



Environmental Justice Council Annual Report 2024

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board



OREGON
WATERSHED
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

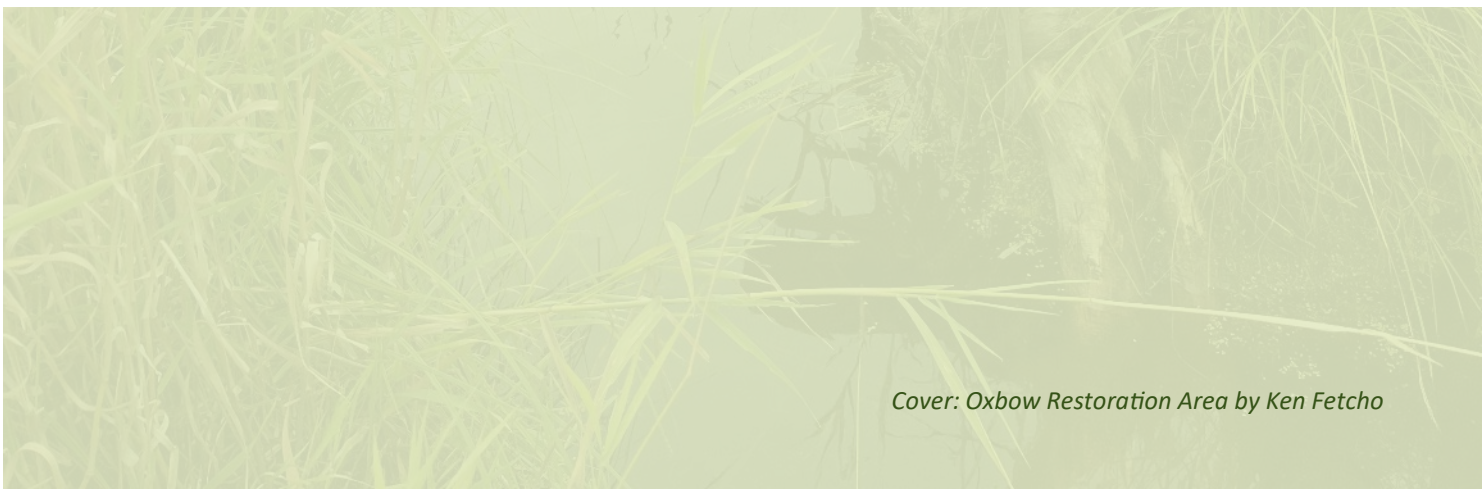


Email: alexa.m.schmidt@oweb.oregon.gov

Website: <http://www.oregon.gov/oweb>

Phone: (971) 718-4904

Address: 775 Summer St. NE #360, Salem, OR 97301



Cover: Oxbow Restoration Area by Ken Fetcho

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Agency Introduction.....	1
Environmental Justice Highlights	3
Address Environmental Justice Issues (Ors 182.550 Section 1)	6
Public Participation and Meaningful Involvement (Ors 182.535 Section 2)	8
Agency Environmental Justice Impacts (Ors 182.550 Section 3)	11
Agency Environmental Justice Progress (Ors 182.550 Section 4).....	12
Agency Environmental Justice Mapping Tool Involvement (Ors 182.550 Section 5)	13
Agency Environmental Justice Council Engagement 2025.....	14
Agency Meaningful Engagement Related Legislation	14
Definitions.....	15
Appendix.....	16

AGENCY INTRODUCTION

Agency Mission Statement

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) is a state agency that administers grants for watershed restoration, fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, farm and ranchland protection, and natural resource disaster recovery and resiliency. The agency's mission is to help protect and restore healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies.

Agency Leadership

Sara O'Brien, *Executive Director*

Stephanie Page, *Deputy Director*

Miriam Scharer, *Business Operations Manager*

Eric Williams, *Restoration Grant Programs Manager*

Courtney Shaff, *Monitoring & Reporting Manager*

Renee Davis, *Acquisitions & Special Programs Manager*

Eric Hartstein, *Senior Policy Coordinator*

Nicole Maness, *Environmental Restoration Program Manager*

OWEB is led by an 18-member policy oversight and decision-making board. Board members represent the public, federally recognized Tribes, five state natural resource agency boards and commissions, Oregon State University Extension Service, and six federal land management and natural resource agencies.



The OWEB board meets four times a year to discuss funding, programs, and policies.

Environmental Justice Personnel

OWEB promotes ongoing learning on topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion for all staff and board members through the internal Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Awareness (IDEA) team and has prioritized a culture where everyone takes responsibility for environmental justice. OWEB also has two roles which focus on environmental justice: The Water and Climate Coordinator serves as the agency liaison to the Environmental Justice Council and as part of OWEB's tribal policy, OWEB has a Tribal Liaison who is responsible for ensuring that OWEB's programs and policy development adhere to our [Statement of State-Tribal Relations Policy](#). OWEB's 2024 Tribal Report is available [here](#).

Agency Budget and Revenue Sources

OWEB's total 2023-2025 biennial budget is \$259 million, of which \$235 million is funding for grants, with the remainder supporting agency operations. Most of OWEB's funding comes from the Oregon Lottery as directed by the Oregon Constitution, but OWEB administers some other funding sources as well. OWEB's staff includes 33 permanent positions and 16 limited duration positions, and we are advised by an 18-member board that includes public members, representatives from other state agencies, and a Tribal representative, among others. OWEB's 2025-2027 Agency Request Budget is available [here](#).

Major Agency Programs

Acquisitions

- Land
- Water

Open Solicitation

- Restoration
- Technical Assistance
- Monitoring
- Engagement

Operating Capacity

- Operating Capacity
- Organization Collaboration
- Partnership Technical Assistance

Emergency Response

- Post-Fire Recovery
- Drought Relief

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program

- Covenants & Easements
- Conservation Management Plans
- Technical Assistance
- Succession Planning

Other

- BLM Good Neighbor Authority
- Coastal Wetlands
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and CREP Technical Assistance
- Drinking Water Source Protection
- Environmental Restoration Council
- Focused Investment Partnerships
- Forest Collaborative Technical Assistance
- Natural and Working Lands
- Small Grants
- Tribal Project Development Grants



OWEB also supports Klamath Post-Dam Recovery efforts in the footprint of the former JC Boyle Dam. (credit Swiftwater Films)

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE HIGHLIGHTS



In accordance with Governor Kotek's expectations of state agencies, OWEB developed a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Environmental Justice Action Plan with the following five goals:

1. Foster a culture of inclusivity and belonging
2. Provide equitable access to all of OWEB's services
3. Engage with all Oregonians, actively build relationships, and promote the work of new and non-traditional partners
4. Leverage qualitative and quantitative data to identify needs and track progress
5. Ensure OWEB's communication is transparent, open, and accessible

These actions are reflected throughout the six priorities of [OWEB's 2024 Strategic Plan Refresh](#), and in particular, in priority #2, to leverage our position as an anchor funder to engage the diversity of Oregonians in watershed enhancement work. In addition to the goals outlined above, the Strategic Plan includes a strategic priority to learn, share, and support efforts to integrate Indigenous Knowledge in effectiveness monitoring.

Climate-Related Evaluation Criteria

In July 2023, the OWEB board adopted [climate-related evaluation criteria](#), which asks grant applicants to describe:

- How engagement with, and input from, local communities disproportionately impacted by climate change has informed or will inform the project;
- How changing climate conditions have been incorporated into the project and how the project will contribute to durable adaptation and resilience for ecosystems, including human communities; and
- How consideration of greenhouse gas emissions and/or long-term carbon sequestration or storage has informed the project. Applicant responses to these new criteria are considered by technical review teams during grant review and helps inform whether a project is recommended for funding.

A year into adopting these criteria, OWEB reviewed how they were incorporated by applicants. OWEB regional representatives thought applicants were well-prepared to address climate criteria in their applications, with the following success factors:

- Many applicants have been generally thinking about climate change for some time when prioritizing projects and building considerations into project design. The climate questions prompted them to describe this thought process in more detail.
- Having the non-evaluative climate questions in the application before they became evaluative was helpful and gave applicants the opportunity to practice answering the questions. This was also helpful for the review teams because they got a sense of the answers that applicants were likely to give around climate.
- Several applicants used the tools and training provided by OWEB to inform their responses to the questions. One applicant even uploaded the results from one of the tools used.



Natural and Working Lands Funds

In 2023, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 3409, establishing a Natural and Working Lands (NWL) fund. OWEB received \$2.25 million to provide financial incentives and technical support to help Tribes, landowners, land managers, and environmental justice communities implement natural climate solutions, ensuring that communities also benefit from the social, health, resilience, and economic co-benefits of these solutions. This legislative mandate provides OWEB with flexible funding that helps advance the agency's strategic priorities around deepening partnerships with Tribes and environmental justice communities.

Environmental Justice Example

Prior to rolling out the Natural and Working Lands funds, OWEB has conducted a 4-month engagement process with a survey, listening sessions, and individual conversations. Based on this feedback, OWEB is including additional climate-smart practices, such as cultural burns, cover crops, and rotational grazing as eligible for payments through the OAHP Conservation Management Plans.

(Right) Taylor Larson, OAHP Program Coordinator, presented about grant programs at the 2024 Connect + Conference.



Equity in Grant Funding

In 2023, OWEB worked with ECONorthwest to identify barriers that prevent equitable distribution of grant funding and develop recommendations that would help us adapt our processes and grant offerings to better serve a more diverse set of partners. Several recommendations are well underway, including simplifying grant applications, improving outreach to nontraditional partners, and increasing flexibility in grantmaking.



Engaging Non-Traditional Partners

For the past two years, OWEB leadership has prioritized efforts to reach out to and engage at least three new and non-traditional partners each quarter and has exceeded this goal every quarter. The purpose of these conversations is to introduce potential partners to OWEB, discuss overlapping areas of interest, and identify opportunities for collaboration. OWEB has also participated in events that provide networking opportunities with diverse communities. Examples of recent outreach include conversations with Elderberry Wisdom Farm, OSU Center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems, and the NW Environmental Justice Center.



Environmental Justice Example

OWEB participated in a legislative tour of the Adelante Mujeres incubator farm and office in Forest Grove, alongside several other organizations that support farming, conservation, and watershed health. OWEB staff gave a presentation introducing OWEB and the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program. The goal is that the nonprofit focused on serving Latina women will be able to apply for OWEB grants in the future to support their own incubator farm and other agricultural operations run by their members.

(Left) Taylor Larson and Stephanie Page from OWEB with Representative Susan McLain, and Alejandro Tecum, Director of the Adelante Agricultura program at Adelante Mujeres.



DEI and Environmental Justice Resolution

In July 2024, the OWEB board adopted a [DEI and Environmental Justice Resolution](#). This resolution acknowledges the dispossession of Tribal communities, the disproportionate impacts of climate change, and the historical marginalization of certain communities from environmental processes and decision making. This resolution makes explicit OWEB's commitment to integrating and prioritizing environmental justice throughout our work.

ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ISSUES (ORS 182.550 SECTION 1)

Environmental Justice Consideration Process

Does the agency have a defined process for incorporating environmental justice factors into agency operations and decision-making?

In July 2023, the OWEB Board adopted climate-related evaluation criteria (OAR 695-005-0045), which apply to grant programs including Restoration, Stakeholder Engagement, Monitoring, Technical Assistance, Outcome-Based Watershed Council Operating Capacity, Land Acquisition, Water Acquisition, and Focused Investment Partnerships. The first criteria, *how engagement with, and input from, local communities disproportionately impacted by climate change has informed or will inform the project* makes environmental justice consideration a key part of our competitive grant applications.

How does your agency keep track of environmental justice issues that have been identified?

OWEB has an internal IDEA team that meets monthly and includes representatives from all sections of the agency; OWEB's Tribal Liaison and a member of the agency's Executive Team are permanent members. This team is responsible for helping develop the agency's DEI Action Plan and tracking implementation progress, organizing efforts to build agency DEI capacity, and working with OWEB's Executive Team to operationalize DEI and environmental justice practices.

The OWEB board maintains committees that meet on a quarterly basis to discuss matters related to agency grantmaking and track implementation of policy direction, such as the board's DEI and EJ resolution adopted in 2024.



Environmental Justice Example

With support from OWEB, the City of Talent has planted 760 trees in response to the Alameda Fire, which burned 36.7% of the city, disproportionately affecting low-income residents. The loss of the tree canopy has increased ground temperatures, increased storm water runoff, and increased nutrient and sediment loads. This urban forest replanting and wildfire recovery project will help restore the urban forest and the vast ecological services it provided.

(Left) Community tree planting at Lynn Newbry Park in the City of Talent.

Environmental Justice Community Considerations

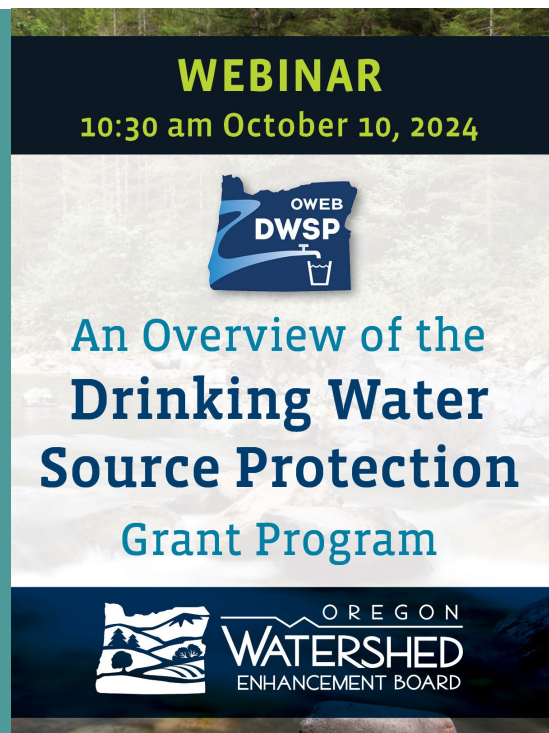
How does your agency define environmental justice communities?

OWEB uses the definition of environmental justice communities from the Environmental Justice Council and HB4077: communities of color, communities experiencing lower incomes, communities experiencing health inequities, tribal communities, rural communities, remote communities, coastal communities, communities with limited infrastructure and other communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes and adversely harmed by environmental and health hazards, including seniors, youth and persons with disabilities.

Environmental Justice Example

OWEB launched the new Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program which focuses on protecting drinking water source areas for small, rural, and under-resourced water suppliers. This program mitigates the effects of climate change on drinking water supplies while also creating watershed health co-benefits. OWEB staff provided extra support to ensure new applicants could apply successfully, and as a result, all applicants were new to OWEB grantmaking.

(Right) OWEB held a webinar in October 2024 to introduce the Drinking Water Source Protection grant program.



What tools does your agency use to identify and prioritize environmental justice communities?

In lieu of a statewide environmental justice mapping tool, [OWEB's guidance for addressing climate related evaluation criteria](#) encourages potential applicants to use the following resources for identifying and engaging with communities disproportionately impacted by climate change:

1. U.S. EPA: EJScreen Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (helps to identify where environmental justice communities are located)
2. State of Oregon: Climate Equity Blueprint (Section III. Lead meaningful community engagement is particularly helpful)
3. Queensland Government: Community Engagement Toolkit for Planning (six core principles)
4. Hubbard et al. 2020: Oregon Climate Adaptation Framework: Climate Equity [Level-Setting Workshop II] (Presented at State of Oregon Climate Adaptation Framework Planning: May 2020 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Level-Setting Workshops)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT (ORS 182.535 SECTION 2)

ORS 182.550 Section 2: Increase public participation of individuals and communities affected by agencies' decisions.

Meaningful Involvement: (ORS 182.535 Section 7)

"Meaningful involvement" means:

- (a) Members of vulnerable populations have appropriate opportunities to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment or health;
- (b) Public involvement can influence a decision maker's decision;
- (c) The concerns of all participants involved are considered in the decision-making process; and
- (d) Decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of members of vulnerable populations.

Public Engagement Policy and Processes

Does your agency have a public engagement process for promoting community participation in agency decision-making processes? Describe the current level and quality of public participation.

OWEB promotes community participation in agency decision-making in several ways, including:



(Above) Members of the public attend OWEB Board meetings and have opportunity to give comment to the board.

- OWEB invites members of the public to submit verbal or written comments for consideration during our board and committee meetings. We have also shifted to virtual or hybrid board and committee meetings, which allows the public to engage in agency decision-making even if they cannot attend an in-person meeting. OWEB regularly receives and considers public comment for board and committee meetings.
- OWEB often brings together local partners for panel discussions during board meetings. Local partner panels are intended to improve understanding of how OWEB funds are utilized by these partners for on-the-ground projects as well as how important OWEB funds are to sustaining local organizations. During panel discussions, local partners have an opportunity to share ideas about how OWEB processes and funding could be adjusted to better meet emerging challenges and opportunities.



(Above) Belinda Brown, Tribal Partnerships Director at Lomakatsi Restoration Project, spoke to the OWEB Board about their [Tribal Youth Ecological Forestry Training Program](#).

- OWEB regularly recruits representatives from environmental justice communities to participate in Rules Advisory Committees (RACs). For example, OWEB successfully recruited a representative from a small non-profit that works to ensure natural areas and healthy watersheds are integrated into urban areas and accessible to everyone. Members of the public are also invited to provide comments as part of the RAC meetings. These meetings are virtual and OWEB accepts verbal and written comments at each meeting.
- In some instances, prior to initiating rulemaking, OWEB has begun implementing a scoping/public engagement phase to better understand challenges and opportunities faced by our partners that could be affected by new rules. For example, prior to initiating rulemaking on including climate-related evaluation criteria in OWEB's grant programs, we embarked on a 3-month-long public engagement process that included virtual public meetings, a virtual tribal focus group, one-on-one conversations, survey, and interviews with non-traditional partners. Information learned from the public engagement process helped to focus the scope of draft rules and informed RAC discussions.
- This past year, OWEB has worked to shift the timing of grant application due dates and awards based on feedback from applicants and review team members.



Environmental Justice Example

OWEB provided a grant to [Lomakatsi Restoration Project](#) to implement a project at the Brave Buffalo Memorial Sundance Camp, an active inter-tribal Native American ceremonial area, in the Mt. Hood National Forest and at the heart of the East Cascades Oak Partnership priority geography in Wasco County. The project will promote oak survival and adaptation on 23 acres and will include ecological thinning of conifers encroaching on Oregon white oaks and culturally burning the materials generated from the thinning.

(Left) Thinning and cultural burning in Mt. Hood National Forest, December 2024 (credit: Lomakatsi Restoration Project).

Targeted Audiences

With which audiences does your agency engage?

OWEB regularly engages with soil and water conservation districts and irrigation districts, non-profit organizations such as watershed councils and land trusts, federally recognized Tribes, and state and federal agencies, among others. Many of OWEB's grants go to organizations that serve rural communities.

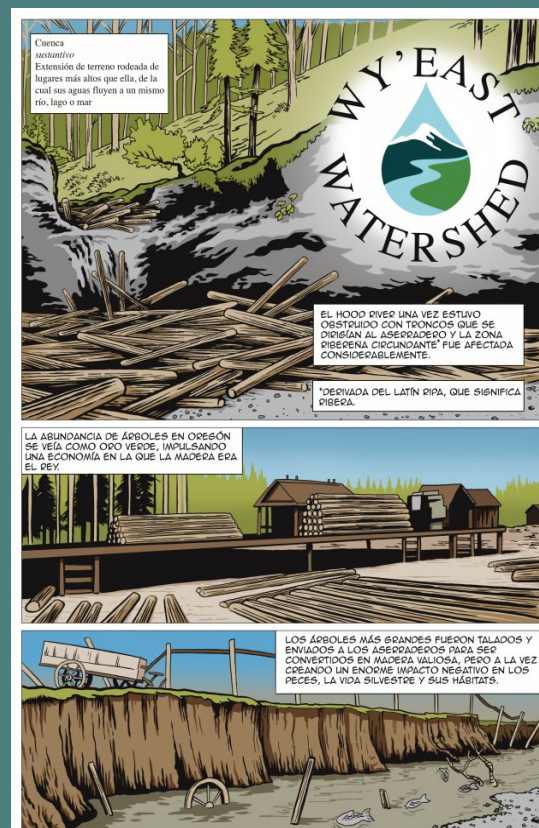
Has the agency performed an analysis to determine the groups impacted by agency decisions?

While the agency has not performed a specific analysis, the agency did work with a consultant to identify barriers that prevent equitable distribution of our grant funding and develop recommendations to address these barriers. As part of this project, the consultant conducted interviews with representatives of 19 community-based organizations to improve understanding of the challenges these organizations face when engaging with OWEB and navigating the grant application process. OWEB is now in the process of implementing several of the recommendations identified by this project, including simplifying the grant application form, simplifying project reporting, and providing training and engagement on new requirements in grant applications.

Environmental Justice Example

OWEB funds support the Hood River Watershed Group's (HRWG) inclusive community engagement to facilitate watershed restoration and residential water conservation. Engagement will include phone calls, site visits, and a community meeting in Odell to share restoration concepts with partners and landowners. Many Odell residents are historically underserved, and this work aims to generate restoration projects that are ecologically important, promote the well-being of local residents, and increase climate resilience. To increase residential water conservation, HRWG will work with water conservation professionals and partners to develop written materials and other media to promote residential water conservation in English and Spanish.

(Right) The Hood River Watershed Comic, available in English and Spanish, tells the story of the people, ecology, and conservation of the Hood River Watershed.



AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IMPACTS (ORS 182.550 SECTION 3)

ORS 182.550 Section 3: Determine the effect of agencies' decisions on environmental justice communities.

Does your agency measure the impacts of agency decisions on environmental justice in Oregon communities? Why or why not?

In the past five years, OWEB has undertaken two efforts to measure the impacts of agency decisions on environmental justice communities. First, in partnership with a Portland State University graduate student, OWEB completed an assessment of our grant programs to better understand how our practices impact federally recognized Tribes' ability to apply for and receive agency grants. The full report, [Granting Practices Impacts to Tribes: An Assessment of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board](#), was shared with the OWEB board in October 2021.

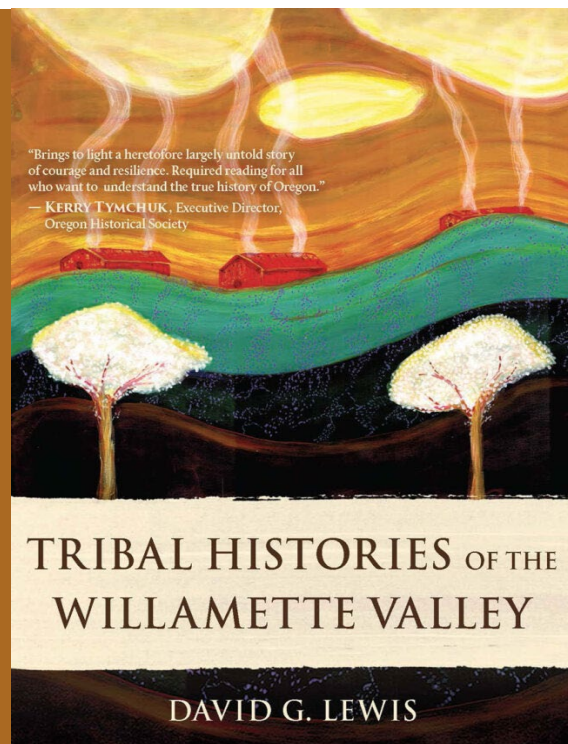
Second, in partnership with a consultant, OWEB undertook an effort to identify barriers that prevent equitable distribution of our grant funding and develop recommendations that would help us adapt our processes and grant offerings to better serve non-traditional partners. In the context of our grantmaking, "non-traditional partners" are organizations that OWEB has not historically interacted with or awarded grants to.

OWEB is currently planning to conduct an equity review of applications for the Natural and Working Lands funds after the grant cycle closes in April 2025. This review will look at whether the outreach and orientation efforts to bring in new partners had the intended effect.

Environmental Justice Example

OWEB's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Awareness (IDEA) team identifies opportunities to build internal and external capacity for DEI efforts, supporting continuous education for OWEB employees and board members. In 2024, the IDEA team led a book club on the Tribal Histories of the Willamette Valley by Dr. David G. Lewis. Staff met every three weeks to discuss the assigned chapters and had the opportunity to attend a speaker event by the author at Chemeketa Community College in October.

(Right) Book Cover of Tribal Histories of the Willamette Valley, by David G. Lewis.



AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRESS (ORS 182.550 SECTION 4)

ORS 182.550 Section 4: Improve plans to further improve environmental justice in Oregon.

How is EJ built into agency strategic plans?

OWEB's 2024 Strategic Plan refresh has environmental justice considerations included throughout. These include priority actions around expanding work with non-traditional partners, including Traditional Ecological Knowledge in effectiveness monitoring approaches, and deepening our work in urban watersheds.

What does your agency need to further develop and implement environmental justice policies at the agency?

1. OWEB would benefit from more collaboration and resource sharing with other state agencies and small agency boards and commissions on training opportunities.
2. OWEB recognizes the burden that environmental justice groups may experience in responding to agency requests to engage. Support for cross-agency collaboration among the natural resource agencies would help ensure that outreach and inclusion is more strategic and streamlined than an agency-by-agency approach.
3. OWEB would benefit from enterprise-level guidance about how to compensate environmental justice community members who participate in RACs, focus groups, and advisory councils. This would help OWEB and other agencies remove barriers to participation.



Environmental Justice Example

In 2024, OWEB supported the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs' implementation of a large-scale restoration project on tribally owned land in the upper Clackamas River watershed. The project addressed unauthorized camping and site modification at the hot springs, restored Clackamas River connectivity to two relic side channels, installed large wood to benefit fish habitat, and installed riparian plantings on seven acres. This project benefits salmon, steelhead, bull trout, and Pacific lamprey.

(Left) Still image from the [video documenting the Clackamas River Side Channel project](#).

Environmental Justice Example

Members of the Clackamas Partnership have worked with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde to plan for and secure funding to commission three traditional sculptures and interpretive signage to connect visitors with the cultural and ecological significance of the Clackamas River. This project combines restoration of traditional art historically found throughout the Clackamas Basin alongside restoration of its historic fish runs. Some of this artwork will be installed adjacent to OWEB-funded projects that include native plantings.

*(Right) Nakoa and Bobby Mercier with their artwork.
(credit Bobby Mercier, Big River Art)*



AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MAPPING TOOL INVOLVEMENT (ORS 182.550 SECTION 5)

ORS 182.550 Section 5: Utilize the environmental justice mapping tool developed under section 12 of this 2022 Act.

How is your agency participating in the development of the environmental justice mapping tool?

OWEB has responded to the requests for agency input on the environmental justice mapping tool and looks forward to utilizing the tool to advance environmental justice considerations in grantmaking decisions.

AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT 2025

How would your agency like to engage with the EJC in 2025?

In 2025, OWEB will be working closely with the Governor's Office and numerous partners to begin implementation of Senate Bill 1561 (2024) which established the Environmental Restoration Fund and created the Environmental Restoration Council (ERC). OWEB would like to update the EJC on the plans for standup and rollout of the ERC's work once the new ERC manager is on board in 2025.

OWEB plans to use the council's environmental justice mapping tool to support and enhance equity in grantmaking and will also update resource materials to encourage OWEB grantees and partners to use the tool. The tool will also help OWEB understand where funding gaps exist and how OWEB and other partner funding programs can be the most helpful.

AGENCY MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT RELATED LEGISLATION

Please share agency-impacted legislation that includes language regarding meaningful engagement. Example: HB 3293 (2021)

How do agencies collaborate when multiple agencies are listed?

HB 3293 (2021). OWEB is one of six agencies considered to be "a provider of water project support" referenced in the bill. The bill requires each provider of water project support to, in coordination with the other providers, adopt rules recognizing best practices for community engagement. The WRD is overseeing the coordination process and development of best practices, with the other five agencies providing feedback on draft documents.

HB 3409 (2023). This bill establishes a Natural and Working Lands (NWL) Fund to support natural climate solutions and invests \$10 million into the fund. OWEB is one of four natural resource agencies tasked with working with the Oregon Climate Action Commission to develop grant programs and projects related to natural climate solutions. The statute directs these agencies to provide incentives to help landowners, Tribes, land managers, and environmental justice communities adopt practices that support natural climate solutions and provide financial assistance for technical support for these groups for the adoption of natural climate solutions.

SB 1561 (2024). In the 2024 legislation, OWEB was selected as the administrator to fulfill the state's responsibilities under the State of Oregon vs. Monsanto settlement over PCBs. The legislation established an Environmental Restoration Council to be staffed by OWEB to administer the settlement funds. OWEB will administer the state's responsibilities to work with the council to adopt rules, identify funding priorities, and transfer funds as described in the legislation to state agencies, Tribes, and a disproportionately impacted community grant fund.

DEFINITIONS

Environmental Justice: (ORS 182.535 Section 3)

“Environmental justice” means the equal protection from environmental and health risks, fair treatment and meaningful involvement in decision making of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, immigration status, income or other identities with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies that affect the environment in which people live, work, learn and practice spirituality and culture.

Environmental Justice Community: (ORS 182.535 Section 4)

“Environmental justice community” includes communities of color, communities experiencing lower incomes, communities experiencing health inequities, tribal communities, rural communities, remote communities, coastal communities, communities with limited infrastructure and other communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes and adversely harmed by environmental and health hazards, including seniors, youth and persons with disabilities.

Meaningful Involvement: (ORS 182.535 Section 7)

“Meaningful involvement” means:

- (a) Members of vulnerable populations have appropriate opportunities to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment or health;
- (b) Public involvement can influence a decision maker’s decision;
- (c) The concerns of all participants involved are considered in the decision-making process; and
- (d) Decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of members of vulnerable populations

Environmental Burdens: (ORS 182.535 Section 2)

“Environmental burden” means the environmental and health risks to communities caused by the combined historic, current and projected future effects of:

- (a) Exposure to conventional pollution and toxic hazards in the air or in or on water or land;
- (b) Adverse environmental conditions caused or made worse by other contamination or pollution; and
- (c) Changes in the environment resulting from climate change, such as water insecurity, drought, flooding, wildfire, smoke and other air pollution, extreme heat, loss of traditional cultural resources or foods, ocean acidification, sea-level rise and increases in infectious disease.

APPENDIX

Senate Bill 420 (2007)

Legislation established the Environmental Justice Task Force, the predecessor for the Environmental Justice Council. It also includes requirements for the Task Force to submit biannual reports to the Governor and the requirement for natural resource agencies to submit an annual report to the Environmental Justice Task Force.

House Bill 4077 (2022)

Legislation established the Environmental Justice Council, the Council's responsibility to develop an environmental justice mapping tool, develop a biannual report to the Governor, and the requirement for natural resource agencies to submit an annual report to the Environmental Justice Council.

ORS 182.550 Reports by Natural Resource Agencies

All directors of natural resource agencies, and other agency directors as the Governor may designate, shall report annually to the Environmental Justice Task Force and to the Governor on the results of the agencies' efforts to:

1. Address environmental justice issues;
2. Increase public participation of individuals and communities affected by agencies' decisions;
3. Determine the effect of the agencies' decisions on environmental justice communities;
4. Improve plans to further the progress of environmental justice in Oregon; and
5. Utilize the environmental justice mapping tool developed under section 12 of this 2022 Act.

House Bill 3409 (2023)

Legislation established a \$10 million fund (with OWEB distributing \$2.25 million) to provide financial incentives and technical support to help Tribes, landowners, land managers, and environmental justice communities adopt practices that support natural climate solutions.

Senate Bill 1561 (2024)

Legislation established an Environmental Restoration Council to be staffed by OWEB to fulfill the state's responsibilities to administer the settlement funds from State of Oregon vs. Monsanto.