



# OACD NEWS

September 2023



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## **77<sup>th</sup> Annual OACD Conference**

October 16-18 at Eagle Crest, Redmond, OR

The must-attend event for networking and learning for the Soil and Water Conservation Districts throughout Oregon. Join us for our annual business meeting, insightful presentations, engaging discussions, and networking opportunities.

Sessions will include:

- Funding Opportunities
- What Districts need to know from the 2023 Legislative Session
- District Manager Roundtable
- Carbon Sequestration Workshop
- Exhibitors
- Evening Social Event
- and more...!

Register for the conference at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/oregon-association-of-conservation-districts-annual-conference-tickets-676327442587?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

Register for your rooms at Eagle Crest Resort (remember to mention that you are part of the OACD Annual Conference): <https://www.eagle-crest.com>



Hello Conservation Colleagues and Happy Autumn!

The days are shorter, the leaves are turning, and the air is cooler. It's definitely a time of transition for many of our producers and we want to ensure that we are here to assist you as best as we can through our OACD programming – including our upcoming Annual Meeting! We have a great line-up of speakers, and it will be an amazing opportunity to reconnect and learn from each other.

On the topic of reconnecting and learning from each other, about a half dozen of us from Oregon attended the recent National Association of Conservation Districts Regional Meeting in California. The main focus this year was wildfires: we sent our support to our Pacific Region colleagues in Hawaii as they responded to the devastating Lahaina fires and learned from each other how best to prevent future fires support our communities when fires have moved through their land.

Some key takeaways from the NACD meeting centered on how SWCDs are well-positioned as community leaders. Through the critical relationships and trust we have developed within our communities, we can serve as central organizers during wildfire, storm, earthquake, wind, and natural disaster events.

- Districts can provide pre-disaster education on risks, fallout, and hazards. Districts can facilitate success story sharing around prevention and response plans, in collaboration with county, state, national, and tribal partnerships.
- During and after disasters, Districts can provide safe and trustworthy events for the community, like Town Halls, where emergency response agencies and stakeholders can deliver necessary information. Districts can leverage the trust that they have built with the community to help relay this important information.
- We know that our communities rely on SWCDs for meaningful and reliable follow-up support, whether that's access to technical assistance or guidance on how to apply for agriculture-related disaster relief funding. We can become local leaders in helping our communities navigate and access public resources – and we can share our contact information and the types of resources we can provide \*before\* disasters occur, so people know how to reach us when we are needed.

As always, this month's newsletter is full of great information and resources – especially funding opportunities, details about our Annual Meeting, and OACD Board elections! I urge you to take the time to read it through in its entirety.

In service of our Oregon conservation districts,

Terri Preeg Riggsby, OACD President  
[tpriggsby@yahoo.com](mailto:tpriggsby@yahoo.com), 971-404-4909



## COMING EVENTS

### Agency Meetings (all events are hybrid; see details at link to websites)

[Soil & Water Conservation Commission](#) meets October 18 in Redmond

[OWEB Board Meeting](#) will meet October 23-25 in Klamath Falls 5

[Water Resources Commission](#) meets November 16-17, location TBD

[Agriculture Board](#) meets November 14-16 in Eugene

[Environmental Quality Commission](#) November 16-17, location TBD

[Fish & Wildlife Commission](#) December 14-15, in McMinnville

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## Heat and Drought Resilience Training for Oregon Agriculture Professionals

[Train the Trainer - Workshop Wednesdays: November 1st, 8th, and 15<sup>th</sup>](#)

Virtual live sessions will be from 9:30-11:30am

- Tailored content for agricultural technical assistance providers in Oregon
- Updates from leading scientists on the impacts of drought & heat on agriculture in Oregon
- Recommended practices for adaptation and resilience
- Tools for communicating about climate resilience with producers
- Facilitated regional break out conversations
- Resources and funding opportunities

Brought to you by Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network and the 2023 Planning Team. [Register here!](#)

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**NACD's 2024 Annual Meeting**, hosted in partnership with the **California Association of Resource Conservation Districts**, will take place in San Diego, California, **February 10-14, 2024**. [Registration](#) is now open, and tour options will be added soon. **Save up to \$130 on registration with early-bird prices, now through December 22.**



After registering, don't forget to make your hotel reservations! The meeting will be held at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina. Discounted room rates in NACD's reserved block start at **\$259/night** plus tax. [Make a reservation online](#) or call 1-888-236-2427 and identify yourself as a guest with the National Association of Conservation Districts.

The last day to reserve available rooms in the room block is **January 19, 2024**. Find everything you need to know on [NACD's website](#)

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## Webinar on Outcomes of Spatial Targeting in Sagebrush Country via the Sage Grouse Initiative – November 16

Dr. David Naugle of the Univ. of Montana serves as the Working Lands for Wildlife Sagebrush Biome Science Advisor. On **November 16 at 9 a.m. PST**, Dr. Naugle will present on the strategic implementation of science-based Farm Bill conservation through the Sage Grouse Initiative. This effort is a collaboration between the University, USDA's Conservation Effects Assessment Project, NRCS Working Lands for Wildlife Sage Grouse Initiative, and others. Findings may be used to inform on-the-ground efforts to further conservation of sage grouse and other species in the sagebrush biome, as well as other data-driven wildlife conservation efforts nationwide. [Plan to Attend](#)

## OWEB Climate Criteria Training

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. To aid applicants in responding to these [new criteria](#), we are offering multiple training opportunities. Training topics will include: Overview of the new climate criteria, Grant application guidance for new criteria, Applicant resources.

### In-Person Training:

- How to respond to the climate questions in OWEB's grant applications
- Where to find resources and assistance
- Specific written content for the climate questions that can be directly incorporated into your grant application

[Register for In-Person Training](#). Registration closes 1 week prior to each session to provide enough time to place lunch orders. *Coffee, pastries, & lunch will be provided at in-person trainings.*

LOCATION	DAY	DATE	TIME
Roseburg	Thursday	September 28	10:00 am – 1:30 pm
Tillamook	Friday	October 6	10:00 am – 1:30 pm
Salem	Thursday	October 12	10:00 am – 1:30 pm
Bend	Monday	October 16	10:00 am – 1:30 pm
John Day	Wednesday	October 18	10:00 am – 1:30 pm
La Grande	Thursday	October 19	10:00 am – 1:30 pm

### Virtual Training (Zoom):

- Similar content as in-person training
- A mix of presentations and breakout group activities

[Register for Virtual Training](#).

LOCATION	DAY	DATE	TIME
Virtual (Zoom)	Wednesday	October 4	1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

### Recorded Webinar:

- Short, recorded webinar for those unable to attend the Virtual or In-Person Training
  - Covers where to find information on climate criteria and available technical resources
- OWEB staff will send out an announcement** once the webinar is posted on our website.

### Climate Open Office Hours via Phone:

- [Call Jessi Kershner at \(971\) 701-3175](#) during one of her designated office hours below.

LOCATION	DATE	TIME
Monday	October 9	2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Tuesday	October 10	10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Wednesday	October 11	9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Monday	October 23	10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Wednesday	October 25	2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Thursday	October 26	9:00 am – 11:00 am
Friday	October 27	11:00 am – 2:00 pm
Monday	October 30	10:00 am – 2:00 pm

For questions about training, contact Jessi Kershner at [jessi.kershner@oweb.oregon.gov](mailto:jessi.kershner@oweb.oregon.gov) or Eric Hartstein at [eric.hartstein@oweb.oregon.gov](mailto:eric.hartstein@oweb.oregon.gov).

# FUNDING RESOURCES



## NOAA Funding Opportunities

There are several federal funding opportunities this fall for fish habitat work through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). While some of these opportunities are referred to as coastal grants, the definition of coastal areas eligible for project funding is quite broad and includes areas located along inland rivers and streams with a significant impact on coastal and ocean resources. Anadromous fish habitat work anywhere in the state may be eligible.

Here is a list of active funding opportunities:

- *Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grants*  
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/restoring-fish-passage-through-barrier-removal-grants>.  
**Application deadline:** October 16, 2023. Project funding range: \$1 million to \$20 million
- *Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grants*  
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/restoring-tribal-priority-fish-passage-through-barrier-removal-grants> **Application deadline:** November 8, 2023. Project funding range: \$300,000 to \$12 million.
- *Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants | NOAA Fisheries.*  
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/transformational-habitat-restoration-and-coastal-resilience-grants> **Application deadline:** November 17, 2023. Project funding range: \$1 million to \$25 million
- *Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience Grants for Tribes and Underserved Communities* <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/coastal-habitat-restoration-and-resilience-grants-tribes-and-underserved-communities> **Application deadline:** December 19, 2023. Project funding range: \$75,000 to \$3 million.
- *Building Tribal Drought Resilience With Support From The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)*  
<https://cpo.noaa.gov/nidis-coping-with-drought-building-tribal-drought-resilience-with-support-from-the-inflation-reduction-act-ira/> **Application deadlines:** Letters of Intent submission deadline is November 2, 2023

## NRCS Oregon Announces Sign-Up Period for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Oregon is accepting applications from agricultural producers and forest landowners for the [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program](#) (ACEP). The ACEP program helps producers enroll working lands and wetlands into conservation easements.

While NRCS accepts ACEP applications year-round, the deadline to be considered for the fiscal year 2024 funding cycle is **December 15, 2023**.

## ODF Small Forestland Grant Application period now open

This call is intended to fund forest fuel management activities on small forestland owner properties. Projects must be submitted by one of the listed project sponsors (Incl. SWCD). Funds will be allocated for work performed in the current 2023-2025 biennium and **reimbursed** as work is completed. Applications are due **November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025** via the online portal. Manual applications will be made available upon request. Project work **MUST BE COMPLETED BY May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, with final invoices received no later than June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025.** Application: <https://arcq.is/1imaOm>

## OWEB GRANTS – Open Solicitation Grant Offering

OWEB is now accepting online applications for the **Fall 2023 Open Solicitation Grant Offering** for the following grant types:

- [Restoration](#) (25% match is required)
- [Technical Assistance](#) (NEW: \$1 match is required; no cap on requests)
- [Stakeholder Engagement](#) (NEW: \$1 match is required)

OWEB has made two key changes to the technical assistance and stakeholder engagement programs to address barriers to participation.

- Recognizing that matching funds are more difficult to obtain for Technical Assistance and Stakeholder Engagement projects, and that match is sometimes a barrier to participation in OWEB grants, the match requirement for these grant types has been reduced to \$1. The 25% match requirement for restoration remains in place.
- In response to rising costs, increasing project complexity, and more comprehensive permitting requirements, the \$75,000 cap on technical assistance application requests has been removed. Please click on the grant type of interest for application requirements and login information. If you already have an Online Application login, you may [access the application directly](#).

**Grant applications are due October 30, 2023, by 5:00 pm** and must be submitted via OWEB's online grant application. The OWEB Board plans to make grant awards at the April 2024 meeting.

If you have questions about applying for an OWEB grant, please [contact the Regional Program Representative](#) for your region. If you are new to OWEB and our grant program, please visit [OWEB's website](#).

These grants support voluntary efforts by Oregonians to protect and restore healthy watersheds. This includes actions supporting the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds and the Oregon Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy.

OWEB anticipates making available a combined total of over \$10 million for Restoration, Technical Assistance, and Stakeholder Engagement through this solicitation.

## NEWS and OPPORTUNITIES

### \$3 Billion for Climate-Smart Practices on Agricultural Lands Through Investing in America Agenda

#### ***Expansion of Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry Activities supported by the Inflation Reduction Act***

NRCS is increasing [Climate-Smart Agricultural and Forestry Mitigation Activities](#) eligible for Inflation Reduction Act funding for fiscal year 2024 through the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). These in-demand activities are expected to deliver reductions in greenhouse gas emissions or increases in carbon sequestration as well as significant other benefits to natural resources like soil health, water quality, pollinator and wildlife habitat and air quality. In response to feedback received from conservation partners, producers and NRCS staff across the country, NRCS considered and evaluated activities based on scientific literature demonstrating expected climate change mitigation benefits. To learn more, download the [list of practices](#) and a [fact sheet](#).

When applied through this framework, these activities are expected to deliver reductions in greenhouse gas emissions or increases in carbon sequestration. NRCS will continue to evaluate additional practices as science progresses and will evaluate and identify quantification methodologies during the fiscal year.

#### ***Expansion of priorities for the ACEP investments through the Inflation Reduction Act***

Additionally, NRCS is expanding the national priority areas eligible for Inflation Reduction Act funding for [Agricultural Conservation Easements Program](#) (ACEP) easements in fiscal year 2024.

For ACEP Agricultural Land Easements (ALE), NRCS is prioritizing securing:

- Grasslands in areas of highest risk for conversion to non-grassland uses to prevent the release of soil carbon stores.
- Agricultural lands under threat of conversion to non-agricultural uses.
- State-specific priorities including rice cultivation on subsiding highly organic soils.

For ACEP Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE), NRCS is prioritizing:

- Land with soils high in organic carbon.
- Eligible lands that will be restored to and managed as forests like bottomland hardwood forests.
- Eligible lands in existing forest cover that will be managed as forests.
- Several geographically specific priorities (i.e., former cranberry bogs, wet meadows, and ephemeral wetlands in grassland ecosystems).

### USFWS proposes federal protections for western pond turtle under the ESA

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service announced a proposal to list the northwestern pond turtle and the southwestern pond turtle as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The Service is also proposing a 4(d) rule that would support the conservation of both species. A news release [is available online](#), along with Frequently Asked Questions. The proposed listing documents were published in the Federal Register on October 3, 2023 opening a 60-day public comment period. The Service will consider comments from all interested parties received by December 4, 2023. The proposal and information on how to submit comments can be found on or after October 3, 2023 at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) by searching under docket number FWS-R8-ES-2023-0092.

## OWEB Announces 2023-2025 Organization Structure

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board is pleased to announce an updated organizational structure, effective October 1, 2023. The new structure better distributes workload and meets the agency's operational needs. This message describes key changes to the organizational structure and summarizes the new points of contact for the affected programs.

The most significant change to the organizational structure is the movement of Land and Water Acquisitions and the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) to the Acquisitions and Special Programs section of the agency. Renee Davis, the manager of this section, will supervise Land and Water Acquisitions staff and OAHP staff. OWEB has also reassigned some key responsibilities to better balance the workload. These key changes include the following:

- Brian Wolcott (Water Acquisitions and Capacity Coordinator) will now also coordinate OWEB's SWCD and Watershed Council Capacity grant offerings.
- Taylor Larson (OAHP Coordinator) will now also be the point of contact for OWEB's Tide Gate coordination work.
- Nicole Bettinardi (Executive Assistant) will now also become the main point of contact with the board, allowing Eric Hartstein (OWEB's Legislative and Policy Coordinator) to focus more on grant project management and policy and legislative work.
- Stephanie Page (Deputy Director) will become the main point of contact for the Board DEI/EJ committee. This will allow Courtney Shaff (Monitoring and Reporting Manager) to focus on federal grant oversight and supervision responsibilities, including onboarding new staff positions in OWEB's 2023-2025 budget.

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## FEMA Announces First-Ever Community Disaster Resilience Zones

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced on September 6 the first round of Community Disaster Resilience Zone (CDRZ) designations. Special districts with eligible pre-hazard mitigation projects, as included in FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMP), in the selected zones may be able to access enhanced resources to advance mitigation projects.

Among the [CDRZ program](#)'s benefits include up to a 90 percent federal cost share on their designated projects, technical assistance for project evaluation and preparation, and application assistance. [Click here for a FEMA Frequently Asked Questions document](#) regarding the CDRZ program. Special districts with eligible hazard mitigation needs are encouraged to contact their local emergency management agency for more information.

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## OREGON'S URBAN AGRICULTURE CED!



**Amanda Welker, Urban Agriculture CED**

[Amanda.Welker3@usda.gov](mailto:Amanda.Welker3@usda.gov)

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## IMPORTANT SWCD PROGRAM UPDATE - ANNUAL MEETING NOTIFICATIONS

We would like to clarify the statutes related to noticing your annual meeting, ORS 568.210(5), ORS 568.580, and ORS 568.590. Your **Annual Meeting Notice** should conform with the following:

1. **Two** notices must be caused to be published in a newspaper of general circulation (or posted in a reasonable number of conspicuous places if no such publication of general circulation is available.)
2. The two notices must be published at least seven days apart.
3. **Both notices must be published at least 15 days before the annual meeting.**
4. The notices must include the time and place of the holding of the annual meeting.

If you have any questions, please call Eric Nusbaum (503-510-8930) or Sandi Hiatt (971-301-3605).



**Morrow Soil & Water Conservation District** – Wildlife Habitat Technician. Submit a resume, cover letter, and three references by 5:00 PM on **Friday October 20<sup>th</sup>**. Application materials can be sent via email to [kevin.payne@or.nacdn.net](mailto:kevin.payne@or.nacdn.net)

**NRCS** – Supervisory Hydrologist. **Apply by October 6.** [Apply here](#)

**NRCS** – Business Manager. **Apply by October 13.** [Apply here](#)

**NRCS** – Soil Conservationist. **Apply by October 20.** [Apply here](#)

**Mid Coast Watershed Council** - Communications and Outreach Specialist. Please send the documents below as a single PDF to [info@midcoastwc.org](mailto:info@midcoastwc.org) with *Communications and Outreach Specialist* and your *Last Name* in the subject line. Applications must be received by 5 PM on **October 30, 2023**. Position is open until filled.

1. A cover letter of no more than two pages describing how your work experiences have prepared you to successfully complete the position's duties
2. A resume of no more than two pages
3. The contact information for at least three professional references.
4. The *date* you would be available to start work

**Deschutes Land Trust** – Restoration Specialist. Application deadline is October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023. [More details and application information.](#)

**Coos Watershed Association** – Monitoring Program Manager, Submit cover letter (include start date availability), résumé, technical writing sample (grant, research paper, etc), and contact information for three references to [hutz@cooswatershed.org](mailto:hutz@cooswatershed.org). Applications are due **Thursday October 26<sup>th</sup>** by 2pm.



Oregon Association of  
Conservation Districts

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