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I wish to provide (select one):	both written and verbal comment
If you are providing VERBAL comment, how do you plan to attend the meeting (select one):	virtually
I want to provide comment at (select one):	OWEB Board Water and Climate committee
Agenda Topic / Item Letter	engagement process and timeline Natural Climate Solutions Funds
Type Comment Here (comments may also be uploaded below):	<p>My name is Megan Kemple, Executive Director, Oregon Climate & Agriculture Network. We advocated for the \$10M NCS Fund and are engaging with OWEB on their use of the Funds for Conservation Management Planning, Technical Assistance, and Payment for Practices via OAHP. Farmers and ranchers in OrCAN's network are ready to implement practices that sequester carbon and mitigate climate change but they need support including financial incentives and TA, and these programs are designed to do just that. OrCAN and our partners are ready to help roll this Program out as quickly and effectively as possible. We're thrilled that Alexa, OWEB's new Climate and Water Coordinator, is on board and has begun the community engagement needed to get this funding and technical assistance to Oregon's farms and ranches in a way that's equitable and effective for farmers and ranchers in Oregon. We'll engage in those discussions and we'll engage our network of farmers/ranchers and farm service providers in the process as well. We're ready to distribute OWEB's survey about the NWL funds to our extensive network of farmers and farm service providers, this week. The NWL funds were a one time allocation and OrCAN's highest policy priority for the 2025 legislative session is renewal of these funds. Tomorrow we're co-hosting a ranch tour for legislators to demonstrate the climate benefits of OAHP funds. Continuity of this funding is critical! When funding is available one year and not the next, interest in the programs decreases, and it becomes difficult for land managers and community organizations to anticipate what will be available and take best advantage of it. In order to effectively advocate for renewal of the funds we need to demonstrate success & demand. Our understanding is that the NCS Fund application period may not be open until January-April, which is late in the legislative session to demonstrate demand to decision makers. I understand from talking with Alexa that it</p>

	<p>may not be feasible now that the survey has been released, but ask OWEB staff to re-consider inclusion of a question in the survey that can help to demonstrate demand such as: 1) are you interested in applying for these funds? This would be kind of a pre application survey, (included in the current survey) which would go a long way to demonstrate demand. We're also concerned about the engagement timeline which would likely put distribution of funds in June-- in the last days of the biennium. This will make it difficult to demonstrate success and we want to see this funding distributed ASAP. We ask OWEB to consider a shorter open application period to put obligation of funds earlier in 2025. We appreciate all that staff are doing to distribute these funds equitably and effectively and we look forward to collaborating to engage our community in the process and use of the funds. We want to help distribute this funding as quickly, equitably, and effectively as possible. Thank you for considering these requests for changes to the timeline and process.</p>
<p>Request physical, language, or other accommodations</p>	<p>I provided this verbal comment at the OWEB Board Water and Climate committee on Sept 11th, and was encouraged to provide them in writing as well.</p>

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