



# RS EXCHANGE

## REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

### Regional Solutions Team News

**Wildfire Recovery Summit:** In late October, Regional Solutions Coordinators Jessica LaBerge, Beth Wytoski and Courtney Flathers attended the Oregon Summit on Wildfire Recovery, representing regions affected by the catastrophic 2020 wildfires. The summit was well attended by state and local government, non-profit organizations and CBOs who all have a role and commitment to supporting these communities as they continue to do the work to recover. While largely focused on 2020 fires and recovery efforts, this gathering also provided an excellent opportunity to connect and share lessons learned that will be critical to our future response and recovery efforts.

### Regional Updates

#### South Valley/Mid-Coast – Courtney Flathers

- **Mapleton Water District:** Several members of the Regional Solutions team along with Lane County staff visited Mapleton Water District to learn more about the district's hard work to upgrade their drinking water infrastructure and provide a safe, reliable water source for their community. We learned about upgrades to the water treatment system that are in process as well as efforts to secure emergency funding to stabilize the district's water intake. Team members discussed ways to continue to support the district as they complete a water master plan, implement a Congressionally Directed Spending award, look for ways to future mitigate risks to their water intake, and start to identify resources that will be needed to replace the district's water distribution system in the future. Regional Solutions staff are also helping to connect the district to technical assistance resources to support the district as they continue to pursue funding opportunities to accomplish their goals.

## North Coast – Nate Stice

- **City of Tillamook Outreach Meeting:** The Regional Solutions Team met with the City of Tillamook to discuss critical infrastructure concerns, including wastewater and water needs that have all but stopped residential development in the community. The team invited along Ryan Gross, Regional Coordinator for Infrastructure Technical Assistance and the Willamette Partnership to help think about technical assistance resources the city might access in finding infrastructure solutions. The city's wastewater system faces significant inflow and infiltration from failing laterals to individual properties and on their overall systems. The city is working with property owner to address the laterals which about for about 50 percent of the I & I. The team discussed approaches to help property owners meet the costs of replacing laterals and is pursuing option for the city to meeting the significant costs of upgrading the rest of its systems. The team additionally discussed replacement of critical pieces of the city's water system, which serves as a regional hub for several smaller systems, and a failing seawall.

The team is scheduling regular follow up meetings with the city and partners keep attention on these critical needs.

## North Central – Nate Stice

- Members of the North Central Team attended the Wasco Economic Development Commission's Community Enhancement Project Meeting with the unincorporated and very small communities in the County. The EDC is currently working through its priority project list, which will feed into the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District's Regional Priority Project list. During the meeting, representative from unincorporated communities, such as Tygh Valley and Wamic, and representatives of small-incorporated communities like Shaniko and Antelope, shared projects focused on critical infrastructure, business development, community centers, broadband, and other areas. The team is engaged in many of the projects, and we appreciate the EDC providing an opportunity to learn about others.

## South Coast Region – Jessica LaBerge

- **Funding for Veteran housing** – Not a Regional Solutions project, but something exciting to share with the community of the South Coast. This week the Oregon Housing Stability Council approved \$56.7 million in Small Projects and Veterans funding to 11 affordable housing developments across the state. Brookings CORE Response, a non-profit that serves veterans experiencing homelessness, was awarded \$3.2 million in funding for the creation of the Veterans Housing Project which will provide 18 much needed homes in Gold Beach. [Link to the full report.](#)
- **Federal funding to improve coastal ports in Oregon** – Also not a Regional Solutions project, but worth celebrating. This week Oregon's U.S. Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden, along with U.S. Representatives Suzanne Bonamici and Val Hoyle announced a total of \$36,489,508 in federal investments heading to the ports of Astoria, Coquille Indian Tribes' Ko'Kwel Wharf and Newport. [Link to the article here.](#)

## Mid-Valley Region – Beth Wytoski

- **Infrastructure Advances:** The region is busy in infrastructure work. The last couple of weeks have included visits to more than a dozen communities where I met staff, toured facilities, and helped identify resources. Many of our cities are working to expand their capacity in terms of drinking water, wastewater, and transportation to allow for needed housing and economic growth. Common themes are technical capacity, accessibility of resources, and tax base constraints. Opportunities to share about loans with principal forgiveness and other competitive grants have been well received in some cases where financing is the only barrier to a given project.
- **Yamhill County:** In Yamhill County, Amity is working on pedestrian safety as well as water treatment and delivery lines. Carlton is working on significant upgrades to their wastewater processing and looking at opportunities to replace service lines as well. Dayton is currently installing a replacement pedestrian bridge to secure the water and sewer lines running under the existing structure. Lafayette is filling their new UGB area with housing while working on long-term water plans. McMinnville is also working hard on housing and economic development in targeted areas. Willamina is working on significant wastewater upgrades as well as improvements to their ponds and pathways. Yamhill is working to secure long-term water delivery and empower local economic development. The Confederated Tribe of Grand Ronde is continuing to develop housing and human service infrastructure (and will celebrate 40 years post-restoration this month). The county is looking closely at childcare and is continuing to work on transportation growth management like the bypass.
- **Marion County:** In Marion County, Aumsville is working hard to improve their wastewater system. Detroit is working with Gates, Idanha, Mill City and Marion County in the North Santiam Sewer Authority to plan for immediate and long-term solutions that rate payers can afford. Salem, like many others, is seeing supply chain challenges cause delays but is working on permanent supportive housing and plans for resiliency including components like redundant water supplies. Silverton just welcomed a new City Manager who is hitting the ground running and looking into investments in recreation. Sublimity is working hard on housing and improving affordability for residents. Woodburn is working toward a needed community center and zoning changes to improve the balance of industrial and commercial lands with residential areas.
- **Polk County:** Polk County is doing amazing work leveraging relationships, local resources, philanthropy, and grant dollars to serve vulnerable people through several different models. They're also engaged in discussions about interchange upgrades and other transportation needs to accommodate population growth and ensuring safety for residents as well as commuters in the region. Dallas is looking at creative approaches to growing their water storage and working with private property owners to develop housing in the most appropriate areas. Falls City is in the middle of wastewater upgrades, replacing equipment in the lagoons and delivery lines while looking to the future to plan for potential growth and economic development. Independence, the 4<sup>th</sup> fastest growing city in Oregon, is working on sewer capacity and compliance as well

as transportation growth management due to the growth. Monmouth is focused on Mainstreet revitalization and highway pedestrian crossings.

### **Metro Region – Amelia Porterfield**

- **City of Molalla Outreach Meeting:** The Metro Regional Solutions Team, joined by staff from the Water Resources Department and State Parks, spent Monday morning at the City of Molalla. Having recently tipped beyond a population of 10,000 residents, Molalla has been undertaking quite a few efforts to adapt to its rapid growth while maintaining community character, including working with DLCD on exploring potential UGB expansion. During this visit, we focused on the City’s plans to modernize their wastewater treatment plant, enhance opportunities to develop industrial land, improve roadways and regional recreation facilities. The team was able to provide ideas for funding sources to pursue, offer to convene agency partners to problem-solve, and will follow up with connections to other resources that may benefit these projects.



### **Resources and Opportunities**

- **Funding for Restoration of Water Quality and Fish Habitat:** [The Drinking Water Providers Partnership \(DWPP\)](#) is inviting project proposals for 2024 requesting up to \$150,000. The partnership includes USDA Forest Service, Geos Institute, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Washington Department of Health, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, WildEarth Guardians, and The Freshwater Trust. Together, the partners present this watershed restoration funding opportunity for water providers and watershed restoration practitioners in Oregon and Washington. The goals of the DWPP are to:
  - Restore and protect the health of watersheds and water quality which communities depend upon for drinking water
  - Improve aquatic and riparian ecosystems, including the native fish that inhabit them
  - Support local partnerships of drinking water providers, landowners and restoration experts that successfully implement restoration projects
  - **Proposals are due by 5pm PT January 5, 2024.** Download the RFP and application below.

[2024 Request for Proposals](#)  
[Application for funding](#)

- **Water Project Grants & Loans and Irrigation Modernization Funding:** The Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) seeks applications for Water Project Grants and Loans (WPGL) projects and Irrigation Modernization projects.

The [Water Project Grants and Loans](#) program provides grants for projects to evaluate, plan, and develop instream and out-of-stream water supply projects. This funding opportunity will invest in projects that meet water supply needs and result in public [economic, environmental, and social/cultural public benefits](#). Projects require a 25% cost match.

- **Eligible Projects:** Water conservation, reuse, above-ground storage, below-ground storage, streamflow protection or restoration, water distribution, conveyance or delivery systems, and other water resource development projects that result in economic, environmental, and social/cultural public benefits.
- **Anticipated Funding Available:** \$5 million
- **How to Apply:** Application materials are available [here](#).
- **Application Deadline: 5 p.m. on Wednesday, January 17, 2024**

**Informational Webinars:** OWRD will offer two optional information sessions to review the grant process and timeline for both WPGL and Irrigation Modernization Funding. The information sessions will also include a question-and-answer period.

- Grant Information Session 1: Monday, December 4, 2023, 2-3:30 p.m.
  - [Registration Link:](#)
- Grant Information Session 2: Thursday, December 7, 2023, 9-10:30 a.m.
  - [Registration Link:](#)

**Pre-Application Conference:** OWRD encourages all applicants to request a Pre-Application Conference before applying. Staff will review your draft application and provide feedback. You must submit your draft application two weeks before the pre-application conference. Pre-application conferences will not be scheduled the week of the application due date. To learn more, see the [pre-application conference form](#).