

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 25-26

**DIRECTING STATE AGENCIES TO TAKE URGENT ACTION TO
PROMOTE THE RESILIENCE OF OUR COMMUNITIES AND NATURAL
AND WORKING LANDS AND WATERS**

WHEREAS, the lands and waters that comprise the State of Oregon have supported people since time immemorial, contributing to clean air and water, food, fiber and shelter, rich biodiversity and ecosystems, recreation, livelihoods, and enhanced quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Oregon is at an inflection point as changing climate and ocean conditions are impacting Oregon's landscapes, waters, communities, and local economies with increased temperatures, warming surface waters, changing precipitation patterns, reduced snowpack, hotter and drier summers, sea-level rise, diminishing water supplies, habitat constraints to iconic species, and more frequent and damaging wildfires and extreme weather events; and

WHEREAS, Oregon's natural and working lands and waters — including forests, grasslands, rangelands, farmlands, wetlands, rivers, lakes and coastal and marine waters, and the parks and open spaces in urban environments — provide a range of environmental, social, health, and economic benefits statewide, including opportunities to increase carbon sequestration to help address climate change; and

WHEREAS, Oregon can realize the promise and power of our natural and working lands and waters through proactive policies and actions that facilitate the management of natural landscapes and waterways in a way that enhances their ability to withstand and recover from climate change impacts; and

WHEREAS, the effects of our changing climate are resulting in direct health impacts from heat and wildfire smoke; damage to and often destruction of homes, businesses, and working landscapes; and economic losses across multiple sectors of the State's natural resource economy; and

WHEREAS, communities have the knowledge, ability, and desire to participate in climate solutions and increase local disaster resilience through collaborative planning and action in partnership with state agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Oregon State Legislature established a definition of climate resilience in House Bill 3409 (2023) as "the capability to anticipate, prepare for, respond to and recover from significant climate-related threats while minimizing damage to social wellbeing, the economy and ecosystem functions"; and



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WHEREAS, meeting Oregon's resilience goals at scale requires bringing everyone together — Tribes, landowners, communities, business, and government — in partnership to support our lands, waters, and communities; and

WHEREAS, meeting Oregon's resilience goals requires a coordinated, outcome-focused effort to implement actions that will meaningfully mitigate and adapt the State's lands and waters to the increasing pace and scale of impacts from the changing climate, so they continue to contribute to the social, environmental, and economic well-being of Oregonians.

NOW IT IS HEREBY DIRECTED AND ORDERED THAT AGENCIES SHALL FURTHER THE ACTIONS IDENTIFIED BELOW.

I. FOSTER RESILIENT LANDS, WATERS AND COMMUNITIES

- 1. Define Key Resilience Attributes for Land and Waters.** Agencies shall use existing plans and strategies and the best available science to define key resilience attributes appropriate for Oregon with the goal of identifying characteristics of lands and water that are: (1) currently resilient to impacts from climate change and therefore able to deliver multiple benefits that are likely to persist under future climate conditions; or, (2) capable of achieving multiple benefits of high resilience in the face of changing conditions if supported by focused actions that promote restoration, enhancement or reconnection of those lands and/or waters.
 - a.** The Executive Director of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board ("OWEB") will partner with the Director of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife ("ODFW") (collectively "Lead Agencies") to lead a natural resource interagency team to undertake the work associated with development of resilience attributes anticipated by Section 1, including determining baseline conditions against which progress will be measured. The Lead Agencies shall collaborate closely with the Director of the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE), who oversees the Natural and Working Lands Program, to ensure consistency across efforts.

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2. Keep Oregon's Working Lands and Waters Working.

- a. Executive branch agencies identified in Section II of this Order ("Agencies") are directed to utilize the resilience attributes along with other relevant information to identify and improve programs, processes, and practices that protect and promote stewardship of working lands and waters to adapt to impacts from a changing climate. These include but are not limited to the following:
 - i. Existing programs, tools and incentives that support the stewardship of working lands and waters in order to provide more diverse agricultural, forest and ocean-reliant products while also supporting co-benefits such as clean water, healthy soils and improved resilience to changing climate conditions.
 - ii. Partnerships to increase the pace and scale of adoption of sustainable stewardship and climate resilient practices by landowners including federal, local and tribal governments, businesses, non-profit organizations and private citizens.
 - iii. Application and review processes for grantmaking, loan, and financing programs to improve partner engagement on resilience projects including exploration of opportunities to leverage and expand access to capital and administrative capacity through partnership with third party service providers.
 - iv. Permitting processes for restoration projects on working lands and waters.
- b. The Department of State Lands, Department of Land and Conservation Development and Department of Fish and Wildlife, shall work with the Oregon Ocean Policy Advisory Council, the Oregon Ocean Science Trust and Oregon Sea Grant to evaluate opportunities to support long-term resilience of nearshore resources in Oregon, and incentivize and promote globally competitive ocean-reliant products derived through sustainable practices.

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3. **Conserve Natural Lands and Waters to Act as Resilience Anchors in the Face of Climate Change Impacts.**
 - a. **Ten Percent in Ten Years.** Agencies are directed to protect, conserve, connect or restore ten percent of lands and waters in Oregon within ten years as compared to baseline conditions established for 2025.
 - b. **Prioritize Key Lands and Waters.** Agencies subject to this Order will utilize resilience attributes developed in Section I (1) to prioritize implementation of programs, policies and projects seeking to advance protection, conservation, restoration, or connection of lands and waters in support of the goal of ten percent in ten years. Durability and effectiveness of actions to conserve, protect, restore, or connect lands and waters must be considered in determining whether proposed actions further this directive. Agencies shall seek to maximize implementation of actions with co-benefits such as increased carbon sequestration and biodiversity, improved community health and cultural well-being, enhanced ecosystem health, and/or reduced fire and flood risk.
 - c. **Develop Innovative Mitigation Solutions.** The natural resources inter-agency team established in Section II (3) of this Order shall collaborate with Business Oregon as appropriate to explore innovative mitigation tools to support the long-term protection and resilience of land and waters that contain key resilience attributes while ensuring that the economic benefits of mitigation investments support local communities. Consideration shall be given but not be limited to the following potential solutions:
 - i. Advanced Mitigation Banks: which proactively conserve or restore ecological values in anticipation of future development impacts; and
 - ii. In-Lieu Fee Programs: which allow project developers to meet mitigation obligations by paying into a state-managed or authorized fund used for strategic conservation, restoration, and landscape resilience projects.
 - iii. These programs must be designed to:



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1. Maximize ecological outcomes aligned with the protection of lands and waters with key resilience attributes.
 2. Retain mitigation revenue within Oregon, ensuring that funds support in-state projects.
 3. Allow for creative mitigation portfolios that ensure “no net loss” of lands and waters with key resilience attributes while supporting “net benefit” programs and organizations that protect lands and waters from catastrophic wildfire and/or flooding.
 4. Benefit Oregon’s agricultural families and rural communities through partnerships with local landowners, land trusts, and conservation districts.
 5. Create durable and locally beneficial conservation outcomes through transparent governance, science-based site selection, and robust monitoring/accountability requirements
 6. Leverage private investment and market-based tools in ways that complement existing public funding and programs.
4. **Lead by Example: State-Owned and Managed Lands and Waters.** Agencies subject to this Executive Order that own or manage lands or waters (including, but not limited to, those identified below) are directed to develop and implement strategies to enhance climate resilience as a co-benefit of current management objectives and to ensure present and future impacts of climate change are explicitly considered in planning for the management of those lands and waters.
- i. State Parks
 - ii. State Forests, including the Elliott State Research Forest
 - iii. State Wildlife Management Areas
 - iv. State Fish Hatcheries
 - v. State-Owned Properties/Lands (including Trust lands) not principally owned, operated, or managed in support of structures, offices, or facilities serving state agency programs.
 - vi. State Held Conservation Easements and/or Leases
 - vii. State owned submerged and submersible lands and waters, including the Territorial Sea
 - viii. State-Held Water Rights

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5. Ensure a Livable Oregon.

a. Support and Enhance Local Resilience Efforts through Planning and Action in Collaboration with Communities. The Oregon State Resilience Officer shall lead an effort to create a Plan for a Resilient Oregon (“PRO”) that identifies and offers funding pathways for strategies to help communities adapt and thrive in the face of increasingly severe climate risks, and to support communities in long-term recovery from climate-driven disasters. The following actions shall be taken to implement this directive:

- i. Extensive and meaningful outreach with communities shall occur in every region of the State and shall inform the development of the PRO.
- ii. Agencies participating in PRO planning and implementation efforts shall utilize existing and available staffing resources.
- iii. The PRO will integrate with existing strategies and plans, including those related to wildfire and flood protection, energy resilience, and directives of this Order.

b. Protect Oregon from Catastrophic Wildfire.

i. Implement Oregon’s 20-year Landscape Resiliency Plan.

Agencies are directed to leverage partnerships and use available programs and resources to reduce the risk of wildfire and public health impacts of smoke by creating resilient natural and working landscapes. The following actions shall be taken to implement this directive:

1. Prioritize landscapes for restoration and resilience treatments and identify pathways to increase the extent and scale of treatments.
2. Maximize dedicated funding to promote partnerships through Good Neighbor Authorities to accomplish large scale landscape resilience treatments.
3. Identify pathways to increase the extent and scale of prescribed burns and cultural burning while minimizing smoke impacts to public health.



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4. Support the development and implementation of community smoke response plans. Identify additional measures for timely dissemination of air quality information and alerts during wildfire and prescribed fire events.
- ii. **Create Fire-Adapted Communities.** To safeguard lives, property, and critical infrastructure from the growing threat of wildfires, agencies are directed to support efforts to build Fire-Adapted Communities across the state. The following actions shall be taken to implement this directive:
 1. Further defensible space education and establishment across the state. Defensible space is the buffer between a building and the surrounding vegetation that slows or stops the spread of wildfire.
 2. Promote increased use of fire-resistant building materials (home hardening) and community design features to reduce structural vulnerability.
 3. Promote community risk reduction efforts through volunteer programs such as Firewise, local evacuation route planning, and partnerships to increase community survivability during urban wildfire conflagrations.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY, COORDINATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. **Executive Branch Agencies Subject to this Order.** Progress on the direction and commitments of this Order will take focused and coordinated planning and execution by Oregon's natural resource agencies, each of which has its own Board or Commission. The following state agencies and their Boards or Commissions are subject to the goals and directives outlined in this Order as they may apply section by section:
 - i. Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD);
 - ii. Department of State Lands (DSL);
 - iii. Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation (OPRD);
 - iv. Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ);
 - v. Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA);
 - vi. Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE);



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- vii. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW);
 - viii. Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI);
 - ix. Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF);
 - x. Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT);
 - xi. Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Environmental Public Health;
 - xii. Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD);
 - xiii. Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB);
 - xiv. Public Utility Commission of Oregon (PUC); and
 - xv. Oregon Climate Action Commission (OCAC).
- 2. **Reporting and Accountability.** State agencies must deliver transparent, accurate reporting on public programs, maintain accountability to citizens and stakeholders, and establish clear feedback loops that enable public input and demonstrate responsive government action, using the following:
 - a. **Develop Biennial Plans.** Each agency shall develop (or incorporate into an existing planning process) a biennial plan that includes targets and metrics appropriate to the agency's intersection with this Order with the goal of focusing existing and new resources, programs, and incentives to advance the goals and actions in Sections I and II of this Order as applicable:
 - i. **Public Feedback and Oversight.** Agencies will present their biennial plans to their respective board or commission for discussion, review, and comment at a public meeting where public testimony can be received.
 - ii. **Recommendations for Governor's Recommended Budget ("GRB").** Biennial plans will be developed on a schedule and in a format to inform the development of the GRB starting with the 2029-2031 Agency Request Budget ("ARB") biennial cycle. Actions for consideration for the development of the 2027-2029 GRB will be expedited as needed.
 - iii. **Implementation Workplan.** Agencies shall immediately begin developing implementation timelines and pathways to comply with this Order. The following existing reporting requirements



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related to the goals of this Order will be assessed and consolidated to the extent practicable: the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Roadmap, Forest Climate and Carbon Plan, Connectivity Action Plan, Integrated Water Resources Strategy, Climate Adaptation Framework, Natural Climate Solutions, and others as identified.

- b. **Update Key Performance Measures (“KPMs”).** Agencies will work with Department of Administrative Services to review and modify existing plans and KPMs to adjust existing goals as appropriate to integrate with and advance this Order.
 - c. **Engagement with Oregon’s Nine Federally Recognized Sovereign Tribal Nations.** The State, through the Office of Governor Kotek and the State Agencies within the Natural Resources Cluster Workgroup, shall collaborate with Oregon’s nine federally recognized sovereign tribal nations to build, sustain, and enhance relationships to find common ground in support of the implementation of this Order.
3. **Coordination and Oversight of Implementation.** The Governor’s Natural Resources Office will take a leadership role in advancing the efforts associated with this Order. It is the responsibility of each respective agency director to ensure appropriate coordination and implementation contemplated by this Order is integrated into agency programs and initiatives.
- a. **Agency Leadership Implementation Team.** A group of agency directors and senior staff will be assembled under the auspices of the Governor’s Natural Resources Cabinet. The subgroup, working at the direction of the Governor’s Office and State Agency Natural Resources Cabinet, will:
 - i. Identify existing initiatives and programs that could benefit from increased cross-agency collaboration and develop recommendations to improve integration of climate resilience programs and actions in this Order. These recommendations will



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include both policy and budget needs related to the successful implementation of this Order.

- ii. Develop recommendations to address critical gaps or barriers (e.g., programs, administrative rules, statutory changes) to the state's implementation of this Order.
 - iii. Assess and implement as practicable a State of Oregon Climate Action and Resilience Dashboard to serve as source of information on the work of agencies on this Order.
- b. **Board & Commission Oversight Team.** A subgroup of relevant Board and Commission members will be assembled under the auspices of the Governor's Natural Resources Cabinet. The subgroup will work parallel to the Agency Leadership Team to support the implementation work of the Order.
- c. **Legislative & Public Engagement.** As requested, agencies shall provide updates and presentations on implementation work to relevant Boards, Commissions, Councils, Local Governments, Federal Agencies, and the Oregon State Legislature.

Done at Salem, Oregon, this 21st day of October, 2025.

Tina Kotek
GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

Tobias Read
SECRETARY OF STATE