

# Investing in Resilient Communities

## Southwest Oregon

Douglas, Josephine & Jackson Counties

Climate change is already impacting Southwest Oregon where higher temperatures, wildfires, recurring drought, declining snowpack and extreme weather events are disrupting agriculture, forests, tourism and outdoor recreation. For Southwest Oregon to adapt and prosper, it is imperative to identify areas of risk and to invest in solutions that safeguard and restore natural resources, protect communities and enhance the region's economy.

### LANDSCAPES & WILDFIRE

Forests in the Rogue and Umpqua River watersheds 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.
- **Invest** in the carbon storage potential of forests, wetlands and riparian areas.

### WATERWAYS & WILDLIFE

Higher temperatures, periodic drought and lower river and stream flows can increase demands on Southwest Oregon's water resources, harm native fish, promote invasive species and increase the potential for toxic algae blooms.

- **Fund** watershed restoration to enhance natural functions, streamflow and aquifer recharge.
- **Preserve** intact habitats, including old-growth forests and wildlife migration corridors.
- **Implement** community water conservation strategies, including facilities upgrades and education programs.
- **Invest** in practices to prevent outbreaks of toxic algae and other water-borne pathogens.
- **Monitor** groundwater aquifers to ensure their continued viability for domestic and agricultural uses.

### AGRICULTURE & IRRIGATION

Hotter, drier summers and more intense storms increase risks for farmers. Some crops may not adapt rapidly to warming conditions and water shortages will impact productivity. Wildfire smoke brings risk and uncertainty, particularly for the wine industry, and creates health risks for farm workers.

- **Invest** in water conservation measures and more efficient irrigation infrastructure.
- **Assist** farmers and ranchers with cost-saving measures to reduce energy use and with the installation of off-grid solar and battery storage, wind, biofuels, in-conduit hydropower and geothermal power.
- **Prevent** the spread of invasive plants, insect species and plant diseases.
- **Invest** in soil health and carbon sequestration in farmland soils.

### LIVABILITY & SECURITY

Climate change impacts require investments to support the people who call Southwest Oregon home.

- **Collaborate** with the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians and other Tribes to protect shared natural resources and invest in community resilience.
- **Prioritize** economic diversification, job creation, skills training and workforce support for disrupted industries including agriculture, recreation and tourism.
- **Develop** job opportunities including wildland fuels management, restoration, and infrastructure development.
- **Assist** low-and moderate-income residents with weatherization and energy conservation.
- **Provide** 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](#); [ClimateWise: Climate Change Preparation in the Rogue River Basin \(2009\)](#); [Oregon Wildfire Risk Explorer \(2019\)](#); [Oregon Water Atlas \(2017\)](#)