



# RS EXCHANGE

## REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Monday, May 1, 2023

### Greater Eastern and Northeast Regions

- **Verde Light Community Solar Project:** RS has been working for the past few weeks with a community solar project in Ontario. This project was facing some challenges getting the final permits from the state of Oregon and Regional Solutions was able to bring all the parties together to find a path forward. Big thanks to both DEQ and DSL in helping to figure out a path forward so that this project can move forward with construction.
- **Union County Veterans Village Housing Project:** Regional Solutions toured the Veterans Village housing project in La Grande that has been completed by a local developer. This developer has used state OHCS funding to complete the project in La Grande and has similar projects underway in both Baker City and Ontario. These developments are helping houseless veterans in Eastern Oregon. Additionally, the developer is working with local partners to potentially provide housing for teachers across Eastern Oregon.
- **Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area:** Regional Solutions continues to work with state agencies to address public health and environmental issues in the Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area. The Governor has assigned a project manager from OHA that is assigned to the Governor's office and is working with an interagency team. That team is focused on ensuring that all domestic well owners in the LUBGWMA are aware that the state has free testing available and depending on the results of testing, free drinking water delivery and in-home treatment options.
- **Eastern Oregon Border Board:** The Governor has appointed three new members to the Eastern Oregon Border Board. Taylor Rembowski, Nicki Shira, and Montessa Young have all been appointed to the board and Dana Young has been appointed as the board chair. We are excited about the future of the Border Board and would like to thank both Tiffany Cruickshank and Stuart Reitz for their service on the board since its inception and Roberto Gamboa for his service over the past few years.
- **John Day Main Street Fire:** In recent weeks a building in downtown John Day caught fire and destroyed three businesses in the community. Four additional businesses sustained smoke damage and fire fighting assistance from Central Oregon had to be called in to help contain the fire. Grant County economic development reached out to Regional Solutions to see if there are state resources that are available to help these businesses recover. We are working with Business Oregon and Department of Business and Consumer Services (DCBS) to see if we can be creative in helping these small businesses.

## Mid-Valley Region

- The mid-valley Regional Solutions Team met with the City of Aumsville on April 19<sup>th</sup> to hear updates on the City's current projects. The City's biggest challenge is a forthcoming \$28 million wastewater treatment plant improvement; members of the RST conducted a One Stop Financing Roundtable to help the City model potential funding scenarios and explore application timelines and processes.



## Resources

- **EPA Offers Technical Assistance to Help Communities Address Wastewater Challenges**

Many rural, small, and Tribal systems face unique financial and operational challenges, including aging infrastructure, workforce shortages, increasing costs, and declining rate bases. The EPA recently announced \$41 million in new technical assistance funding under America's Water Infrastructure Act to help communities address urgent wastewater challenges. The new funding, awarded to nine technical assistance providers across the country, will primarily help rural, small, and Tribal communities assess water needs, identify solutions, and access funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and other federal programs. EPA's grant funding will be used to assess communities most pressing challenges, provide training on water infrastructure and management best practices, help communities navigate the federal funding application process, and strategically invest in reliable infrastructure solutions. Communities can request assistance by visiting the agency's [Water Technical Assistance webpage](#).