



# OACD NEWS

March 2025



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## OACD Annual Conference

October 21-23

Pendleton, OR

## Associate Membership/Dues Options

**Emeritus Membership** – for directors and staff who have retired from their positions but want to remain involved with OACD. This would entitle them to apply for scholarships for the OACD Annual Conference.

\$75/year

**Supporter Membership** – for non-SWCD organizations and businesses. This would entitle them to reduced fees for exhibiting at the OACD Annual Conference.

\$500/year

Contact Andrea Kreiner at [andrea.kreiner@oacd.org](mailto:andrea.kreiner@oacd.org) for more information



Spring is just around the corner now!

And spring brings some new funding opportunities and a new work season! OWEB now has three funding programs open that can provide funding for district projects and technical assistance:

- The Natural and Working Lands Fund (NWLF) Restoration and Technical Assistance Grants (see p.4)
- Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program grants for “conservation management plans”, also funded by the NWLF (see p.4)
- 2024 Immediate Wildfire Response Grant Offering (We announced those in the newsletter last month, but here is the guidance [document that](#) provides information for preparing applications, which are due by May 29, 2025)

OACD adopted our strategic plan last fall to build on future work on behalf of our district members. Currently we are working on two items from the plan. This spring we will be sending out a survey to all directors and staff to receive your input to assist the OACD board to take actions and build programs that serve the membership.

The second work project is to strengthen communication between OACD and the member districts. This will be facilitated by board members reaching out to districts assigned to each board member to promote 2-way communication. Board members will try to attend some of the local district meetings from time to time (zoom, phone or in person), report to the districts on OACD information and seek input from the district to share back with OACD. Your district should be contacted soon by your board representative.

Information on OACD’s revised dues structure for fiscal year July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, has been sent to district managers. In addition to the district dues structure which has been updated to provide more equity, the board also approved two associate membership categories:

- Emeritus Membership for retired district board and/or staff would still like to stay engaged with OACD
- Supporter Membership for organization and business. See the information on p.1.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jan', is positioned above the contact information.

Jan Lee, OACD President  
[janleewater@gmail.com](mailto:janleewater@gmail.com) 503-545-9420 cell



## COMING EVENTS

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

[Oregon Water Resources Commission](#) - March 13-14, Salem

[Oregon Board of Agriculture](#) – March 12-14, Salem

[Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission](#) – March 14, Virtual

[OWEB Partnership & Capacity Committee](#) March 4

[OWEB Acquisitions & Restoration Committee](#) March 6

[OWEB Tracking & Communicating Committee](#) March 12

### OACD Board Meeting

District participation and comments are encouraged.

**March 25, 9am-11am.** Zoom link [HERE](#).

**WATER  
DAY**

AT THE CAPITOL

Join the Legislative Water Caucus for a day of learning and community building to elevate water as a priority for Oregon. Wear blue for water!

**MARCH 20, 2025**

Willamette Heritage Center  
and the Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, OR

Save your spot!  
[bit.ly/2025waterday](https://bit.ly/2025waterday)

### CONNECT 2025 | April 8-10

Florence Event Center - Florence, Oregon

[CONNECT is more than a conference](#); it's a platform for change-makers in conservation. We bring together local, state, and federal decision-makers, professionals from Conservation Districts, and other support organizations dedicated to preserving our state's natural resources.

View the agenda and register at <https://www.connectoregon.net>

### [Interactive Info Session: OAHP Conservation Management Plan Grant Program](#)

Join OrCAN and OWEB for an interactive [Info Session](#) on **Tuesday, March 11, 2025, from 2-3pm on Zoom** to dive deeper into the application process and get your questions answered.

REGISTER [HERE](#).

## FUNDING RESOURCES

### Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program is Now Accepting Conservation Management Planning Grant Applications



Applications are due by **5 pm on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025**.

Eligibility Requirements: Proposed projects for this grant offering must take place on lands that are actively used by an agricultural owner or operator for an agricultural operation that includes, but need not be limited to, active engagement in farming or ranching.

This grant solicitation utilizes the Natural and Working Lands Fund (Oregon General Funds) which has the additional intent of providing support to help Tribes, landowners, land managers, and environmental justice communities adopt natural climate solutions.

Funding may be utilized to develop, implement, or monitor Conservation Management Plans. Implementation of a Conservation Management Plan includes annual ecosystem services payments to agricultural operators.

**Application Guidance** Detailed information about the grant program and application guidance may be found on the [OAHF webpage](#). The guidance documents outline important information about the grant program's structure and guide potential applicants to determine if proposed projects are appropriate for the OAHF Grant Program.

YouTube Recording of informational webinar: [youtube.com/channel/UC0dl-TOWlt4Sp--i1KEa\\_OA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0dl-TOWlt4Sp--i1KEa_OA).

Applicants are strongly encouraged to connect with the OWEB staff identified below to schedule a pre-application consultation. If you have questions about OWEB's Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program grant offering contact OAHF Coordinator, Taylor Larson at 971.701.3248, or [taylor.larson@oweb.oregon.gov](mailto:taylor.larson@oweb.oregon.gov).

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### OWEB is Now Accepting Applications for Natural and Working Lands Fund Restoration and Technical Assistance Grants

The Natural and Working Lands (NWL) funds were appropriated in 2023 by House Bill 3409 as part of Oregon's comprehensive strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Distributing these funds builds on OWEB's longstanding commitment to ecosystem health, while also emphasizing the economic, social, health, or climate resilience co-benefits for disproportionately impacted and underrepresented communities.

OWEB will administer the NWL funds through **Restoration** and **Technical Assistance grants**—with the additional legislative mandate of providing support to help Tribes, landowners, land managers, and environmental justice communities to adopt natural climate solutions.

**Eligible Applicants** include any Tribe, Watershed Council, SWCD, not-for-profit institution, school, community college, state institution of higher education, independent not-for-profit institution of higher education, or political subdivision of this state that is not a state agency. A state agency or federal agency may apply for funding under this section only as a co-applicant with one of the other eligible entities above. Prioritization will be given to Tribes or environmental justice groups or partners who have done meaningful engagement with those communities.

YouTube Recording of informational webinar: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0dl-TOWlt4Sp--i1KEa\\_OA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0dl-TOWlt4Sp--i1KEa_OA)

**Applications are due by 5:00 pm on April 1, 2025**

If you have questions, please contact Alexa Schmidt at [alexa.m.schmidt@oweb.oregon.gov](mailto:alexa.m.schmidt@oweb.oregon.gov) or 971-718-4904.

Please visit the [Natural and Working Lands webpage](#) for more information about this offering.



## Wright Foundation for Sustainability and Innovation Grants

<https://wrightfortomorrow.org/grants/>

Wright Foundation for Sustainability and Innovation administers projects directly funded by donors that help reduce carbon footprints through carbon positive practices and emission offsetting. The foundation holds open application periods for projects in North America that focus on reducing environmental risk through regenerative agricultural practices, habitat restoration and using natural energy sources to make our communities more sustainable. If any specific projects are included in the grant cycle, they will be posted here.

Please send us a letter of intent including the name of your organization, a brief summary of your proposed project and how it fits into the foundation's priorities to [info@wrightfortomorrow.org](mailto:info@wrightfortomorrow.org). If your project meets our criteria for the project, you will be sent our standard grant application. **Letters of intent and applications are accepted from February 10 – March 21, 2025. Grants will be awarded in the summer.**

### Tree Canopy Improvement Grant

- Increasing tree species diversity
- Planting in urban and suburban areas and greenspaces

### John Harsch Regenerative Agriculture Grant

We are looking to partner with nonprofit organizations, farmers, landowners or producers who are interested in adopting best regenerative agricultural management practices that impact one or several of these areas:

- Improve water quality
- Reduce soil erosion
- Increase soil health index
- Reduce synthetic fertilizer use
- Increase effective manure use as a fertilizer
- Increase biodiversity
- Reduce methane and nitrous oxide emissions

## 2025 Drinking Water Source Protection Fund - Call for Proposals

Deadline **March 28, 2025**

Projects that reduce risk to surface water or groundwater sources of public drinking water. For 2025, OHA will be accepting applications **for up to \$70,000 per water system for land conservation planning projects**. Conservation planning projects can include studies or activities that are related to assessing the legal and/or financial feasibility of purchasing land, easements, etc. within an identified drinking water source area. This could also include public involvement, establishing stewardship plans or ecosystem services projects.

This may be a great opportunity for watershed partners (SWCDs, Watershed Councils, Land Trusts, local governments, etc) to work with local public water systems on projects that are mutually beneficial. Water systems in the same basin are encouraged to work together to meet common goals and address regional water quality issues.

The application process is fairly simple and **no match** is required for grant funds if awarded. Projects are rated on the potential to reduce risk in the delineated source areas or contribute to reduction in contaminant concentrations at the drinking water source. For more information see the [Application Guide](#) on the OHA-DWS [Drinking Water Source Water Protection Projects webpage](#). Maps of drinking water source areas can be found on DEQ's Drinking water protection program interactive viewer (link at [DWP Maps and GIS Data webpage](#)). Examples of previously funded projects can be found on our [Interactive Drinking Water Source Protection Funded Projects Map](#).

**We encourage interested water systems and local partners to reach out DWP technical assistance staff to discuss the project prior to applying.** We can also work with basin partners to help identify source areas and PWSs that may be willing to partner. Let us know if you want to discuss any potential projects or if we can provide assistance with a grant application.

Focusing on Northwest Region and Eastern Region public water providers:

Alyssa Leidel [alyssa.leidel@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:alyssa.leidel@deq.oregon.gov) and Shersten Finley [shersten.finley@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:shersten.finley@deq.oregon.gov)

Focusing on Western Region public water providers:

Laura Johnson [laura.j.johnson@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:laura.j.johnson@deq.oregon.gov)

## Grant application process now open for high priority fish passage and screening projects

ODFW is accepting applications for high priority fish passage and fish screening projects. Approximately \$11 million in grant funding is available to support projects across Oregon that are key to helping protect, conserve, and recover Oregon's native migratory fish populations. **Applications must be submitted by March 17, 2025.**

This is a unique opportunity to make a lasting impact on Oregon's fish and waterways. Water users, municipalities, watershed councils, soil and water conservation districts, tribes, state and federal agencies, and owners or operators of fish passage barriers and water diversions are all encouraged to apply. Applicants must submit a project description, proposed budget, and clearly document the cooperation and permission from all pertinent landowners and water users.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss potential projects with ODFW prior to submission if there are questions or to review project benefits and implementation plans.

Please read the [Supplemental Information](#) before completing the RFP Application. Email completed applications to [Fish.Passage@odfw.oregon.gov](mailto:Fish.Passage@odfw.oregon.gov). If you do not have Microsoft Excel, contact ODFW for an alternative format.

### Eligibility Requirements

- Capital projects must be an ODFW priority and supported by local District Fish Biologists.
- Must have a completed application with landowner signatures prior to approval.
- Must identify how passage and screening will be maintained after implementation.
- Fish screens and passage projects will need to comply with current ODFW fish passage criteria and screening requirements.

### Ineligible Projects and Costs

- Research, inventories, monitoring, reporting, and design only projects.
- Indirect and administration costs.
- Repairs or maintenance costs at existing facilities.
- Projects associated with fulfilling mitigation requirements will not be accepted.

### Grant fund allocation will focus on project proposals that:

- Protect, conserve and/or promote native migratory fish species with emphasis to those that benefit listed Threatened, Endangered and State Sensitive species,
- Address high priority fish passage or screening projects, especially projects identified on the [Statewide Fish Passage Priority Barrier List](#) or through other prioritization efforts,
- Provide access or improved access to a large quantity of high-quality habitat,
- Installs new fish screens at unscreened water diversions,
- Are supported by local ODFW District Fish Biologists, and
- Implement projects described in Conservation and Recovery Plans.

## NEWS and OPPORTUNITIES

### Redesigned Oregon Explorer natural resources digital library launched



You can explore the new platform at the following link: <https://hub.oregonexplorer.info/> with the new and improved Data page accessed directly here: <https://hub.oregonexplorer.info/pages/data> with links to the OSDL archived non-framework data here: <https://hub.oregonexplorer.info/pages/osdl-archive>

## PRESCRIBED BURNING DESIGN FOR TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

NRCS Washington and partners are hosting a free informational session on Prescribed Burning Plans and how to become a Technical Service Provider (TSP). Join the online learning session on **March 21, 9-11 a.m.** Click the button below to view the flier. [Register for the event here.](#)

## New OWEB Open Solicitation Application Timing

OWEB is shifting the timing of the Open Solicitation Grant Applications to address seasonal barriers affecting the grant review process, including weather conditions that are unsafe for site visits and travel.

### Open Solicitation Application Timing For the 2025 – 2027 Biennium:

	Project Types	Application Open	Application Due Date	Board Awards
<b>Summer 2025</b> Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restoration</li> <li>• Technical Assistance</li> <li>• Engagement</li> <li>• Monitoring</li> </ul>	Monday March 24, 2025	Monday August 4, 2025	January 2026
<b>Winter 2026</b> Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restoration</li> <li>• Technical Assistance</li> <li>• Engagement</li> </ul>	Monday September 22, 2025	Monday February 2, 2026	July 2026
<b>Summer 2026</b> Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restoration</li> <li>• Technical Assistance</li> <li>• Engagement</li> <li>• Monitoring</li> </ul>	Monday March 23, 2026	Monday August 3, 2026	January 2027
<b>Winter 2027*</b> Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restoration</li> <li>• Technical Assistance</li> <li>• Engagement</li> </ul>	Monday September 21, 2026	Monday February 1, 2027*	July 2027*

\*While the Winter 2027 application is during the 2025-2027 biennium, awards will occur in July 2027, which is in the 2027-2029 biennium.

**This cycle shift does not apply to the upcoming Natural and Working Lands Restoration and Technical Assistance solicitation, which launches on Wednesday, February 5th.**

## Oregon Water Data Portal update – beta version of the pilot portal ready for testing

The Oregon Water Data Portal project is about improving access to data and information to help users make water and water infrastructure decisions. The concept of a water data portal was initially described in the implementation portion of [Oregon's 2017 Integrated Water Resources Strategy](#) and [Oregon's 100-year Water Vision](#).

The pilot portal is accessible at <https://www.oregonwaterdata.org/>. Changes to the pilot portal will be made intermittently from input received during the beta testing until June 2025, as resources allow.

This Oregon water data pilot portal was developed through a collaboration with multiple Oregon agencies, Oregon State University, and the Internet of Water Coalition. The objective of this initial pilot portal is to test functionality using limited data and will evolve over the next six months as data is added and improvements are made based on user feedback. We will continue to build our understanding about user needs and experiences through this pilot portal phase. Users can provide feedback about the beta version of the pilot portal by completing a [survey](#) or emailing [OWDP@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:OWDP@deq.oregon.gov).

More information about the project is online here: <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/wq/Pages/owdp.aspx>

The pilot portal beta version is online here: <https://www.oregonwaterdata.org/>

Please contact the Oregon Water Data Portal team with questions at [OWDP@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:OWDP@deq.oregon.gov).

## OWEB Ecological Priorities Refresh for Focused Investment Partnerships

The FIP grant program supports high-performing partnerships across Oregon for up to three biennia (6-years) as they implement landscape-scale restoration and conservation actions in board-identified ecological priorities. Information on the existing OWEB Board FIP Ecological Priorities can be found on OWEB's webpage and includes a technical memo, habitat map, and theory of change diagram for each priority: <https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/grants/Pages/fips.aspx>

**OWEB needs your help to determine whether to make any changes to the existing ecological priorities and if new ecological priorities should be considered.** These ecological priorities will additionally help inform the next solicitation for FIP partnerships, which is tentatively scheduled to begin in January 2026. There are three ways to provide your feedback:

1. **Complete the FIP Ecological Priorities Review Survey:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HQNLXVY>

2. **Participate in one or more virtual listening sessions (these are open to public and agencies)**

· Thursday, February 20th, 10:00 am-11:00 am Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/rOz3FpSwTGujQxsG7pHvgw>

· Thursday, March 6th, 11:00 am- 12:00 pm Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/5HO7F1yvSN2CUJlakUM0cg>

· Thursday, March 13th, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/zowMIJoVTFS1RCMZIUGVeA>

· Tuesday, March 18th, 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/9emxgGfPQVeEVrZ111EUOg>

3. Share feedback directly in a virtual or in-person meeting with OWEB staff, please contact Eric Hartstein at [eric.hartstein@oweb.oregon.gov](mailto:eric.hartstein@oweb.oregon.gov) or at 503-910-6201 to schedule a meeting or have a phone conversation.

## Community engagement around nutrient management in Oregon

DEQ is looking at different ways of improving water quality and reducing pollution from nutrients in Oregon. As part of this effort, DEQ is working with [Oregon's Kitchen Table](#) to hear peoples' concerns and priorities about how nutrients impact water quality and what ideas people have for making water in Oregon safer. Share what you think between now and March 31 by taking our survey, inviting others to participate, or hosting your own conversation! Visit <https://bit.ly/oregon-nutrient-mgt> for more information.

## Eastern Oregon Solar Siting Rulemaking Geographic Hearing Postponed: Public Comment Period Extended

At its January 23-24, 2025 meeting, the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) extended the Eastern Oregon Solar Siting Rulemaking process. As a result, the public comment period will now be closing on April 11, 2025, at 11:59 p.m.

Accordingly, the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) canceled the geographic hearing scheduled for February 3, 2025, in Prineville, Oregon.

DLCD will reschedule the geographic hearing for March or early April 2025 — before the public comment period ends.

Once DLCD reschedules the geographic hearing, staff will send a GovDelivery notice and update DLCD's [Solar Siting Rulemaking Webpage](#), which includes more information about the rulemaking process and a signup option for GovDelivery notices.

For questions on the rulemaking process, please contact Senior Rules Coordinator Casaria Taylor at [casaria.taylor@dlcd.oregon.gov](mailto:casaria.taylor@dlcd.oregon.gov) or by phone at 971-600-7699.



## DISTRICTS IN THE NEWS

### CHECK OUT THE LATEST NEWS STORIES FEATURING OUR SWCDs---

[The River's Reach: McKenzie River Trust's vision](#), KLCC – Radio (includes work with SWCDs)

[Jackson SWCD: Antelope Creek Riparian Restoration](#), NACD Conservation Clips

Do you have a story to share, please send it to [andrea.kreiner@OACD.org](mailto:andrea.kreiner@OACD.org)!

We also want to share this wonderful story map on Juniper removal presented to the House Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water Committee by the Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council, [Oregon Juniper Removal Project](#)

## DISTRICT TO DISTRICT

We regret to announce that Deschutes SWCD board member **William Kuhns** passed away peacefully in his sleep on January 25, 2025. He told Jeff Rola: no tears, only smiles! Let's continue to work and move this District forward together with positivity, smiles, laughter, and teamwork! He only wants success and happiness for us all and to protect the wildlife, habitat, and natural resources of our County!

## NACD REPORT

From Terri Preeg Riggsby, Oregon delegate:

Oregon had a solid showing at National Association of Conservation District's "Bee the Change" 2025 Annual Meeting, with Andrea Kreiner of OACD, Jan Lee of Clackamas SWCD, Stan Dean of Jackson SWCD, Andy Bleckinger of Yamhill SWCD, and Terri Preeg Riggsby of West Multnomah SWCD. We are hopeful to continue to grow Oregon's participation at future NACD meetings with representation from across our geographically diverse state.

NACD welcomed a new suite of Executive Committee members and is eager to continue to build their leadership bench, particularly with young and varied members of our Conservation District communities. From cattle ranchers to urban farmers, coastal estuary land managers to foresters, NACD is looking for folks that engage in working and natural lands in various ways to ensure that they understand and serve **every person, every acre, every day**.

In Oregon, we are excited to grow our own leadership bench to represent our state with NACD. Beyond board positions, there are a variety of opportunities to get involved at the Committee and Subcommittee level – from collaborating with others focused on engagement and outreach, to specific natural resource and agriculture needs, there is something for everyone. I have been serving Oregon on the national board and would love to answer questions and mentor Directors for service at the national level, especially our Directors who may be new to service at the local level. Contact Terri directly at 971-404-4909 or [tpriggsby@yahoo.com](mailto:tpriggsby@yahoo.com).

As newly-elected NACD President Gary Blair said : "Let's break barriers. Let's lead this organization into the future and face adversity together. Let's be the change. I encourage everyone to realize how you fit in – all of our local district boards are part of the National organization. Our work starts local." So let's start locally and engage at the national level!

Report: [Sustaining our Locally Led Conservation Delivery System: Urgent Action Needed to Address Funding Freezes, Bridge Staffing Gaps, and Preserve Partnerships – February 28, 2025](#)



Oregon Association of  
Conservation Districts

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