

# OREGON Watershed Enhancement Board



## 2018-2028 Strategic Plan

Quarterly Report to the Board | January 2024



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



Brainstorming session for Strategic Plan Priorities at OWEB All-Staff Meeting.

OWEB continues gathering information on areas of focus for the upcoming **2024 Strategic Plan refresh**—including a series of in-depth staff meetings and partner interviews, a board work session in October, and continuing presentation and discussion with the board at upcoming meetings—leading toward a new, completed Strategic Plan by June 2024.



OWEB completed the **2021-2023 Oregon Plan Biennial Report**—synthesizing information about the agency’s restoration funding, match funding; watershed metrics, inter-agency initiatives, and a summary of ongoing monitoring and information gathering needs under the Oregon Plan. The Report includes information from each of the agency’s reporting basins



## Priority 2

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



Airblast sprayer, photo by the Hood River Soil and Water Conservation District.

In the Hood River basin, OWEB provides support for a **Pesticide Stewardship Partnership**, through the [Hood River Soil and Water Conservation District](#) including a workshop in Spanish which helps farm workers learn ways to apply less pesticides.



[Link to the Partnership Project III report.](#)

Bonneville Environmental Foundation completed **Partnership Learning Project Part III**, a report that describes challenges and solutions as restoration initiatives continue efforts to expand their circles of engagement.

- [Part I](#)
- [Part II](#)



## Priority 3

### Community capacity and strategic partnerships achieve healthy watersheds



OWEB visited the JC Boyle Dam Removal site at the last Board Meeting.

Community and agency collaborative efforts in Klamath Basin have focused on **addressing water quality and quantity issues**.

- Producer listening sessions convened by Sustainable Northwest.
- Collaborative water quality monitoring through the [Klamath Basin Monitoring Program](#).
- OWEB continues to administer an agreement with the Klamath River Renewal Corporation to support restoration efforts following the removal of JC Boyle dam in Oregon. The OWEB board visited the dam as part of its October 2023 meeting in Klamath Falls.



20-year Landscape Resiliency Strategy Summit. Photo by ODF.

OWEB joined other state agencies, tribes and local collaboratives to participate in a Shared Stewardship Landscape Resiliency Summit to plan the early implementation of a [20-year Landscape Resiliency Strategy](#).



## Priority 4

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



Ochoco Preserve Restoration Phase 2, photo by Deschutes Land Trust.

**Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding** was used to help organizations address drought resilience, water quality and quantity, and fish passage. A few of these projects include:

- [Upper Sandy-Zigzag River Tributaries Restoration](#)
- [Ochoco Preserve Restoration Phase 2](#)
- [Tioga Falls Habitat Connectivity Project](#)



A [brochure of the Farm Bill](#) is available at the USDA website.

A new **federal cooperative agreement is in place with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)** to support extension of the [current Farm Bill](#) implementation in local communities. As a part of the agreement, OWEB is administering the federal funds as grants to local communities.



## Priority 5

The value of working lands is fully integrated into watershed health



[Seely Farm, recipient of an Oregon Agricultural Heritage grant.](#)

OWEB engaged an economic consultant to explore the **valuation of different conservation practices on working lands.**



[Senator Merkley looking at the new pipe-cutting machine.](#)

OWEB's **Drought program continued to focus on working lands** to benefit water quality, instream flow, soil health, community engagement at the grassroots level, and how to assist production at the farm level. In October, OWEB staff participated in an Irrigation Modernization Celebration in Terrebonne also attended by Senator Merkley, where he helped operate a new pipe-cutting machine and branded one of the pipes to commemorate the project.



## Priority 6

Coordinated monitoring and shared learning to advance watershed restoration effectiveness



[A field tour of completed projects at Camp Creek and the Middle Fork John Day River followed the meeting.](#)

A **collaborative meeting** between the **John Day Partnership** and the **Middle Fork John Day Intensively Monitored Watershed (IMW)** was held in Fall 2023. Practitioners and scientists reviewed data and project results together and discussed how to use the results and enhance restoration effectiveness.



[Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network site visit.](#)

Monitoring meetings were held with each of the 3rd cohort of Focused Investment Partnerships (FIPs). These meetings developed emerging needs and processes for **reporting progress over the 6-year lifespan of each initiative.** Additionally, the Bonneville Environmental Foundation team is helping these FIPs refine their Progress Monitoring Framework to show an in-depth depiction of how conservation actions lead to near-term and longer-term outcomes.



# Priority 7

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



**Climate and Water Resources**

**Climate-Related Evaluation Criteria in Grant Applications**  
 The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) is now including **Evaluative Climate Criteria** in our grant applications, starting with the Fall 2023 Open Solicitation Grant Offering. This means that OWEB technical review teams will consider applicants' responses to climate-related questions as part of their evaluation of OWEB grant applications.  
 For more information about how to respond to the new criteria, watch the [webinar](#).

**Observed and Projected Changes in Climate, Habitat, and Species by Region**

**NORTH COAST**  
 Climate  
 Habitat & Species

**SOUTH COAST**  
 Climate  
 Habitat & Species

**WILLAMETTE**  
 Climate  
 Habitat & Species

**CENTRAL OREGON**  
 Climate  
 Habitat & Species

**EASTERN & COLUMBIA BASIN**  
 Climate  
 Habitat & Species

**Adaptation, Mitigation, and Disproportionately Impacted Communities**

Examples of adaptation strategies and actions

Types of benefits, including carbon sequestration and adaptation, resulting from projects

Where environmental justice communities are located in Oregon

**Resources**

[Climate Resilience](#)

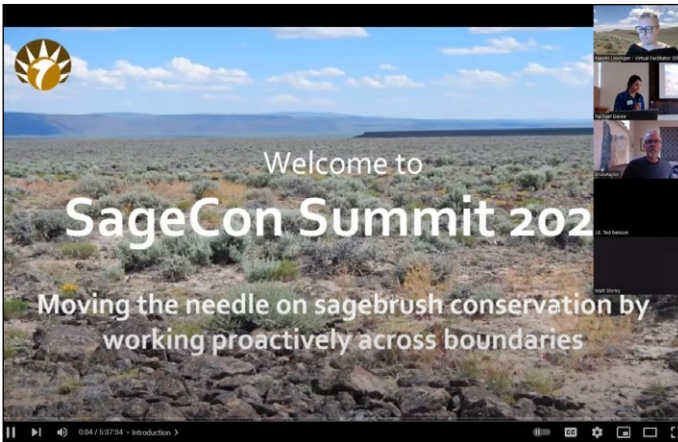
[Climate-Related Technical Resources](#)

[Grant Guide: Climate-Related Application Criteria](#)

[Climate-Related Criteria Virtual Training Presentation Slides](#)

OWEB **added Evaluative Climate Criteria** to grant applications, starting with the Fall 2023 Open Solicitation grant cycle. OWEB's online application system was updated significantly to incorporate new climate questions, and climate criteria have been incorporated into the evaluation process for the agency's grant offerings.

Information about Climate-Related Evaluation Criteria may be found on the [Climate and Water Resources webpage](#).



[SageCon Summit 2023](#)

At the annual **SageCon Summit in Fall 2023**, the use of technology to improve restoration planning and implementation was a theme. Throughout the event, practitioners and scientists discussed how to work together more efficiently to track conservation progress across the sagebrush landscape.



accomplishments  
 highlighted in quarterly update

April  
 July  
 October  
 January

## Strategies Chart Apr. 2023 - Jan. 2024

### 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.