB and/or grantees and these communities.

Summarized input on opportunities and challenges related to building greenhouse gas emissions reductions, carbon sequestration and storage into projects

Primary challenges identified by participants included quantification and monitoring of emissions reduction and/or sequestration potential, equipment transitions, and capacity and equity. In many cases, participants developed potential solutions or options to help alleviate some of the challenges that were identified. Primary opportunities identified included finding efficiencies in projects, leveraging funding, and education and outreach. The importance of understanding and balancing tradeoffs was also identified.

Quantification & Monitoring of Emissions Reductions and/or Sequestration Potential

Major Challenges

- Learn how to measure data from current, funded projects so that grantees (and OWEB) get credit for the work already being done
- From a state climate mitigation perspective, it would be valuable for OWEB to track emissions reductions from projects as one potential metric for progress toward meeting the Oregon Global Warming Commission's natural and working lands sequestration goals.
- Most applicants do not have the capacity or expertise to proactively identify emissions reduction or sequestration potential nor to develop and conduct the monitoring that would be required to track emissions impacts over time. If OWEB seeks high rigor for estimates of sequestration or avoided emissions or requires long-term monitoring, applicants will need significant assistance both in application preparation and monitoring and tracking, either directly or through a third-party contractor.
 - High-rigor estimates may not be realistic, especially for smaller projects; approaches that track practices known to cause carbon sequestration or emissions reduction may be more feasible than trying to measure these effects directly.
 - It is difficult to establish/determine baseline data and then build the carbon budget, which is highly situational.
 - Quantifying carbon sequestration and emissions levels are both extremely technical and time consuming. Sequestration rates can widely vary species to species and even geography to geography. Similarly, with emissions, quantifying emissions from one type of gas-powered bulldozer to another can vary. Finding a way to standardize emissions reductions and carbon sequestration is a huge challenge, especially for small organizations with limited time and expertise. It is important for OWEB to do this work to ensure consistency and reduce the burden on grantees. This is extremely complex and there are many assumptions built into reduction/sequestration estimates.
- Additional greenhouse gas (GHG) tracking challenges: When quantifying carbon sequestration or other GHG reduction benefits, it will be critical to define the counterfactual against which the GHG reduction benefit from a project is determined.
- Another challenge is defining the appropriate time horizon for evaluating GHG reduction benefits. If OWEB requires project applicants to quantify the potential benefits (in terms of GHG reductions) from their projects, we encourage OWEB to

develop clear guidance for applicants to help them determine the best methods for quantification that include counterfactuals and time bound estimates.

- Think about the project lifecycle; there could be a lot of expenses that get lost and not tracked within the lifecycle of 10+ years. Similarly, how would we quantify monitoring the project over a longer-term timeframe?

Solutions

- Offer additional funding for extended monitoring timeframes (current framework inadequate to truly learn monitoring lessons).
- Develop metrics and a common tool to measure and track the amount of carbon that could be released from a restoration project and quantifying long-term resilience benefits.
 - OWEB could consider getting outside expertise to develop criteria and metrics
 - Developing a calculator could be an OWEB grant in itself; if so, it should involve a consortium of agencies and organizations who work together to develop and continually refine a calculator that is reasonably simple, accurate, and consistent.
- Include guideline(s) for how to implement sequestration monitoring (e.g., for organizations without the knowledge and/or capacity to figure this out before the application deadline).
- There are multiple tools for estimating greenhouse gas emissions and there is the expensive route of validating them. Who is responsible for the calculations?
 - Every applicant may calculate carbon differently; a consistent, streamlined system for how these impacts and benefits are measured by grantees and reported to OWEB is needed.

Equipment Transitions

Major Barriers/Challenges

- Electric options for heavy equipment used in restoration projects are non-existent or extremely limited.
- Converting to more efficient equipment is expensive, and specialized equipment can cost a lot more than conventional equipment.
- Mobilization and transportation costs are higher for projects in remote locations.
- Added costs to maintain new equipment.
- Lack of access to charging equipment/infrastructure.
- Lack of access to materials, supply chain issues.
- Time needed to transition/convert to new equipment varies (e.g., months, years, decades).
- Perception that electric equipment is not as efficient or effective at getting the job done.
- Rural communities have limited options for contractors; we want to support our local contractors and local economy, rather than sourcing contractors from other locations (e.g., Eugene, Portland) that have newer, more efficient equipment and/or access to more efficient materials.

Tradeoffs

- If the new rules increase construction and implementation costs, there is concern it could restrict other parts of the restoration work (i.e., money that would have been used for more on-the-ground restoration is now redirected to cover costs with upgrading equipment).
- Incentive to make climate-smart changes to equipment could be limiting given the vast amount of conventional work that is currently available for contractors.
- Would the project be classified as lower priority if the applicant is unable to acquire/access better vehicles and/or electric equipment?
- If bigger companies are better suited/able to adopt climate-smart changes more quickly, it could leave local contractors at a disadvantage (i.e., because they cannot adopt new changes as quickly).
- It could reduce the contractor pool (e.g., if contractors have difficulty transitioning to electric equipment), which could increase contractors' prices.

Solutions

- Begin dialogue with contractors on when/how/why to transition equipment.
- Build in phase-in time and consider renting vs. owning.
- Provide incentives for moving towards tool/equipment conversion; incentive could involve funding to switch or rewarding contractors who have already switched.
- Consider funding a pilot project for purchasing/using smaller electric tools, which could provide real data to help contractors see the benefit.
- OWEB could consider partnering with Business Oregon or another agency/organization to establish small business grants/loans to contractors to upgrade equipment.
- Consider budget line items to pay for equipment with zero emissions.
- Create a funding source for grantees/contractors to purchase low carbon emissions vehicles or equipment.
 - For example, could OWEB offer a one-time investment for each watershed council or soil and water conservation district receiving a council capacity grant to purchase an electric vehicle (car or truck)?
 - Is there a possibility for new startup contractors to partner with existing contractors, to fill in resource or equipment adaptation gaps? Would that create different jobs for those who were not in the room to begin with? Would that create a new partnership?

Capacity and Equity

- Lack of capacity, funds, time, and technical knowledge. These are new skills and grant applicants will need information, guidance, trainings/classes, and tools to respond and engage in these new parameters effectively.
- Inequities may be especially evident in small, rural organizations, projects, and/or contractors.

Box 2: Understanding Tradeoffs

- Some project activities will release significant carbon (e.g., prescribed fire and/or fuels reduction projects, oak release projects); how do we balance tradeoffs and account for avoided emissions of projects (e.g., prescribed fire lessens chance of catastrophic wildfire, which would ultimately release more carbon)?
- Smaller-scale projects may be at a disadvantage if looked at from a mitigation perspective (i.e., when considering emissions generated from project activities compared with longer-term sequestration benefits, they may not translate benefits as well compared to larger projects with larger benefits).
- Project differences:
 - Some projects have few opportunities to cut emissions.
 - Ability to sequester carbon varies per property/geographic location.
 - Projects that require the use of heavy equipment with no electric equipment or climate-smart manufactured material alternatives (e.g., culvert replacement project) that have significant ecological benefits (e.g., fish passage improvement).
- Concerns around treaty rights and access to cultural harvests; for example, some culturally significant plants might fall under a carbon sequestration umbrella, which could prevent Tribes from harvesting.

Efficiencies in Projects

- Opportunities to cut emissions in everyday tasks and projects (e.g., driving less/shorter distances, localizing work, coordinating with other grantees when hauling materials).
- Rather than transitioning to brand new electric equipment, purchase less carbon-intensive materials (i.e., reducing carbon intensity of a project through materials if transition to electric equipment is not possible).

Leveraging Funding

- Opportunity to incentivize “green” methods, including leveraging other funding sources by adopting greener techniques.
- May be an opportunity to attract new climate-centric funders or funding partners and could lead to opportunities to leverage additional funds for OWEB itself as well as grantees/applicants.
- Projects that aim to sequester carbon may also, depending on project design, be able to leverage additional funding for "climate mitigation" projects from other sources, from philanthropic to carbon market/offset revenue. OWEB should have clear eligibility guidance for projects with carbon offset components; this guidance should ensure any OWEB-funded projects that anticipate selling carbon credits meet high thresholds for additionality (i.e., not selling credits for conservation that would have occurred absent carbon credit revenue) and consider OWEB program goals.

Education & Outreach

- Continue to recognize projects that sequester carbon (e.g., beaver dam analogs and process-based wetland restoration) that offer additional climate-smart benefits (e.g., resilience).
- Develop a suite of best practices and guidance for low-carbon restoration (e.g., guidance on construction materials, vehicles, and tools) that helps applicants understand and evaluate options and associated emissions.
 - *Note that these reductions, if tracked, should be tracked separately from “natural climate solution” impacts as state inventories typically track these emissions in other sectors
- Diversify opinions and approaches to implementing emissions reductions into projects and highlight both human community and climate benefits.
- Demonstrate the benefits of cleaner fuels and gain of projects; is it just a very small gain, and should the benefits really be measured by the ecosystem benefits of the work completed?
- Highlight organizations implementing emissions reductions and/or carbon sequestration and storage in their projects and spread know-how to others; for example, highlight demonstration projects using electric equipment.
- Improve understanding of the capacity of electric tools to get the job done (i.e., there is a perception that electric tools are not powerful enough).

Summarized input on opportunities and challenges associated with building climate-smart adaptation and resilience into projects

Primary challenges identified by participants included quantification and monitoring of adaptation and resilience benefits and capacity. Primary opportunities identified included new funding and/or leveraging funding, expanding climate-smart approaches, and education and outreach.

Quantification & Monitoring

- Measuring climate resilience and adaptation is a challenge.
- We need good data – how do we articulate the benefit of the climate work and monitor the impacts? Need a robust investment in pre- and post-monitoring to articulate the climate benefits of the work.
- Assume OWEB-funded projects are already doing this.
 - How do we quantify existing work?
 - How do we compare one project against another?
 - How do we analyze metrics to determine project success?
 - How will OWEB evaluate metrics?
- Invest in working with experts to understand the most meaningful ways that grantees are already providing climate adaptation and mitigation benefits and include those as “boxes to check” on grant applications.
- Request basic information (e.g., acres of floodplain restored, # of native trees planted, etc.) so that mitigation and adaptation benefits can be calculated (by OWEB staff or consultants). These “boxes to check” could be the specific metrics determined by experts and identified by OWEB staff to represent climate benefits of OWEB-funded ecological restoration, similar to the specific metrics grantees are already required to report on for habitat restoration.

Capacity

- Lack of technical expertise, access to data and information, time, and funding.

New Funding and/or Leveraging Funding

- Create grant opportunities that help explore the adaptation and mitigation benefits from grantees’ existing or emerging work, or work that may be important in the future (e.g., monitoring and research funding to understand the possible climate benefits of floodplain restoration work - for example, does restoration improve alluvial aquifer storage, helping cool the creek in a warming climate?)
- Consider creating a climate Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) grant offering.
- Provide direct resources/funds to partners for capacity-building for water-related projects (e.g., acquisitions) that support long-term drought resilience.
- Create new funding sources to support community engagement in new ways.
- OWEB funding could be better leveraged to increase resilience of Oregon watersheds and landscapes to climate change. Many organizations are already considering climate adaptation and resilience for future restoration and protection projects, and a great deal of high-quality restoration work is already happening in our state. OWEB

funding could provide an opportunity to push more projects to fully incorporate climate-smart adaptation and resilience. There may also be opportunities to align evaluation criteria or guidance with federal funding programs also defining or requiring consideration of climate adaptation and resilience.

- Provide funds to retrieve climate-related metrics on current/past projects and share results to help make continued, sustained change.
- Create small grants for outreach to tell stories.
- Integrate a climate lens into agricultural grant programs (e.g., OAHP), providing monetary incentives to farmers/ranchers for practices that have the potential to sequester carbon and promote resilience, but avoid monitoring and verification requirements (or people will not engage as you hope they will).

Expanding Climate-Smart Approaches

- Opportunity to re-examine potential project longevity. How long will our investments be valid? Is there longevity in the efforts we make now? Will they still be effective ten years into the future?
- Opportunity to tweak projects even further to grow climate lens, become more efficient, revise priorities (e.g., one project component becomes more important to pursue given climate considerations), etc.
- Fund and encourage practitioners to use a more holistic approach (e.g., the opportunity to be efficient in combining actions to restore a basin).
- Majority of people are thinking about climate when applying for OWEB grants, but this might incent people to think of new ways/think outside the box on the work they do (i.e., connecting the dots in new ways).

Education and Outreach

- Build a shared understanding of what “climate-smart” and other terminology means and share that widely throughout the state.
- Recognize the work that grantees are already doing to help mitigate and adapt to climate change and improve watershed resilience.
- Assist and support grant applicants/grantees in articulating the benefits of the work they are doing for climate resiliency.
- Improve understanding and have training on what these climate topics are and how to build them into projects, including how to monitor and track changes as well as report outcomes.
- Provide standardized trainings for habitat restoration practitioners (e.g., site preparation, guidelines to begin these practices with climate-smart lens).
- Develop examples of practices and management measures, including those that do/do not work in different regions (i.e., a how-to manual that includes things *not* to do).
- Opportunity for broader social engagement on how this affects everyone; also, an opportunity to increase communication amongst landowners and adjacent sites.

Summarized input on opportunities and challenges related to incorporating diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and environmental justice principles when making funding decisions

- Historically underserved populations often are impacted most heavily by climate change. Put these populations at the table with decision-making power. For example, the Tribes have understanding about resilience that should be centered in this work.
- Oregon's Tribes possess significant traditional ecological knowledge that should be incorporated into the process.
- Think about the capacity of the Tribes when making the funding decision. How can they best utilize the funds? Does the reporting create a burden to their administration?
- Flexibility in definitions. There is no "one way" to connect with and enjoy the natural world. Having more flexibility in terms of what kinds of improvements, and enhancements are helpful will allow for a diversity of ways to access nature.
- Explicitly consider "benefits" and "burdens" from conservation projects and status quo using disaggregated socio-economic data whenever possible (note that this is likely beyond the technical capacity of many grantees and would require significant technical support, or to be done by OWEB).
- Find ways to support engagement - open, honest engagement without pre-determined outcomes (look to Oregon Health Authority funding opportunity that supported climate change and community engagement work).
- Consider including outreach funds in various grant opportunities. Projects will be enhanced by connecting with traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities, but often those communities are not already connected with the organizations doing OWEB-funded work.
- Work with groups that are already working in these communities to develop rules and programs that address these principles. Be prepared to pay them for their time.
- Lower the match requirement and make the grant programs more accessible for traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities. Part of this would involve providing more capacity to smaller watershed councils or providing state agency support for implementing programs.
- Integrating these principles is not going to be a one-size-fits-all consideration with climate change. The challenge is how to balance prioritizing these principles with other priorities.
- OWEB should consider integrating these principles throughout the agency, as inequities and injustices exist in all facets of conservation work. Evaluate where OWEB is relative to the DEI goals for external projects. What is the diversity of the OWEB board and program staff? Is there opportunity to increase diversity internally?
- Integrating these principles into conservation and restoration work takes time and money. Organizations want to do the work, but it demands committed investment - to listen, learn, show up, and not bring pre-determined outcomes or demands to the table. Can OWEB support this time or partner with a funder than can support this time?

- Consider the cost of building relationships and partnerships prior to the grant application. Collaborative engagement is not free and, at a minimum, should be able to be counted as in-kind match towards the project application.
- Small, underrepresented groups need unique funding assistance with upfront funding to support better proposal development
 - Some grant programs have explored small incentive ‘offsets’ for capacity/funding-limited organizations to simply apply, because difficult/complex application processes are an innate systematic barrier to small organizations that may otherwise provide a great deal of value towards DEI and environmental justice goals.
- Ask applicants to include DEI principles and concepts in the development of their projects, as applicable. Grant reporting on DEI should be open-ended as it is challenging to define, qualify, and quantify diversity, equity, and inclusion in relation to project-based options and decisions.

Summarized input on what to consider as OWEB initiates outreach and engagement to traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities

- Increase effective outreach to a broader suite of potential applicants—using more listservs, doing direct outreach to organizations representative of underserved communities, and creating space outside of traditional working hours for questions and discussion of grant opportunities. Specifically, find time to engage traditionally underrepresented communities outside of traditional working hours, within other forums that may only be tangentially watershed-related, and/or provide compensation and technical support to qualifying organizations that would otherwise be unable to competitively apply for OWEB grants.
 - Offer opportunities for both in-person and virtual communication.
 - Utilize trusted community organizations for outreach.
 - Pay people to participate. Provide incentives and resources as needed.
 - Offer translation services/materials in various languages.
 - Record meetings and rebroadcast them with a live person available to answer questions.
- Find and encourage techniques that will include a broad spectrum of people in the discussion, including outside facilitators and new approaches to outreach.
- OWEB’s FIP program may be a useful model for how to approach longer-term relationship and capacity building with communities and organizations that need additional support to be able to apply for OWEB grants.
- Invest time in developing long-term relationships; be careful that incorporation of these principles does not unintentionally promote transactional or extractive relationships between OWEB and/or grantees and these communities.
- There is an opportunity to work with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) organizations to get this work done. Need more outreach and BIPOC staff/board members that understand these communities.
- Seek the perspective from organizations that have established relationships with these impacted communities.
- Focus on ecosystem services to those communities: their loss(es) or those they need to be replaced or enhanced.
- Approach frontline and environmental justice communities through an “asset based” versus a more common “deficit based” lens to help promote community agency and self-determination.
- This is an opportunity to engage tribal traditional ecological knowledge more fully into project prioritization, planning and design options.
- First, identify who is being impacted and then show up prepared to acknowledge previous (and current) injustices and inequities in the way OWEB administers its grant programs. Be open to concerns and integrate representatives from traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities in formal decision making.
- Encourage these communities to identify opportunities and challenges both for outreach efforts and for funding efforts to help them mitigate and adapt to climate change.

- Be flexible and tailor the approach to each community. Avoid creating one solution for all.
- OWEB will need staff capacity to build relationships and trust and shared purpose for engaging.