



Oregon

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Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

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2008 Annual Government-to-Government Report For the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Under Executive Order 96-30

October 15, 2009

1. AGENCY NAME Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

2. KEY CONTACT

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3. MAJOR AREAS

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) works with Oregon Indian Tribes through a grant program to fund projects related to watershed management protection and restoration. In addition, pursuant to Governor Kitzhaber's Executive Order 96-30 and Senate Bill 770, the Department works with Oregon's nine federally recognized Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis to address watershed restoration interests to Oregon agencies and the tribes.

a. Grants for Watershed Restoration and Enhancement. The Department works with Oregon's Tribes to review and evaluate grant applications that would result in the protection or restoration of watersheds in the state. Tribes are one of three specific groups eligible to participate in the OWEB small grant groups.

4. DEPARTMENT STATEMENT

The OWEB Board unanimously adopted a Tribal Policy in May of 2007.

5. PROGRAMS AND PROCESS FOR INVOLVING TRIBES

OWEB involves tribes at all levels of the organization. The Governor appoints a tribal representative as a voting member of the OWEB Board. The position currently is occupied by Eric Quaempts, Natural Resources Director of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. This position has been extremely valuable in identifying opportunities for collaboration with tribes and making the Board and staff aware of responsibilities to involve and consider tribal interests.. The Board member has been an effective voice for tribal interests, and has improved awareness by OWEB staff

of the significance of tribal issues with projects and grant applications managed by the agency. Oregon Tribes have been awarded 24 grants under the general grant program.

At the program level, tribes have specific standing at three levels; as watershed council members, small grant team participants, and regular grant applicants. The statute that identifies watershed councils (ORS 541.388) specifically identifies “federally recognized Indian tribes” as potential members of local watershed councils. Many of the tribes in Oregon are active members of local watershed councils.

When OWEB developed the small grant program (OAR Chapter 695, Division 35), tribes were identified as a member of each “small grant team”. In this role, the tribe is a member along with watershed councils and soil and water conservation districts of a group empowered to make decisions about grants of up to \$10,000 for watershed restoration purposes. OWEB has awarded 4 grants to tribes under this program.

OWEB grants are available to a broad range of entities including tribes. While tribes have no unique standing in the grant program, they are equal to any other applicant [ORS 541.375(1)].

6. TRAINING

The Oregon Department of Administrative Services and the Legislative Commission on Indian Services jointly sponsored a day-long training for state agencies in May 2009. Tribal speakers covered a variety of topics related to tribal culture, history and organization. Four OWEB staff attended the training. The Department plans to continue this cultural cross-training at future Salem and regional office staff meetings. In addition, the Department’s key contact person has met internally with management staff to provide updates on the Government-to-Government activities.

The Department’s key contact person attended some of the Natural Resource Work Group sessions. The Natural Resource Work Group has met several times each year since early 1999. Additionally, the agency Executive Director and department’s key contact person are scheduled to attend the 2009 Annual Government-to-Government Summit in Salem.

7. EMPLOYEE NOTIFICATION

Since OWEB is a small agency (approximately 30 employees) communication about tribal interests and tribal issues occurs on a frequent and agency wide basis. Issues that are identified at staff meetings involving tribal interests are discussed among staff as issues arise.