

The background features a large, faint, circular seal of the State of Oregon. The seal contains the text "STATE OF OREGON" at the top and "1859" at the bottom. In the center is a shield with a plow, a sheaf of wheat, and a sailing ship, with the word "SOLUTIONS" written across the bottom of the shield.

RS EXCHANGE REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Monday, October 26th, 2026

Regional Solutions Program Updates

Regional Infrastructure Fund

Thanks to each of the Regional Solutions Advisory Committee (RSAC) members who participated in the local review and prioritization of Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) applications, and to everyone who tuned in to the RSAC meetings to share their comments. We appreciate the thoughtful discussions and consideration of so many worthy projects and know these were hard decisions considering the limited funding available. A statewide committee will next review the regional prioritizations and make a final proposed funding list, including alternates. We expect all applicants will be notified of funding decisions within the next couple weeks. For more information on the program, visit the [RIF page on Business Oregon's website](#).

RS Attends Oregon Resilience Summit

Last week's [Oregon Resilience Summit](#) brought together thought leaders from across the state for three days of discussion on local, regional, and statewide resilience efforts. Held in Central Oregon, the Summit was a truly community-led event, its content shaped and informed by dozens of community-based organizations, survivors, philanthropic partners, and other contributors. By connecting communities to one another, the Summit created space to tackle tough conversations, celebrate progress, identify gaps, and envision what comes next for resilience planning and implementation.

Attendees explored a wide range of topics, including food-resilient systems, livestock and animal emergency preparedness, the role of organizations in disaster response, capacity-building strategies, tribal land management, and improving technical assistance for rural communities. For those who couldn't attend or want to revisit the materials, resources from the event are available on the [Summit's website](#).

Regional Updates

Central – Scott Aycock

Silver Rail School Tragedy: As part of my role serving as a conduit between local communities and the Governor, I've been proud to support Bend - the community where I have lived for 26 years and where I raised my kids - during this horrible tragedy. The strength of the Bend community is showing – many dozens of businesses and organizations are stepping up for the victims and the community as a whole. I was there to support the Governor when she came to town the day of the tragedy and again last Wednesday, helping to make connections with local community leaders and businesses, and generally supporting Governor Kotek during her visits.



We know that this is just the beginning – there will continue to be grief and pain and a need for a variety of resources to support the victims and community going forward. We will continue to walk with the Bend community as an ally and partner.

For Oregonians looking for ways to help students, families, and educators, there are several ways to offer support:

- **Silver Rail Elementary PTO:** The school's Parent Teacher Organization is sharing ways to donate and directly support Silver Rail families and teachers affected by the tragedy.
- **OCF Rapid Response Fund:** The Oregon Community Foundation's team in Bend is working with local partners to identify urgent needs and direct support where it can have the greatest impact.
- **Megan Lambert Memorial Fund:** Established by the Lambert family to honor their daughter, who died in the shooting. Donations will support causes that reflect Megan's values, including education, mental health,

services for children with special needs, Oregon schools, and youth volleyball in Central Oregon.

For those navigating grief, trauma, or emotional distress, support is available for individuals and families:

- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: Call or text 988 for free, confidential support 24/7. Spanish-language support is available.
- Deschutes County Crisis Line: Call 541-322-7500, ext. 9 for immediate local support.
- YouthLine: Call 877-968-8491 or text TEEN2TEEN to 839863 for support.
- Dial 211 or visit 211info.org to find community services and support.

For families with questions about school safety and student support, Bend-La Pine Schools has published [School Safety FAQs](#) addressing the district's response, available student supports, and school safety measures.

In addition to this hard news, there are of course many good things still happening across the Central Region...

Habitat for Humanity Stone Creek Commons Groundbreaking: A few weeks ago I joined Bend Mayor Melanie Kebler, Rep. Jason Kropf, Bend-La Pine School District Superintendent Steve Cook, and Bend-Redmond Habitat for Humanity Director Carly Colgan to provide remarks at the Stone Creek Commons groundbreaking ceremony. The Bend-La Pine School District made surplus district land available for the development, and Bend-Redmond Habitat for Humanity will be building 18 mixed-income homes with a



preference for teachers and school district employees. This project is what happens when public and nonprofit partnership works. It also happens to touch on two things the governor cares deeply about: housing and education. We are delighted to see so much unique and diverse housing production happening in Bend.

Sisters Regional Solutions Community Meeting: Regional Solutions occasionally organizes in-depth Regional Solutions Community Meetings across Oregon – the Central RST’s latest such meeting was in Sisters. These meetings are a great opportunity for local communities to highlight their key community priorities and projects, to do some real-time problem-solving and resource identification, and to build partnerships with state agencies. Regional Solutions Team (RST) members participate in the meetings with a variety of community leaders and partners. Every RST includes representatives from five agencies – ODOT, DEQ, DLCD, Business OR, and OHCS – and other agencies that are appropriate to the region. At the Sisters meeting, community leaders highlighted a variety of needs, issues, and accomplishments: a pending Urban Growth Boundary expansion and related infrastructure planning and wildfire risk reduction; transportation infrastructure and how the community plans to manage growth and safety in a community with a Cascade Ave. serving as both a downtown corridor and a state highway; water and wastewater infrastructure (including the city’s innovative wastewater wetlands/agriculture site); affordable housing and the capacity challenges facing small communities; and community-appropriate economic development. The turnout was enormous, with representatives from RST agencies, OR Water Resources, OR Dept. of State Lands, Mayor Letz and a rotating cast of city councilors, Sisters staff, Economic Development for Central Oregon, the Central OR Intergovernmental Council, and USDA Rural Development. After the morning meeting, most of the group headed out on tours of the former USFS land that is under development for housing, commercial, and open spaces uses and then had an interesting visit to The Roundhouse Foundation’s Pine Meadow Ranch location.



South Central – Scott Aycock

Lakeview Brownfield Program:

Lake County continues to see positive momentum from a Brownfields assessment grant administered by SCOEDD. Brownfield assessment grants provide funding to inventory, assess, and plan for the cleanup and reuse of real property that requires environmental cleanup before it can be redeveloped. The program in Lakeview enjoys strong partnerships



between SCOEDD, Lake County, the Town of Lakeview, Oregon DEQ, EPA, Lakeview Community Partnership, and community members. The program advanced environmental assessment and redevelopment planning for key properties, including the former Don's Market site. While demolition and underground tank abatement could not be completed within the Brownfields project timeline, the Town of Lakeview has stepped forward to lead the remaining work and has secured additional resources to continue moving the project toward redevelopment. Environmental assessment activities completed through the Brownfields Program helped position the property for these next steps. Additional efforts included an update of the Lakeview Downtown Road Map and a broadband infrastructure assessment under development by Lake County Resources Initiative to help identify future connectivity investments and economic development opportunities throughout the county.

Lakeview and Roundhouse Foundation Partner on Water Treatment Project:

The Town of Lakeview received \$15 million in ARPA funding in 2021 to complete a new water treatment facility for the community. When bids came in higher than anticipated, the Town had to utilize most of their contingency budget for the contract. The Town did a great job value engineering and worked closely with the contractor to keep change orders to a minimum (less than 1% of the overall budget)! As the project neared completion, the Town found itself \$100,000 short on some critical remaining items, including chemical testing equipment, additional engineering costs, and



security fencing. I helped make a connection with the Roundhouse Foundation and it turned out that the Foundation had some one-time funding available in an appropriate funding program. The Town was notified of their \$100K award on October 15 and we want to celebrate the Town of Lakeview for delivering this project for the community, and the Roundhouse Foundation for their partnership!

South Coast – Jessica LaBerge

Gold Beach Conversations Highlights: Last week, RS spent time on the South Coast meeting with partners and collaborators. The visit included a productive conversation with the Curry Campus leadership team at [Southwestern Oregon Community College \(SWOCC\)](#), focused on strengthening workforce development opportunities in the region. Oregon's Wild Rivers Coast Administrator also joined the discussion to explore economic development strategies and how higher education and workforce alignment can further support the South Coast community. It was an energizing and fruitful conversation, and we look forward to continuing this collaboration in the near future.

RS also met with the [City of Gold Beach](#), including the newly appointed City Administrator. Like many communities across the state, Gold Beach operates with a small but highly effective staff that works collaboratively to move projects forward. They are currently advancing several meaningful initiatives with strong local commitment. One example highlighted during the visit was a community-driven project at Buffington Park, located at 94255 Caughell Street. The park is home to the iconic "Kid Castle," the Georgia Fromm Baseball Field, tennis courts, a basketball court, and playground equipment for young children. During the grand opening, nearly 200 children and their families gathered to celebrate, showcasing the community's deep engagement and enthusiasm for shared public spaces. Kudos to Gold Beach for bringing this vibrant project to life!

International Port of Coos Bay Secures Major Federal Grant for Pacific Coast Intermodal Port Project: [The Oregon International Port of Coos Bay](#)

has been awarded \$204.8 million through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grant Program to advance construction of rail infrastructure supporting the Pacific Coast Intermodal Port (PCIP). This significant investment will fund major improvements to the Coos Bay Rail Line, a critical connection between the planned international container terminal on Oregon's South Coast and the national freight rail network. Once completed, the upgraded rail system will enhance freight mobility, increase capacity, and support the development of a new West Coast container gateway.

Among the largest awards nationwide in this year's CRISI grant cycle, the \$204.8 million grant represents the largest public funding commitment to date for the PCIP and marks the project's first major federal construction award. This level of federal support underscores the strategic importance of expanding U.S. port and freight infrastructure and positions Coos Bay as an emerging hub for international trade.

The Port and its partners will use the funding to continue advancing the PCIP toward construction, helping strengthen regional economic development and diversify the nation's maritime and rail shipping capacity. For more information on the Port click [here](#).

Southern – Jessica LaBerge

Applications for Jackson Soil and Water Conservation Districts: It's that time of year again! Do you have a project idea that helps people learn about and care for Jackson County's natural resources? The Community Conservation and Education (CCE) Grant opened October 19th! Grants of up to \$10,000 support projects with a strong educational component that provides a public benefit in Jackson County. No matching funds are required, and funded projects have two years from the award date to be completed. Now is a great time to sketch out who your project will serve, what participants will learn, and which partners might help bring it to life. Nonprofits, government organizations, Tribes, and educational institutions are eligible to apply. **The application period closes on November 20, 2026.** Learn more about the grant and application process [here](#).

Shady Cove's New Leadership: A small team from Regional Solutions recently met with the new City Administrator from [Shady Cove](#) and was excited to hear how the first 90 days on the job have been. We talked about drinking water infrastructure and many aspects of operating, funding upgrades, public-private partnerships and the future opportunities for Shady Cove to grow and add housing. We spoke about tourism and the Rogue River, economic development and making connections to other RS Team or agency partners. It was a very positive meeting, and we welcome the new City Administrator Randy Petersen to Southern Oregon.

South Valley/Mid-Coast – Courtney Flathers

Fire in Newport: The Governor's Office and multiple state agencies including the State Fire Marshall, Business Oregon, the Department of Environmental Quality, and the Employment Department have been closely tracking and supporting response to the devastating fire at Pacific Seafood that occurred on Sunday, October 25th. Pacific Seafood is a cornerstone of Oregon's rural economy, and Oregon's fishing families rely on their processing operations to put food on the table. Just as the state has assisted with necessary resources for fire response, we will also stay with this company long term as the work transitions to clean up and economic recovery.

Support for Business in Linn County: Business Oregon RDO Heather Stevens and I recently had the opportunity to tour Custom Needlecraft Finishing, a small manufacturing business in Albany. Business Oregon provided Custom Needlecraft with a grant through the Small Business Sustainability Fund to purchase equipment to expand their operation. Business Oregon also connected the business with the Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership (OMEP), who was able to partner with them to help improve workflow and realize new efficiencies within their business. Many thanks to Custom Needlecraft for opening your doors to show us the improvements that have resulted from these investments and best of luck as you continue to grow!

New City Hall in Scio: Congratulations to the City of Scio who celebrated the completion of a new city hall building with a ribbon cutting on September 30th! Scio received a federal grant of approximately \$1 million to replace its old

town hall building with a new facility, which houses city hall, the city library, and a senior center. The project was funded through USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities Program.

Philomath Partners with Sustainable City Year: The City of Philomath kicked off a two-year partnership with the University of Oregon's Sustainable City Year Program (SCYP) on October 2nd. SCYP is an innovative university-community partnership program through which university faculty and classes



are paired with Oregon communities over an academic year to address challenging community issues. In Philomath, key focus areas faculty and students will be addressing include middle housing, public relations, downtown placemaking and business development, among others. Learn more about SCYP [here](#).

Millersburg Transition Parkway & Conser Linear Park: On October 8th, the City of Millersburg celebrated the completion of the Transition Parkway and Conser Linear Park project with a ribbon cutting event. Transition Parkway and the park were constructed to provide critical access to the Timberlab and Ball Manufacturing projects in the city and to provide a buffer separating a large residential area from nearby industrial properties. Millersburg received significant state support for this project, including \$2 million in grant funding from ODOT's Immediate Opportunity Fund and \$2.5 million.



Lane County Wastewater Regionalization: Regional Solutions has provided coordination support to multiple partners working toward regionalization of wastewater service in the Eugene/Springfield metro area to include Junction City, Creswell, and the unincorporated area of Goshen. Junction City and Creswell are under building moratoriums due to limitations of their current wastewater treatment systems and Goshen is currently not served by sewer. Lane County recently created a dedicated project manager

position, co-funded by the County, Junction City, and Creswell, to carry this work forward. More background on this regionalization effort and updates are now available on Lane County's [website](#).

Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians Broadband Expansion: The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians (CTSI) were awarded \$11.7 million in grant funding through USDA Rural Development's ReConnect Loan and Grant Program to expand high-speed internet access in rural Lincoln County. CTSI will use these funds to deploy a fiber high-speed internet network to connect households south of the City of Siletz, the Town of Fruitvale west of Toledo, and homes along Yaquina Bay Road and Hidden Valley Road. The ReConnect Program provides grants and loans for construction, improvement, or acquisition of facilities and equipment needed to provide broadband service in eligible rural areas. Congratulations to CTSI on earning this award and for your steadfast commitment to expanding broadband access for your community!



30 Years of OMEP: Last week in Springfield, manufacturers, economic development partners, and regional leaders came together to help celebrate the Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership's (OMEP) 30-year anniversary. Business Oregon Regional Development Officer Heather Stevens participated on a panel that discussed the current state of manufacturing in the region and outlooks for the future. OMEP works alongside manufacturing businesses to improve operations, strengthen teams, and achieve sustainable growth. Learn more about OMEP and request a no-cost assessment on their [website](#).

North Coast – Nate Stice

LCDC Industrial Land Readiness Listening Session – Astoria: Regional Solutions participated in an October 23 Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) listening session in Astoria focused on industrial land

readiness. Local participants included the Port of Astoria, cities of Astoria and Warrenton, Hampton Lumber, and the Astoria-Warrenton Chamber of Commerce.

Given the limited opportunities for new industrial development in Clatsop County and the importance of its working waterfront, the discussion extended beyond industrial land readiness to challenges facing existing industries and infrastructure. Topics included development barriers at the North Coast Business Park, permitting and mitigation challenges associated with the Port of Astoria's Pier 2 rehabilitation, dredging needs at the East Mooring Basin, and broader permitting challenges affecting longstanding coastal industries.

The discussion emphasized the importance of infrastructure investment and coordinated permitting, not only to attract new industrial development but also to maintain and modernize existing industrial facilities that support the regional economy.

Eastern – Courtney Crowell

Harney County Judge Resignation: Last week, Harney County Judge Bill Hart announced his resignation from his seat. Because Harney County has a County Judge form of government and the position has some judicial roles, it falls to the Governor to fill the vacancy. Regional Solutions is working with legal counsel in the Governor's office to begin a process to fill this vacancy.

Housing Discussion with the City of Pendleton: Regional Solutions and the Governor's housing team met with Pendleton Mayor McKennon McDonald and city manager Robb Corbett to talk about the housing and homelessness issues that the city is facing and how the state might be able to help. We discussed a number of issues that the city is facing and will continue to look for opportunities for the state to partner with the city in the future.

Brink's Land Improvement Finalizing Purchase of Heartwood Biomass in Wallowa: Brink's Forest Products has acquired the former Heartwood Biomass facility in Wallowa, Oregon, and is reopening it under the Brink's Forest Products name. The facility had closed before Brink's became involved. The reopening supports 15 local jobs and restores a local outlet for material

from forest fuels mitigation and restoration projects. The Wallowa facility manufactures kiln-dried firewood and post and pole products, creating markets for small-diameter timber and other material removed during forest thinning, wildfire mitigation and restoration work. Revenue from those products can help offset the cost of handling forest material and make continued forest management more feasible. Brink's plans to build on the facility's existing equipment and workforce experience while developing dependable markets for its products.

Metro – Kathy Hyzy

Genentech Groundbreaking in Hillsboro: Last month, Governor Kotek joined Genentech, one of the world's leading biotechnology companies, to announce the start of construction on a \$750 million expansion of its advanced manufacturing facility in Hillsboro. The expansion will create approximately 250 high-wage manufacturing jobs and 200 construction jobs over the duration of the project. The project strengthens regional economic growth and bolsters Oregon's established and growing life sciences and advanced manufacturing industries.

"Today, we're seeing a major investment in Oregon move from plans on paper to breaking ground," Governor Kotek said. "Genentech's continued growth in Hillsboro demonstrates the strength of Oregon's workforce and our ability to support advanced manufacturing that is important to both our state and the country. This project will create new opportunities for Oregonians while strengthening Hillsboro's role in the future of U.S. medicine manufacturing."



To secure this project, the Governor's Office worked closely with Business Oregon throughout a year-long effort making the case that Oregon is the right location for Genentech's expansion.

Oregon Business & Industry Manufacturing and Innovation Roadshow: Regional Solutions **joined** OBI's always-fascinating tour to visit several Metro-area business and learn more about their manufacturing processes and future opportunities. At Looptworks, a Gresham-based startup focusing on recycling and downcycling textiles, we learned about the tremendous waste created every day by the textiles industry, and how Looptworks is **working** to turn that waste into valuable products. A recipient of a \$300,000 loan from Business Oregon, this is a place where the state has been leaning in to support this innovative and crucial addition to the circular economy. Other stops included Miles Fiberglass, specializing in custom fiberglass work for everything from wastewater infrastructure to iconic chairs; QB Fabrication and Welding, a multi-generational family business manufacturing the transmission towers that are essential to our electrical grid; and Leatherman Tools, who put the "multi" in multitool with their portable, folding tools and knives. Many thanks to OBI and the hosting businesses for a great day!

Resources & Opportunities

New Oregon Tax Credit Supports Businesses Creating Jobs – Apply by October 31st

Has your business grown its Oregon workforce? Business Oregon's new Qualified Jobs Creation Tax Credit offers eligible employers \$1,000 per qualifying net new job, up to \$10,000 per taxpayer per tax year. Qualified industries include advanced manufacturing, bioscience and biotechnology, clean technology, food and beverage processing, forestry and wood products, high technology, and outdoor gear and apparel. Applications for the 2026 tax year close October 31, 2026. [Review eligibility requirements and apply here.](#)

Resilience-Related Opportunities:

- **Strategic Doing Practitioners Training**, November 9-10, Bend-area, hosted by the same team from U of O that worked on the Plan for a Resilient Oregon. Join to gain critical skills for moving difficult conversations to action. More information can be found on this [website](#), with [pre-registration found here](#) (Due Oct 30th).
- **The Climate Smart Communities Initiative** put out a Request for Proposals for their 2027 climate Resilience Projects Grant. Letters of Intent are due Friday, November 20th. You can find more information about the organization and funding opportunities on their [website](#).

OR Department of Early Learning & Care (DELIC) hiring Deputy Director of Operations

DELIC is looking for someone who is passionate about public service and eager to make a difference for Oregon communities to join their team. DELIC is a newer, smaller state agency of approximately 360 employees, established in 2023. Their mission is to foster coordinated, culturally appropriate, family-centered services that recognize and respect the strengths and needs of all children, families, and early learning and care professionals.

To learn more, join a [virtual informational session](#) on Wednesday, October 28 from 12:00–12:30 p.m., or view the posting through your Workday account by using the following link: [View Job Posting Details - Workday](#). **The deadline to apply is 11/3/2026.**

DEQ's CERTA Food Waste Processing Infrastructure Grants – Apply by November 30th

Food waste is responsible for over half of methane emissions in Oregon landfills, and expanding processing capacity is a key strategy to reduce climate impacts. DEQ is offering funding to expand food waste processing capacity statewide through two project categories:

- Large-scale food waste processing infrastructure projects (up to \$2million per award, \$25million total available funds). Eligible expenses include processing equipment, anaerobic digestion upgrades, electrical service improvements, receiving areas, and leachate system upgrades.
- Small-scale community composting and food scrap collection initiatives (\$50,000-249,999 per award, \$1.7 million total available funds). Funding supports community collection pilots, drop-off sites, school or farm composting systems, and local compost end-use projects.

For more program information and how to apply, click [here](#) or email DEQFoodWasteGrants@Guidehouse.com

OWEB Drinking Water Source Protection Grants – Apply by Dec. 10th

The Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program (DWSP) provides land acquisition grants to Water Suppliers to protect, restore, or enhance sources of drinking water through the acquisition of lands from willing sellers; entering into covenants, easements, or similar agreements with willing landowners; or repaying a loan used to finance a project. At least \$1.1 million in funding is available for this grant cycle. Public water suppliers with service populations at or below 25,000 users are the only eligible applicants. This includes Tribal public water systems.

The application period closes at 5 pm (PT) on December 10, 2026. **A pre-application consultation is required by November 25, 2026.** To schedule, contact Audrey Squires at audrey.l.squires@oweb.oregon.gov or (503) 798-6337. For more information, visit OWEB's DWSP program [website](#).