

Investing in Resilient Communities

Central Oregon – Deschutes River Basin

Deschutes, Jefferson & Crook Counties

Climate change is already impacting Central Oregon, where higher temperatures, wildfires, declining snowpack and extreme weather events are disrupting agriculture, forestry, tourism and quality of life. For Bend, Prineville and surrounding areas to adapt and prosper, it is imperative to identify areas of risk and to invest in solutions that restore natural resources, protect communities and enhance the region's economy.

WATERWAYS & WATER SUPPLY

Drought and higher temperatures reduce water in rivers, streams, lakes reservoirs and aquifers in the region decreasing availability of water for domestic uses, harming fish populations and possibly leading to competition and conflict over water resources.

- **Fund** watershed restoration to enhance, protect and restore water quality and streamflow and recharge aquifers.
- **Implement** community water conservation strategies, including facilities upgrades and education programs.
- **Invest** in practices to prevent toxic algae outbreaks and public information to reduce exposure.

AGRICULTURE & IRRIGATION

Higher average temperatures combined with less snowpack in the Deschutes River Basin reduces surface water and groundwater available for irrigation and disrupts traditional agricultural and ranching practices. More intense storms and unpredictable weather also bring greater risk to farmers and ranchers. Some traditional crops may not adapt well.

- **Upgrade** Central Oregon's irrigation infrastructure.
- **Prioritize** measures to prevent unsustainable ground water withdrawals from aquifers.
- **Support** management practices that improve soil health and productivity and sequester carbon.
- **Provide** farmers and ranchers with support to offset costs of climate mitigation actions.
- **Assist** farmers and ranchers with cost-saving measures to reduce energy use.

LANDSCAPES & WILDFIRE

Central Oregon's forests, grasslands and sagebrush steppes are threatened by more frequent and intense wildfires.

- **Reduce** wildfire fuels in wildland-urban interface on public and private lands.
- **Foster** interagency and multi-jurisdictional cooperation to prevent and manage wildfires.
- **Assist** homeowners and landowners to implement fire risk reduction strategies.
- **Provide** resources for management practices that increase carbon sequestration and forest adaptation.
- **Support** strategies and capital investments for technological innovation and develop markets for wood derived from wildland fuels management.

LIVABILITY & SECURITY

Climate change impacts, combined with the region's rapid population growth, require investments to support the people who call Central Oregon home.

- **Collaborate** with Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and other Tribes to protect shared natural resources and invest in community resilience.
- **Maintain** and enhance robust early warning systems for emergency response throughout the region.
- **Prioritize** economic diversification, job creation, skills training and workforce support for disrupted industries including, agriculture, timber, recreation and tourism.
- **Assist** low-and moderate-income residents with weatherization and energy conservation.
- **Invest** in health services and programs that address climate induced health risks.

[OCCRI Fourth Oregon Climate Assessment Report \(2019\)](#); [Oregon Global Warming Commission - 2018 Biennial Report to the Legislature](#); [Oregon Water Atlas \(2017\)](#); [U.S. Bureau of Reclamation - Deschutes River Basin Study \(2018\)](#); [USFWS Deschutes River Basin Habitat Conservation Plan \(2019\)](#); [ClimateWise: Integrated Strategies for a Vibrant and Sustainable Central Oregon \(2011\)](#)