

A New Way of Doing Business in Rural Oregon

Rural Oregon is the place you can still find the Oregon of our history and memories and where residents should be able to live Oregon's quality of life today

NOTE: The information contained in this document is adapted from a multi-year effort by the Eastern Oregon Rural Alliance and the newly established Oregon Rural Congress. It is a framework that establishes a broad set of solutions to identified issues affecting rural Oregon, to be considered and acted upon by communities, regional groups, state elected officials, state agencies, federal agencies and federal officials and other stakeholders. It is expected that the development of this state-wide effort to unite all rural areas of the state will be an on-going process that will adapt and grow with the continued input received from other rural areas of Oregon.

Why a new way to address rural issues?

It is in the best interest of the State of Oregon and its people, to have a strong, viable rural economy. It is in the best interest of the state to an organized entity that provides a forum for developing and debating solutions for rural issues and problems, and for communicating with the urban area, the Governor, the Oregon legislature and Federal Government.

Nothing is gained for future generations of Oregonians to have their rural communities wither and die.

Rural Oregon is a unique resource enjoyed by all Oregonians whether they reside in urban, suburban or rural areas of the state. The qualities that are associated with rural Oregon, the vastness, beauty, natural resources, and the independence and self-reliance of its people, contribute to the rich tapestry that is Oregon country. It is important to preserve, maintain and enhance this heritage.

Rural Oregon contributes to the state's economy in many sectors such as tourism, agriculture, timber, fishing, mining, the wheat and cattle industries, power production, wind energy, environmental solutions, regional landfills and scientific research.

The people living and working in rural Oregon contribute to the state's economic strength beyond their absolute number. They live in rural communities that are islands in a public land system. These people are the historic stewards of the land and its resources.

GUIDING RURAL PRINCIPLES

1. Rural communities in Oregon, regardless of size and location, have a right to exist. Residents of these communities have a right to pursue their well-being. State and federal government policies and programs must recognize local decision-making authority in pursuing the best interests of Eastern Oregon communities, their economic foundation and surrounding natural environment.
2. Community leaders need to take the lead in identifying local needs and issues and defining the appropriate means of resolving these needs and issues.

3. Geographic, political and programmatic boundaries should not impede the ability of the leadership of Oregon's rural communities to exercise their authority to accomplish locally-identified goals, objectives and strategies.
4. Policies and programs should recognize the uniqueness of each community in terms of their human, social, economic, natural resources and assets *to* the fullest extent possible.
5. The rural-urban conversation must recognize that commonalities and differences are positive elements in the relationship among Oregon communities and strengthen the fabric of Oregon society.
6. Policies and programs must respect the history of each community in rural Oregon and the forces, internal and external, which have shaped the community.
7. Policies and programs impacting Oregon's rural communities must be based on and shaped by the best available information and research with significant rural participation and input.
8. State and Federal policies and programs that require action must provide the resources to enhance the capacity of each community to address and direct change in the manner deemed most appropriate by community residents.

WHY A UNIFIED APPROACH IS NEEDED FOR RURAL OREGON

Policy Statement: In order to move from thinking about rural policy to establishing and implementing rural policy a united effort that involves all rural areas of the state must be developed and nurtured as an ongoing process.

This effort would facilitate an initial phase in developing rural policies for Oregon. That effort might include

- Vision for and by rural Oregonians
- Creates a shared philosophy that reflects Oregon as one state and but values the component parts
- A way for our State and Federal Government to identify urban-rural differences to address the needs of rural Oregonians in a balanced manner.
- Assist Oregon State Government and the United States Federal Government to develop a Mission and Vision that addresses Rural Policy

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The following are rural issues and potential solutions identified by the Eastern Oregon Rural Alliance and the Oregon Rural Congress over the course of multiple years, multiple rural conferences and broad stakeholder group meetings.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Policy: Agriculture and timber production are at the core of rural Oregon's economy and essential to the well being of the state. A healthy vital agriculture and natural resource base are critical to a healthy state and society. Many pieces make up the economic mosaic in rural areas; however, agriculture and natural resources are the major components of the rural economy. Oregon must take a renewed look at how rural communities function and interact as agriculture and the natural resource stewards and providers for the state.

The ability for rural producers and natural resource managers to thrive and protect their investments must be paramount in the decision-making process and regulations and administrative rules must reflect sound scientific findings.

GOOD SCIENCE-EDUCATION-URBAN

NR000

Issue: Many regulations and administrative rules affecting agriculture and natural resources are not based on scientific research

Solution:

- Affect changes in Federal regulation and State Laws and Administrative Rules
- Develop Legislative concepts and changes to specific Administrative Rules
- Require peer review and approval
- Removal temporary 21 inch diameter harvest rule
- Remove non existence species from endanger species list
- Define quality of maintenance
- Define cost effectiveness
- Allow rational flexibility with respect to managing wild horse herds

Require federal managers to use proactive resource management to educate the public and their staff based on the best scientific information available

NR001

Issue: Current forest policy and court decisions contribute to the urban rural disconnect and are fuel by the need for better education about natural resources, their usage and management

Solution:

- Improve communication and understanding through education opportunities for all ages, through programs such as **Provider Pals, Kids in the Woods**, and the **OSU Summer Ag Institute** for teachers

- Require Congress set a good example to the nation when implementing legislation, that our resource lands should be valued for a balance that includes management, utilization and conservation

NR002

Issue: Climate change legislation in Oregon and the nation without consideration to accurate science and economic impacts will further shut down Oregon's economy

Solution: Require economic impact studies before any legislation. Viable and peer agreed science must be considered and factored in. Pass Cap & Trade legislation. A balanced, science, not theory driven national (not state by state) policy must be demanded by all.

MANAGEMENT

NR003

Issue: We have become too narrowly focused on fuels reduction

The Healthy Forest Restoration Act, as Congressman Walden wrote it, has a holistic restoration approach.

Solution: Modify the use of HFRA. Use education and publicize opportunities and success stories to agencies and collaborators. Expand the vision to include projects such as stream restoration.

NR004

Issue: The cost of continual studies/paperwork demands (i.e. ESA-EIS) undermines forest health and the ability to salvage valuable post-fire resources

Solution: Require the USFS-BLM to disclose the actual public cost of past studies and costs of management delays in terms of lost resources due to disease, insect predation and fire. Require the creation of a landscape, forest specific template that utilizes past studies that can be applied and implemented within without having to constantly re-design and re-study

NR005

Issue: Poor forest health, management practices, fire danger, insect predation

Solution: Allow thinning and salvage of over-grown forests, demand revised forest management practices to encourage healthy forests; create a science baseline of data before blocking management; eliminate the word 'significant' from direction and administration of resources.

NR006

Issue: Lack of resources from large Public Land Ownership

Solution: Coordination with other states with massive public holdings to address implications of eastern/western equitable legislation

NR007

Issue: The natural resource destruction of rural economies has placed a financial strain on rural counties and creates an inequitable level of public safety and security to rural Oregon residents

Solution: The Governor's office and the State Legislature should immediately and honestly support local and statewide efforts to restore Oregon's natural economic strength and step back from the politics of securing the environmental industry votes at the expense of protecting the economy of all of Oregon and in particular the lives of Oregon's rural residents; Local government needs to be able to show that their state and federal leadership (the Legislature, the

Governor and the entire federal delegation) supports prosperity for all of Oregon (also in Public Safety)

NR008

Issue: Stewardship contract funding projects are often unreliable and are rife with red tape and bureaucratic hurdles, bring no revenue to counties

Solution: Resurrect pilot forest projects (as initiated by Ron Hooper USFS D.C. Office) to streamline the effort

NR009

Issue: The denial of public land access to the public by the USFS

Solution: If county cooperation does not work implement litigation. Force federal agencies to follow congressional acts, not personal policies

NR010

Issue: Roadless areas prevent proper wildfire fire safety, block beneficial resource management and prevent equal access to all citizens

Solution:

Keep public lands open to all of the public and to the personnel charged with management and protection

Do not prevent handicapped or elderly citizens from sharing equal access opportunities

NR011

Issue: Loss of Secure Rural Schools funding

Solution:

Properly manage federal lands

Create a statewide task force to address how counties can best address the losses and return to proper management

Develop a billing invoice for each affected county that includes current and past tax payments on federal lands ownership equal to that of private land owners and deliver that invoice, through the Assoc. of Oregon Counties, to the proper federal authorities and demand compensation

WILDFIRE-EMERGENCY ISSUES

NR012

Issue: Oregon's public forests are filled with dead and dying timber. This poses a grave threat to that natural resource and environment. It also affects the rural economy and rural society.

Solution: Change federal regulations with respect to allowing the segment of society living in closest proximity to the forest to take the lead in cleaning up the forest.

- Require the State to take administrative action
- Local and regional model projects exist that can set the pattern for cleaning up the dead and dying forest. It is not necessary to recreate the wheel
- Implement Northwest Forest Plan and HFRA Healthy Forest Restoration Act
- Formally request the Governor to take an immediate and proactive position with D.C. on Federal timber regulations that are destroying Oregon's forest at an accelerating rate each year
- Develop model management areas in rural Oregon to demonstrate forest management practices

NR013

Issue: Wildfire funding swallowing up management capabilities of the BLM/USFS, an issue that needs non-federal support

Solution: Separate fire budgeting from general funding. Develop, as proposed by five former USFS Chiefs, a separate 5-year pot of fire monies, which the federal agencies can tap into in big fire years

NR014

Issue: Fire on public land response

Solution: Do not delineate agencies 'your fire-my fire', but a fire to which all local, state and federal agencies can respond

NR015

Issue: The impact to rural volunteer agencies (fire, emergency medical, search and rescue) of recreational-wilderness area expansions or designations

Solution: Provide a true opportunity for comment and a genuine consideration of local capacity before recreation and wilderness area development or expansions

NR016

Issue: Requirement cost to rural firefighters due for urban specific training

Solution: Exempt rural fire departments/personnel from urban issue requirements, such as high

LITIGATION

Policy Statement: The Federal Court system decisions should recognize both environmental positions and positions of citizens actually living with and making the rural economy function in natural resource and agricultural areas

NR017

Issue: Environmental Industry's legal processes which stall and destroy management objectives and local collaborative management efforts therefore preventing the original intent of federal resource lands which was to provide for the nations needs

Solution:

- Establish claim/damage cap
- Require genuine collaborative efforts prior to legal action
- Require mediation prior to legal action
- Eliminate the state/federal government's obligation to pay damages that support and encourage further actions by the environmental industry
- Require courts to recognize and defer to federal land managers in matters pertaining to resource management
- Encourage counties to intervene in lawsuits

NR018

Issue: The use and cost of environmental industry litigation that halts collaborative restoration efforts, endangers the nation's resource holdings and decimates the budgets that management agencies need to provide adequate oversight to public lands

Solution:

- Review and publicly disclose the actual litigation-implementation costs to the American taxpayers
- Legislatively halt the use of public dollars to fund the legal costs of environmental industry lawyers (you sue-you pay legislation)
- Require genuine environmental industry collaboration not consensus
- Require mediation before legislation

NR019

Issue: Collaborative efforts, even under HFRA (Healthy Forests Restoration Act) still result in 300 page Environmental Assessments, which tax limited federal resources

Solution:

- Establish a federal policy that allows for streamlined NEPA analysis (e.g. 75 pages)
- Have precedent pilot projects that demonstrate these shortened versions ability to withstand the appeals process
- Advertise these successes with other USFS units; shift USFS from defensive mode to seeing and seizing opportunities
- Develop a super-siting equivalent for those model management areas to provide five year window of performance free of legal challenges

NR020

Issue: The decisions of the 9th Circuit Court are crippling Oregon's agricultural and timber natural resource industries. There seems to be no connection between the court's decisions and the reality of how today's society connects and interacts with the natural environment.

Solutions:

- Review the decisions of the 9th Circuit relating to agriculture and natural resources that have adversely affected rural Oregon, the agriculture and natural resource environment. Based on the review develop a strategy for education and awareness targeted to changing the 9th Circuit decisions over time.
- Contact the congressional delegation to obtain standing
- Request modification of rulings
- Identify citizens willing to work on a Decisions Review Team
- Develop the strategy
- Expand the dialogue

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Policy Statement: *The Federal Endangered Species Act has precipitated more destructive impacts on rural America with fewer successes than any piece of legislation ever enacted. Although well intentioned, the long-range impacts have crippled rural communities and done little to positively impact species it was designed to enhance. Like its federal partner, the Oregon Endangered Species Act has similar unintended consequences and creates a redundant, duplicate layer of regulation. One ineffective, harmful piece of legislation is too many.*

Policy Statement: Natural resources and agriculture regulations must be based on a foundation of good science.

NR021

Issue: The Endangered Species Act has proven itself to be a contentious and unwieldy piece of legislation. The ramifications of its implementation have been immense. It is a 1973 law of good intention that has been used as a weapon to cripple the natural resource providers and residents of rural America. It has shut down entire industries and unraveled the fabric of many rural communities. It can claim few successes, having listed over one thousand species and improved the numbers of only six. It consumes significant amounts of scarce conservation resources. There is no real mechanism, nor funding to remove species once they have been listed. Only twenty-five species have been removed from the list, seven of those were due to extinction and twelve had been incorrectly listed to begin with.

Solution:

- Repeal or Amend the Oregon Endangered Species Act as redundant and harmful legislation
- Ask that Oregon review the need for a duplicate Endangered Species Act (ESA) that mirrors the ineffectiveness and destructive components of the federal ESA and has the potential to conflict with the federal law
- Ask that state and federal legislators support legislation that protects rural residents and portions the impacts of legislation equally on all members of society
- Support the efforts to Amend the Endangered Species by federal legislators such as Oregon's Rep. Greg Walden
- Demand verifiable, consistent, sound science principles be utilized for listing and de-listing
- Require that a plan that includes adequate funding for removal and de-listing be part of the process
- Contact our federal legislators to obtain standing and help develop the modifications
- Refer to Alliance policy on requirements for good science foundation
- Adopt the good science findings of the Assoc. of Oregon Counties Task Force on Scientific Inquiry
- Join the efforts of others who are demanding reform, such as the National Association of Counties, The National Association of Realtors, The National Association of Homebuilders, The U.S. Chamber, The National Rural Electrical Co-ops, The National Water Resources Association and The National ESA Reform Coalition
- Be persistent and consistent until reform is achieved

PREDATORS

Policy Statement: State and federal policy makers need to recognize the serious safety and economic impacts of decision-making and legislation, particularly in regard to predator management and their introduction into the rural parts of the nation. Rural residents need the ability to protect themselves and their property from the threat of predators and should not bear the burden of having to do battle with state and federal agencies for their own safety.

NR022

Issue: Introduction of Predators to rural areas. Environmental activists have long favored the reintroduction of predators, such as wolves into the landscape of rural Oregon and the nation. It

has been an aggressive pursuit of a policy that has little negative affect on the environmental organizations who demand it or on the urban populations who champion the practice, but bear none of the tragic impacts.

Solution:

- Support the efforts of Oregon’s agricultural producers to prevent the destructive affects of predator introduction and re-introduction
- Ask that the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife take steps to delist the Grey Wolf in Oregon
- Ask that Oregon review the need for a statewide Endangered Species Act (ESA) that mirrors the ineffectiveness and destructive components of the federal ESA and has the potential to conflict with the federal law
- Join with 16 Oregon Counties who requested in March of 2003, that ODFW de-list the Grey Wolf
- Review and support the Oregon Association of Counties 1999 resolution 99-F6 asking the wolves not be introduced or protected under the ESA (Endangered Species Act)
- Review and support the National Association of Counties 2001-2002 resolution requesting the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service not develop plans for introducing predators into public lands
- Ask that state and federal legislators support legislation that protects rural residents and portions the impacts of legislation equally on all members of society
- Refer to Northeast Oregon Alliance policy on requirements for good science foundation

WATER ISSUES

Policy Statement: Water, its ownership, storage, distribution and environmental implications of its use are regional, state and national issues. Citizens of rural Oregon must be included in developing long-term agreements on the future use of water.

NR023

Issue: Oregon’s communities are beginning to run out of available water. Water rights and access to water are beginning to dominate all other issues. Highly congested urban areas with high water use demand will drive this agenda unless a serious dialogue is started immediately by the rural community. This issue will not improve by the largest cities getting larger.

Solution:

- Begin a regional proactive discussion about over allocation of water right away
- Legislative concept: prevent over allocation of water resources
- County ordinances: Defining and prioritizing water for agriculture
- Expand state water resource board to nine with a representation from the rural
- Host a water conference
- Work with interested Oregon organizations, Legislature and Agencies to further explore the feasibility for upstream storage in the spirit of ORS 536.328

NR024

Issue: The potential of a centralized water plan/control

Solution: Enact legislation providing and enabling the creation and authority of regional water authorities

NR025

Issue: The proposed Clean Water Restoration Act

Solution: Educate regarding the Act's far-reaching restrictions and impacts and strongly oppose

NR026

Issue: Water quality standards, the Clean Water Act and the ESA are being used as a heavy handed stick that prevents the agricultural and ranching sector from producing food for the nation

Solution: The State of Oregon needs to adopt rules that protect our agricultural producers and our economies from federal standards that are crippling our ability to provide for the nation and ourselves

NR027

Issue: The potential of state centralized water planning (Headwaters to Ocean) that would equal and parallel the same complications and one-size-fits-all inflexibility as land use planning

Solution: Oppose state water planning. Encourage local and regional planning and storage development tailored to fit local supply and demand issues. Enact legislation providing and enabling the creation and authority of regional water authorities

NR028

Issue: Shortage of water resources for agriculture, municipal and industrial uses. The potential loss of rural water supply to urban users. Example Los Angeles take of rural waters

Solution: Water storage. Affected stakeholder solutions. Revisit the potential of one senator per county to provide balance of decision making in urban over rural. Allow new out of stream water during times of surplus. Allow free transfer of water rights including priority dates. Fund research to identify water supply and quality, determine carrying capacity of localities by county, which would include agriculture, industry, and municipal use/population.

NR029

Issue: Non-point source pollution contributes to waterway issues without responsibility

Solution: DEQ should identify and work cooperatively to solve the issues

NR030

Issue: Fish Screen and irrigation development

Solution: Legislative funding needed for funding carryover with all funding present before comment

AGRICULTURE

Policy Statement: America and Oregon must remain self-sufficient in the production of food and fiber

AG001

Issue: Changes in U.S. and Oregon regulation and availability of inexpensive foreign produced food and fiber has adversely impacted Oregon's food and fiber industries. Foreign producers are not subject to the same regulations Oregon's agriculture industry is. If citizens are to be protected from harmful agricultural practices at home they need the same protection from harmful agricultural practices by foreign producers. Rural Oregon needs to assess access to food supplies and whether enough food is produced within the region to supply the citizens in an emergency.

Solution

- Level the regulation playing field between foreign and Oregon producers.
- Analyze the regional food supply system to identify 30 access points to food
- Clearly state rural public policy on American / Oregonian agriculture.
- Support value added programs
- Create value added agriculture/natural resource mechanisms (see finance)
- Develop Oregon Quality as an agriculture industry standard (see economic development)
- Encourage food security programs (ODA)
- Encourage Farm to Fork dialogue
- Promote rural Oregon products
- Develop rural restaurant tours for urban market
- Build into value added financing ongoing management support (see finance)
- Cooperative structures need to be changed
- Change rules and regulations for cooperatives

AG002

Issue: State and federal regulations that make it cost prohibitive to meet market demand for locally produced meat and dairy products which makes communities more food insecure, stifles entrepreneurship and sends food dollars out of our communities

Solution: Modify state rules to allow state inspected meat processing so that custom producers can sell by the cut and supply restaurants, schools and hospitals etc. Develop dairy regulations that fit small scale producers and provide products that consumers desire

AG003

Issue: Oregon is a state that continues to see an increase in small farms. Encourage local utilization of local agricultural products

Solution: Provide a tax credit/incentive for purchasing locally grown food

AG004

Issue: Better education and application of alternative crops

Solution: Provide Department of Agriculture education opportunities and tax incentives on rapeseed as an alternative fuel/food/fertilizer

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Policy Statement: In this age of technology telecommunications will be adequately available throughout the state of Oregon

TC001

Issue: Telecommunications are unavailable in much of rural Oregon. For example, only 25% of Wheeler County has cell phone access.

Solution:

- Facilitate development of the middle and last mile infrastructure in rural eastern Oregon.
- Encourage the use of wireless when fiber not available
- Assist partnerships with public, private, tribal entities to increase revenues, develop redundancy and aggregate users.
- Lobby large carriers to provide service in rural areas

BROADBAND REQUIREMENTS

TC002

Issue: The need for the Legislature to assist with 15% match for an FCC \$20.1 million Award that will connect Oregon communities with critical access hospitals and community colleges. Once installed, all within a community can access the broadband

Solution: Assist with the lobbying effort for the Legislature to provide the match

TC003

Issue: The need to expand DSL capabilities to rural areas-overcome digital divide

Solution: Efforts similar and with as much effort as was expended in the rural electrification and phone availability accomplishments

Work collaboratively with the private sector. Encourage providers to access available funding. Encourage OECD investments.

TC004

Issue: The need for a statewide broadband system that will benefit everyone

Solution: Involve beneficiaries: residents, industry, business, healthcare, higher education, agriculture and government. Ensure that all state telecommunication expenditures benefit rural citizens equally with state and local agencies

TC005

Issue: The equitable opportunity and delivery of higher education opportunities

Solution:

- Improve the delivery systems used in distance education and monitor its effectiveness, support and strengthen existing effective services, such as EOU's distance Education program
- support OSU Extension's 'Open Campus' plans

RURAL CELLULAR

TC006

Issue: The FCC's planned cuts to funding for rural cellular

Solution: Educate and lobby congress as to the importance of this for both a communications and public safety issue

OWIN**TC007**

Issue: OWIN (Oregon Wireless Inner-Operability Network) does not include or provide for the entire state, especially the rural eastern portions and the project lacks funding sustainability

Solution: Lobby the legislature to require that if OWIN is to receive funding, it really become a statewide priority that will sustain itself without becoming a maintenance burden on local governments

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Policy Statement: Rural Oregon is an easily identified region; from the Pacific Coast on the west to the Idaho border on the east. From the Washington border on the north to the California-Nevada border on the south. It is a region of beauty and unique in its rural make up. Its rural communities arise like islands in the vast public land system offering hospitality and assistance to neighbor and visitor alike. It is in the best interest of the region to work together for economic development enhancement.

WAGE DISPARITY

Policy Statement: There will be an on going effort to reduce the urban-rural wage disparity over the next 5 years.

ED001

Issue: The disparity in urban-rural wage scale

Solution

- Educate employers and economic development professionals at the State
- Encourage and support the rural business community's efforts to increase the amount of rural economic development. (see Finance)
- Work with Oregon Economic and Community Development Department to improve wages on business recruitment activities.
- Facilitate local employer work shops and marketing efforts to improve wage/production

GENERAL

ED002

Issue: There is not an "adopted" definition of economic development.

Solution: Craft and adopt, in statute, a definition of economic development. (This will ensure a place-based model for economic development because currently urban ED is nowhere close to rural ED).

ED003

Issue: No definitions of economic development and its different permutations statewide. Creates a lack of understanding, respect or appreciation of local efforts.

Solution: First define economic development with contributions from rural (frontier – urban) and let local wants/needs define strategies. Make rural/regional funds (reinstated) and their investment determined locally.

ED004

Issue: Population drives funding and allocations of state dollars and assistance to counties.

Solution: It shall be the policy of the State of Oregon to consider and review actual community project needs not population and its obvious limitations to control or stifle community efforts.

STATE JOBS CONCEPT

ED005

Issue: Job losses in rural areas, while centralized state employees employment numbers rise.

Solution:

- Decentralize Oregon state agencies personnel into the counties to assist local communities
- Make decisions locally and not centrally.
- Increase rural development impact of state expenditures by locating more state offices/jobs in rural communities throughout the state and sourcing services and supplies proactively from rural Oregon.

ED006

Issue: Building inspectors.

Solution: Accept certifications of building inspectors from other states, letting rural areas a change to compete for these individuals.

ED007

Issue: Capacity to perform basic economic development in every community that wants help

Solution: Provide lottery funding to pay for “people” to be on the ground

ED008

Issue: Access to costly site selection databases used by national companies and consultants

Solution: Create a resource center similar to a plan center where global resources are available

ED009

Issue: Housing has to follow economic development.

Solution: Before state resources are invested in economic development, ensure the housing resources are present to accommodate the new jobs

ED010

Issue: Business incubation.

Solution: Fund support/financial assistance for a network of incubators throughout the state.

ED011

Issue: Development of industrial base that lends itself to rural and resource based communities.

Solution: Lakeview has a huge amount of diatomaceous earth and rail access – we should be making sheetrock and fire cores for doors in Lakeview

Policy Statement: Business in rural eastern Oregon should have access to insurance coverage at reasonable rates that at least match urban areas

ED012

Issue: There is a very high insurance cost for rural businesses when and if it is available in much of rural Oregon

Solution:

Create an Rural Oregon insurance industry

Change experience rating for fewer than 100 employees

Aggregate small business demand for insurance

- Modify or change State and Federal rules.

ED013

Issue: Use of revenue.

Solution: Allow counties greater flexibility in the use of hotel bed tax, lottery and other revenues.

ES014

Issue: Constant change in State and Federal economic development programs.

Solution: Sustain ED programs to 10 years minimum

Policy Statement: Rural Oregon economic development projects and construction projects must not be held hostage or prohibited by the use of the Davis-Bacon Act

ED015

Issue: Business deal breakers in rural Oregon are increased expenses through taxes, fees, legislation, Davis Bacon and the Bureau of Labor and Industries regulations

Solution:

- Facilitate a unified business voice to develop a legislative change
- Collect case examples of the impact of legislation on small rural businesses to effect legislative change

Facilitate a small business rural summit

BEST PRACTICES SHARING

ED016

Issue: Much of the information needed to make the best, informed decision in rural areas is anecdotal; there is a deficiency of good data related to economic development.

Solution: Stimulate, support and require community engagement by research universities and others to provide research and expertise for rural community economic development; develop education, training and research partnerships, networks and clusters to assist and develop commitment.

ED017

Issue: Disjointed and frequently antagonistic economic development in rural settings – not well planned and conducted activities.

Solution: Implement a mechanism(s) to share economic development expenses, failures, successes and lessons learned between rural Oregon communities. Recognize economic development success result from a multi-faceted systems approach to community/county economic development and plan and conduct actions accordingly.

ED018

Issue: Prioritize issues / solutions.

Solution: We formed the “Common Ground Alliance” with farmers and fishermen. The idea is to discover issues that we agree upon and then put solutions together. Those issues we do not agree upon need further work to put them on the list.

REINSTATE RURAL REGIONAL (MULTIPLE ENTRIES)

ED019

Issue: Elimination of Regional/Rural Investment dollars.

Solution:

- Fund the Regional Investment Program or a comparable program where job creation/retention projects are determined by locally appointed boards
- Re-establish functionality of Oregon Lottery toward economic development programs (original intent of Lottery)
- Re-establish Regional Strategies program, fund at '87/'89 levels and use '87/'89 rules
- Have 2009 legislature re-fund this program so the Regional Investment Boards can continue their good work.

ED020

Issue: Preservation/re-institution of a local delivery system (RIBs) for economic development efforts.

Solution: Recognize that local communities understand how best economic development funds can be effective.

ED021

Issue: Re-invest Rural/Regional

Solution: Re-investment of lottery dollars for their original intent – statewide economic recovery and development fund at '87/'89 levels and '87/'89 rules. Draft legislation – broad based – bipartisan House/Senate support that returns job creation and retention efforts to local/regional control.

INFRASTRUCTURE

ED022

Issue: Lack of available funding for municipal infrastructure.

Solution: Recapitalize the State's public works funds (water/wastewater, special public works).

ED023

Issue: Current eligibility for financial assistance for municipal water and wastewater systems is dependent on the current charges for those services on a statewide basis. That average, for water for instance, is \$45/month. Small cities can operate a profitable system for as little as \$30-\$35/month.

Solution: Determine eligibility by the municipality's ability to operate profitably and maintain a reserve based on a percentage of the associated capital asset, charging the minimum utility rate to accomplish that task

ED024

Issue: Poor/lacking infrastructure, e.g. power, gas, water, sewer, telecommunications.

Solution: Allow Public Utility Districts to install/provide services as needed by residents (not excused by limited subscribers).

ED025

Issue: Equitable rates for water/wastewater, commercial/residential. Unfunded mandates for water/wastewater system improvements and growth. Being forced to comply with changing state rules then being forced to use Davis-Bacon rules is a burden to small communities.

Solution: On unfunded or only partially granted state required projects give the communities the ability to suspend David-Bacon and allow a fair and open bidding process to create a competitive factor to these projects.

ED026

Issue: (See also Telecommunications) Telecommunications are unavailable in much of rural Oregon. For example, only 25% of Wheeler County has cell phone access.

Solution

- Facilitate development of the middle and last mile infrastructure in rural eastern Oregon.
- Encourage the use of wireless when fiber not available
- Assist partnerships with public, private, tribal entities to increase revenues, develop redundancy and aggregate users.
- Lobby large carriers to provide service in rural areas

ED027

Issue: Affordability of water and sewer systems in rural distressed communities.

Solution: Create a statewide “meter tax” as a form of transferring payments to offset the high cost of water and sewer systems to low and moderate income communities.

ED028

Issue: Inability of small communities to maintain infrastructure against rising environmental requirements

Solution: Provide subsidies for small communities for water, wastewater and basic utility services; develop a state fund by leveraging the states bonding capacity

ED029

Issue: The high cost of wastewater treatment and its negative impact on economic development and livability.

Solution: Require DEQ to share information about alternative waste water solutions, water reuse for agriculture and drinking, eliminate the requirement that everyone connect to the large center sewer treatment plant, encourage decentralization and let the local community decide.

WORKFORCE

Policy Statement: In order to take advantage of Federal and State work force programs there must be more coordinated effort across rural eastern Oregon and a better understanding of the availability of workers in rural Oregon

ED031

Issue: The perception that there is a lack of available workers in rural Eastern Oregon

Solution

- Begin to educate the urban business community and the State Dept. of Economic
- Development that businesses moving into rural communities will attract the local workers
- Encourage business that will attract transplanted workers living in urban areas that want to move back home.
- Change the focus of OECD and other State agencies
- Allow increased communications capacity to move state jobs out of Salem
- Focus the Dept. of Economic Development on high unemployment areas; not just the urban areas of the state.

- Create a template for region-specific that can be used for all programs

ED032

Issue: There is a lack of coordinated efforts on workforce issues across rural eastern Oregon

Solution

- Use Region 13 (Baker, Union, Wallowa) as model
- Create a federal community solutions model
- Provides workshops to promote awareness and coordinated efforts.
- Have communities (workforce) coordinate with economic development efforts
- Incorporate federal partners & Congressional delegation staff located within the region.

ED033

Issue: Workforce is perceived as an issue, i.e. not available in rural Oregon.

Solution: Work with rural Oregon to allow flexibility in workforce funding streams, incentive programs to attract employees and strategies to attract and train a solid workforce. It should also be to allow/encourage local decision-making.

ED034

Issue: Inconsistent and inadequate funding of workforce and skill development initiatives and programs.

Solution: Invest state general fund resources in existing rural programs supporting citizen skill and workforce development, opportunities and programs – especially for the provision of services to youth.

ED035

Issue: Funding workforce development programs to increase the pipeline on proven workforce needs.

Solution: Get funding for expansion of programs that we know we have a huge need like nursing/medical and windsmiths/wind energy.

ED036

Issue: Emerging workforce.

Solution: Identify and use training/education/experience strategies to instill work ethics in emerging workforce.

ED037

Issue: Small, inconsistent funding and workforce training and restrictive rules for allocation.

Solution: “Iowa Model” for bonding of workforce development training.

ED038

Issue: Declining workforce training revenues have gutted the ability to assist youth and adults in accessing training and services to get and keep family wage jobs. As baby boomers “age out” the ability to fill job slots with a trained workforce is declining.

Solution: State and Federal workforce revenues must increase to address the needs of Oregonians (youth and adult) to compete for and attain jobs. We need dollars to train workers in health, telecommunications, energy, etc.

ED039

Issue: The State’s economic development efforts are clearly focused on urban growth, infrastructure and opportunities. Little attention is given to rural ED needs and potential.

Solution: The State should develop a focused, dedicated ED effort specific to rural areas. Include dedicated and flexible funds. It could be done within the context of existing organizational structures –

but with a clear and separately focused effort. This effort should also recognize and validate the diversity of rural areas.

ED040

Issue: Job creation is not the answer. Many low wage jobs will not help rural Oregon.

Solution: Do not concentrate on job creation, concentrate on wealth creation. See my Cascade Policy Institute commentary: “Replace job creation with wealth creation”.

ENTREPRENEURS

Policy Statement: The free enterprise system needs entrepreneurs. Rural Oregon shall develop tools to assist, encourage and support entrepreneurs

ED041

Issue: Rural Oregon has many entrepreneurs. There is no lack of people willing to try to start up business. Technical and financial assistance is needed to make them viable. (see Finance)

Solution:

- Adequately and substantially fund rural regional development funds
- Provide a venue for SBA, and SBDC programs to get their information out to rural Oregon entrepreneurs.
- Facilitate identification of business space
- Encourage and support efforts to establish SCORE programs through the state
- Market SBA & SBDC programs through the Alliance network
- Identify business incubator space that can be donated i.e. in chambers, courthouses etc.

ED042

Issue: Small business development.

Solution: Encourage the development of small business around agricultural raw products in rural communities.

ED043

Issue: There is an opportunity to strengthen and grow the business sector and create wealth and jobs through the support of businesses and entrepreneurs.

Solution: Support an entrepreneurial economy by funding the local delivery of an Entrepreneurial Development System (EDS) that provides: 1) entrepreneurial education (K-16), 2) training, technical assistance and counseling for entrepreneurs, 3) networking and 4) access to capital or access to markets.

ED044

Issue: Entrepreneurship and small business support.

Solution: Support a statewide entrepreneurship development system (EDS) by funding the local delivery of this system that includes: education (youth and adult); training and technical assistance; access to capital; access to markets and networking. The statewide EDS would create a pipeline of information and resources (including telecommunications) to connect local service delivery organizations to serve all our entrepreneurs and small businesses.

ED045

Issue: Job creation in rural communities.

Solution: Support job creation, job retention and job support in our rural communities. The Oregon Economic Community and Development Department needs to continue to, and increase, its support of small businesses and entrepreneurs.

ECO-DEVO EDUCATION

ED046

Issue: Economic Development education

Solution: Foster and support school-based entrepreneurship education as a key part of curriculum in Oregon. We need to grow entrepreneurs among the next generation.

ED047

Issue: Accessing and utilizing knowledge, innovation and technologies are the driver of economic development that is dependent on education and training.

Solution: Enhance education and training in rural schools by eliminating “No Child Left Behind” and providing support for schools and quality teaching and teachers.

ED048

Issue: There is an urgent need to train rural residents to join the fast-growing renewable energy industries of Eastern Oregon – particularly wind power, but soon to include solar power and others. Workforce shortage constrains this industry’s growth.

Solution: Support and expand renewable energy workforce training programs in Oregon’s network of 17 community colleges and W.I.A. partners beginning with those training programs already in place.

ED049

Issue: Assistance to strengthen education and training in rural settings is lacking and/or declining and the quality of such training is declining. This had broad impact across economic development, environment and health care delivery.

Solution: Through a spectrum of federal, state and local initiatives, activities and policies enhance the quality, relevance and availability of K - gray education, training and life-long learning.

ECO-DEVO CAPACITY

ED050

Issue: Requirement for cities to have water fees at certain level before being eligible for loans or grants.

Solution: Realize that one size does not fit all. Wages are not the same in rural Oregon so neither are fees. Cities are reluctant to raise rates so high that citizens cannot afford them; therefore they don’t go after loans or grants. Make mandatory rates in relation to per capita income of local area.

ED051

Issue: State funding to address issues.

Solution: 1) cannot tax poverty, 2) initial priority upon development of infrastructure conducive to growth of free enterprises (roads, utilities) = financial investment and 3) roll back debilitating regulatory restraints.

ED052

Issue: Lack of economic development capacity in rural areas.

Solution: Require OECDD to partner with established ED districts to provide services locally rather than out of Salem.

ED053

Issue: Economically distressed communities often lack staff capacity and resources to implement economic development projects. Economic development districts complete comprehensive economic development strategies with the input of counties, cities and businesses.

Solution: Fund and utilize economic development districts to plan and implement economic and community development projects and services in conjunction with counties, cities, unincorporated areas, non-profits and businesses throughout the state of Oregon.

ED054

Issue: Process for rural economic development.

Solution: Streamline process for development across the board.

ED055

Issue: The threshold for initiating BOLI Rules is based on the size of the project (in terms of dollars). In small cities, the threshold becomes a showstopper. BOLI Rules also restrict local contractors in small cities in seeking large projects as primary or sub-contractor.

Solution: Base the threshold for initiating BOLI Rules on the size of the community (in terms of population).

ED056

Issue: Inadequate capacity/resources for rural communities and rural regions to sufficiently prepare for and capitalize on development opportunities.

Solution: Adequately invest in the future of Oregon’s rural communities, including investing in local and regional strategic investment planning and invest in training for rural staff/leadership RE: successful planning and investment for housing, transportation and economic development.

TOURISM**ED057**

Issue: Rural Communities have no or few resources for the economic opportunity of tourism development

Solution: Require Tourism Commission to allocate more funds to rural tourism development; establish a tourism development position in communities that have the promise or interest in tourism

ED058

Issue: The regions needs to expand marketing efforts

Solution: Encourage State agencies and existing regional marketing and tourism groups.

- Coordinate so as not to duplicate efforts
- Target marketing: Develop a brand. I.e. “Eastern Oregon” with unique message to focus and identify the region
- Encourage and support quality Oregon products
- Combined efforts and participation in trade shows
- Coordinate with Eastern Oregon Visitors Association to facilitate expand the trade area

ED059

Issue: A community based initiative. Developing tourism dollars Effective and well organized meetings, festivals, events.

Solution:

- Encourage development of existing events plus creation of new events within communities and geographic regions
- Train citizens on basic and mid-level meeting and event planning skills and how to maximize economic impact
- City/County mandate; If an employee travels to a conference or event he/she must make the attempt to invite that conference back to his/her home community (new dollars).

ED060

Issue: New uses of natural resources are developed being developed (wind, solar) that impact view sheds and scenic byways that impact the tourism industry

Solution: invite the tourism industry into the planning process. Make sure provisions are included for tear down and transportation impacts

ED061

Issue: Adequate funding for tourism development projects, safe transportations (roads and facilities) and representation of the tourism industry at the economic development forums.

Solution:

- Encourage economic development groups to have a tourism rep
- Ask Oregon Tourism Commission to allocate more dollars and staff for tourism development
- Work with Tourism Transportation Task Force to forward 2009 legislative agenda, including funding for new Ontario State Welcome Center.

HEALTHCARE

Access to good health care should be available equitably to rural Oregonian as well as urban

PUBLIC HEALTH-MENTAL HEALTH- LOCAL IMPACTS

Policy: It shall be the policy of the state and federal government to establish stable, baseline funding that is broad in nature, is not silo driven, but can be tailored to fit community needs and allows for the support of infrastructure, staffing and administration necessary to operate county based programs.

HC001

Issue: The need for stable state support of Public-Mental Health care, which currently does not cover basic administrative costs, especially when allocated on a per capita formula.

Solution:

Educate the legislature about the inadequate resource needs of their local partners by providing (similar to the timber payments loss to the state documents) the economic impacts if counties are forced to return the services back to the state.

Policy: It shall be the policy of the State of Oregon to adequately fund and support Mental Health hold rooms in each county. Additionally, there is a need for regional crisis assessment and stabilization facilities to be located regionally throughout Oregon

HC002

Issue: There are too few places available for mental health evaluation, care and housing, which creates overcrowding in local hospitals and jails and requires Herculean efforts by staff to seek out proper care facilities for people moderate to severe mental issues.

Solution: Require that the Legislature provide Oregonians, particularly those outside the Willamette Valley corridor, adequate mental health facilities that were lost due to the closure of the State hospital, not by building merely a smaller facility, but regionally locating facilities that do not put the burden of distance and accessibility on the shoulders of rural residents, providers and patients

HC003

Issue: Local governments and public safety providers cannot issue a law enforcement hold on an inmate seeking medical attention without incurring financial liability

Solution: Change the state statute to hold local law enforcement harmless

HC004

Issue: Long term, community based care options for a rapidly aging population and the disabled are inadequate

Solution: Continue planning for enhancement; tele-med, stabilize Oregon Project Independence; equity for Area Agencies on Aging; adequate re-imburement rates for Medicaid housing/care; address in comprehensive planning in SB1061 (2008)

HC005 Issue: The instability of rural health clinics due to lack of finances, retaining providers and other issues

Solution: Provide incentives to stabilize the collapse of the rural clinics, which are in many instances, the only healthcare option for miles

HC006

Issue: Lack of dental care in rural areas is extremely limited and resources are so severe the option is often to just remove teeth rather than perform costly repairs

Solution: Create a rural sliding scale dental program that includes transportation and incentives for mobile dental efforts

TELE-MEDICINE

Policy Statement: *Oregon communities need the ability to connect with critical access hospitals and educational institutions through broadband access*

HC007

Issue: There is a need for the Legislature to assist with 15% match for a \$20.1 million FCC Award that will connect Oregon communities with critical access hospitals and community colleges. Once installed, all within a community can access the broadband

Solution: Support lobbying efforts that convince the legislature to assist with the match.

HC008

Issue: Oregon's rapidly aging rural population and disabled rural residents are unable to access needed medical services

Solution: Tele-medicine capabilities and exchange between all medical clinics and hospitals in the state needs to be funded and implemented. Integrate telemedicine into the curriculum of all health professionals to prepare them for this technology

INSURANCE – PRESCRIPTION COSTS

HC009

Issue: The high cost of and access to adequate insurance especially for rural businesses

Solution: Explore the use of Health Savings Accounts (HSA), allow incentives for small businesses to band together to purchase group, healthcare plans for employees and create an umbrella health insurance policy for small business owners across the state

HC010

Issue: You can not buy out of state health insurance. You can buy out of state life insurance but not health insurance

Solution: Waive the Oregon Insurance Department approval of health insurance policies to allow policies sold by any other state

HC011

Issue: There is a lack of resources in rural communities for private care givers of home care of post hospital patients and care centers are not covered by health insurance

Solution: It shall be the policy of the state of Oregon to modify legal liability to private caregivers to enable the formation of a private healthcare registry to meet the needs of rural communities

HC012

Issue: The prohibitive, high cost of prescription drugs

Solution: Encourage counties to implement the National Assoc. of Counties Prescription Card, which can save thousands (up to 50%) of dollars by those who use the card

TORT CLAIM CAP

HC013

Issue: High insurance premiums precipitated by high dollar litigation awards

Solution: The Legislature must establish a tort claim cap; not only for the medical profession, but for government agencies, universities and volunteer organizations that will ensure adequate, equitable compensation, not exorbitant incentives for litigation

RURAL HEALTHCARE WORKERS

HC014

Issue: There is a lack of adequate, qualified rural healthcare workers. Recruitment and retention of health providers is difficult in rural communities

Solution:

- Link education with the need to develop systems for education health professionals in rural, high need communities to learn while providing care.
- Establish a loan repayment fund or waive tuition requirements for licensed staff dedicated to locating to rural areas
- Review urban-rural compensation inequities
- Address the cost of requirements for environmental health specialists
- Increase legislative funding
- Provide access to continuing education for healthcare workers through distance education and community colleges
- Encourage educational institutions to develop policies that support the recruitment of rural students with the likelihood and desire that they will return home to practice
- Provide educational institutions with incentives for locating professional health degree programs on rural campuses or through distance ed/satellite sites
- Create incentives and encourage insurance companies or groups to invest a portion of premiums into healthcare education
- Encourage young mothers who want to supplement family income by becoming healthcare workers by providing special incentives and transportation allowances
- Establish community scholarships to help 'grow our own' work force
- Work with both state and federal government to increase federal student loan repayment fund for medically under-served areas.
- Make ease of reimbursement for telemedicine procedures a priority with OMAP
- Work with OHSU and others to restore the Frontier Model Nursing Program so that folks can be trained in their home communities
- Form a Health/Public Health subcommittee dedicated to supporting health issues

HC015

Issue: Stringent licensing in Oregon creates a lack of access to physicians to provide adequate medical care in rural areas

Solution: Eliminate the punitive requirements (the most stringent in the United States) imposed upon a doctor to be licensed in Oregon; simplify licensing and certification programs; explore the

compensation differential between on-call doctors in urban vs. rural settings (i.e. Bend, Redmond, Prineville)

HC016

Issue: The state of Oregon should demand less not more centralized planning.

Solution: Worry less about needing to monitor where healthcare professionals work, but where we can access these needed professions and the market will provide the services
(or conversely)

HC017

Issue: There is not an entity to supply monitoring or quantify the demand for healthcare workforce in Oregon

Solution: Delegate responsibility for healthcare workforce analysis and recommendations to the Oregon Healthcare Workforce Institute (OHWI) and provide the necessary financial resources. Require healthcare licensing boards collect common data that would indicate who is working where and how much, with data to be furnished to OHWI

HC018

Issue: The high cost of training and equipment for rural EMS agencies

Solution: Reinstate SB 911 (1999) to provide grant funds for training and equipment

(HC20 added to HC14)

Policy Statement: *The presumptive eligibility of the Oregon Health Plan must be reinstated*

HC20

Issue: By withdrawing the OHP presumptive eligibility there has been a significant cost shift to counties

Solution:

- Reinstate OHP coverage for Rural Health Providers to reduce cost shift
- Work with OMAP and legislature to correct problem

Policy Statement: *Bio-Terrorism system change planning and training should be available for all rural, local health departments*

HC021

Issue: There is a need for regional technical assistance resource to assist local health departments in system change planning to include bio-terrorism and the training of local health officers

Solution

- Establish a regional center for excellence in rural public health practice to be located on college and university campuses. This resource will help with bioterrorism planning and training for public health officers in each of our communities
- Work with federal and state elected officials and DHS to secure funding for regional center

Policy Statement: *Health screening and primary care contact should be available in every rural high school*

HC022

Issue: There is a lack of access to health screening and primary care for children in rural Oregon. Many children go without the basic health screening because of the lack of health care providers in rural Oregon

Solution:

- Establish Adolescent Health Contact Centers in schools in rural communities.

Develop a concept and work with OMAP and the legislature to secure funding

Policy Statement: *There should be ‘whole system’ planning for public health in rural Oregon.*

HC023

Issue: There is no whole system planning for health and public health in rural Oregon

Solution

- Develop a facilitated strategic plan to bring all of rural health care together
- Create a Health / Public Health subcommittee to develop planning process

Policy Statement: *Rural Oregon should have a service integration system for human resource programs and services designed to meet the structure of rural communities.*

HCO24

Issue: Rural Oregon does not have enough human social resources services and programs at the local level to afford to have separated local services and programs. Having separate services requires a person to travel, sometimes one hundred miles, to get to all the human resource services or programs. This also means that a person may have many confidential case files in multiple locations.

Solution

- Give rural counties the ability to run the few human resource services and programs in one coordinated manner
- Secure a dedicated funding stream such as tax on wine and beer that comes directly to the county to be used to leverage state and federal funds in order to develop rural, local human resource service integration
- Promote changes to statutes and administrative rules to accommodate these changes

MENTAL HEALTH

Policy Statement: *The State shall provide technical assistance for local mental health infrastructure*

HC025

Issue: Community leaders lack expertise and funding to develop clinical and physical infrastructure in very rural communities to support alternatives to hospitalization

Solution

- There are a myriad of financing opportunities for purchase of facilities
- Regional Mental Health Organizations would need to underwrite or subsidize initial clinical development costs
- Develop better relations with housing authorities or develop a non-profit to target FHA and RD (? acronyms) to build facilities
- NIMBY Syndrome can be overcome by demonstrating fiscal benefit of investment

Policy Statement: *There will be a focus on Mental Health assistance for children and adolescents*

HC026

Issue: Level of mental health services to children and adolescents needs to be increased through treatment and prevention activities

Solution:

- Develop policies that allow community partners to get beyond turf issues such as responsibility for payment.
- Allow county to take a more active role in defining behavioral health services that meet the specific needs of their communities
- Share information between Ends (?) & mental health organizations
- Better define and reward the value of licensure for human services professionals
- Pool resources to hire best professionals possible

Policy Statement: *Replication of planning shall be limited to what is needed and adequately funded*

HC027

Issue: State ignores or grades plans they impose on Counties and Agencies once they are submitted (SB 555 & HB 3024)

Solution:

- Prohibit state agencies from imposing more mandated planning on Counties unless funds are allocated to implement plans.
- Review all 555 and 3024 plans, at the regional level, find elements common to all, define outcomes we can achieve, go to legislators with a budget including defined penalties for failure and bonus for exceeding outcomes.
- Measure the benefit of plans against the cost of people in Salem managing the plans.

Policy Statement: *There shall be clearly identified boundaries that allow interaction between local jurisdictions, the State and Mental Health organizations*

HC028

Issue: The Office of Medical Assistance Programs and the Office of Mental Health and Addiction Services do not have clearly defined boundaries when it comes to dealing with Counties and Regional Mental Health Organizations

Solution:

Demonstrate to legislators that we are capable of meeting and exceeding state and federal standards through the gathering, sharing and maintenance of good cost/benefit data on locally managed programs.

Implement data gathering and sharing strategies mentioned above

Make the present function of both less relevant

Demonstrate that we are more capable of policing ourselves than one or more state agencies are capable of doing

Policy Statement: *Rural Oregon mental health programs require operational flexibility in the funding provided by the State*

HC029

Issue: All of the money for county mental health programs comes from the state with little or no flexibility.

Solution:

- Create dedicated revenue streams for human services at the county level
- Create a fiscally conservative, rural strategy for generating options for funding human services and K-12 education at the county level, which can be taken directly to the voters
- Form a human services and education subcommittee dedicated to local revenue generation
- Place a local revenue generation measure on the ballot for consideration by the voters.

Policy Statement: Mental Health Authorities shall have the ability to manage risk authorized within the State Administrative Rules governing funding.

HC030

Issue: County Commissioners are designated as the Local Mental Health and Public Health Authority but the state controls the funds – keeping counties hamstrung and, as the payer of last resort, counties have little opportunity to manage risk

Solution

- Revenue streams generated statewide and dedicated to human services at the county level would give counties more control of the system to meet unique needs of each community
- Inventory what each county human services delivery system looks like
- Determine all the places where Commissioners have a voice and a vote on the local, regional, and statewide human services delivery system
- Build a strategy for making the system work from the bottom up for each county
- Promote changes to statutes and administrative rules to accommodate these changes

Policy Statement: New or updated computer systems developed by ODHS shall be interactive where ever they are located in Oregon

HC031

Issue: Oregon Department of Human Services computer systems are 30 years old and cannot talk to each other.

Solution:

- Create our own databases and demonstrate value to legislators
- Convince legislators that spending \$250,000,000 on new DHS computer systems makes less sense than supporting counties and regions to collect information and sell it to the state

Policy Statement: Funding for mental health will follow the client.

HCO32

Issue: More than half of the state mental health general fund budget is spent on approximately 800 institutional beds in the State Hospital System. The rates for alternatives to hospitalization have been set by the state and dollars saved do not follow people from the State Hospital System to the community.

Solution:

- State general funds expended on persons residing in institutions with a population of more than 16 people are largely not eligible for Medicaid Match.
- Creation of smaller community based treatment facilities allows for a more personalized level of care at a lower cost due to eligibility for Medicaid Match
- Work with Eastern Oregon Psychiatric Center to develop alternatives to hospitalization for long-term population
- Maintain financial and clinical records on people placed in our communities
- Tie encounter data, CPMS data, and financial data together to demonstrate cost/benefit of achieving outcomes
- Capture financial data to demonstrate value added to regional rate setting
- Create regional database to measure and track outcomes

EDUCATION

EDUCATION K-12

Policy Statement: All students of Oregon, no matter where they live should have equal access to quality education. Living in a rural, frontier rural or isolated rural area should not condemn a child to a significantly inferior education. Nor should the State funding formula adversely affect the quality of education in rural areas. State and federal program decisions based on data and statistics must include a rural factor to avoid a slanted outcome.

K-12-001

Issue: Currently education is funded per child. As the rural population declines rural school funding is declining

Solution

- State legislative change
- Increase population growth or retain and restore historic employment opportunities (an economic development issue)
- Develop a Legislative concept to increase a funding floor for rural schools and rural Education Service Districts. A sustainable rural funding formula could consider a five year average enrollment, a funding base, distance consideration

K-12-002

Issue: The education of our children- which has inadequate local input and which seems to be driven by state and federal funding parameters and urban-based boards

Solution: Return the control of education back to local school boards/districts who can decide the quality of education for their children; which schools are cost effective and whether or not schools, which are often the social center of rural communities, should or should not be closed; allow a community to assist with local school funding without a trade off of equal state funding

K-12-003

Issue: Certification required for specialty teachers in small rural schools prohibits local assistance from volunteers who may be gifted in music, art and drama and prevents rural children from receiving beneficial electives

Solution: Exempt small rural schools from certification requirements for specialty classes:

K-12-004

Issue: Education data assumptions are skewed by small rural populations

Solution

Develop rural template, draft legislation. Draft a legislative concept: template for each of the following; metro, urban, urban rural, rural, frontier and isolated rural. The template will provide

a format for data collection and surveys that eliminate the unintended consequences of having a one size fits all for information, data and statistical work.
Invite legislators to sign on the bill as soon as possible.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Policy Statement: All of Oregon’s universities and colleges need to be strengthened and receive equitable funding consideration throughout the state

Policy Statement: Higher Education must be a fundamental part of rural education and economic development activities in rural communities

HE001

Issue: Higher education should be a partner in rural economic development

Solution:

- Legislation and funding
- Collaborative strategic planning with communities, workforce development, health care, and facilitation.
- Add higher education to the community solutions, economic revitalizations process

HE002

Issue: Need to diversify higher education student body

Solution:

- Internal change
- Administrative leadership institution specific

HE003

Issue: There is a need to strengthen all rural Oregon colleges-universities

Solution:

- Internal changes
- Develop and implement a strategic plan that includes: survival of the institutions, include economic development, workforce and cultural development in the plan

HE004

Issue: Inadequate funding for rural Universities such as Eastern Oregon University which would broaden educational offerings/opportunities

Solution: Legislation providing expansion resources to significantly enhance EOU with funding equal to the new sports facility in Eugene.

HE-005

Issue: Providing more flexibility at community colleges to meet local needs

Solution: Require state to eliminate the community college ‘plan’ that requires each community college to offer specified classes; engage community colleges to petition for the classes most needed and desired locally

HE006

Issue: Assistance for communities that would like to be in a community college district

Solution: provide incentives for community colleges to provide services to broader areas, provide higher education money for expansion; repeal the percentage allocation that already financially strapped counties are saddled with if they participate

LAND USE

Policy Statement: Oregon's Land Use Laws must be living documents that adjust to changes in society over time

Policy Statements: Voter referral bill explanations in voters manual must be peer reviewed with documentation

Policy Statement: When developing programs and rules the State will take into consideration the differences between urban rural, rural, frontier rural and isolated rural

LU001

Issue: One-size fits all regulation has proved unworkable in Oregon's land use efforts

Solution:

- Scrap comprehensive land use planning and return regulation and implementation to counties for placed-based desires and application
- Local control, use rural policy population template
- State legislation
- Draft a legislative concept: template for; metro, urban, urban rural, rural, frontier and isolated rural that can be used for developing new programs or writing administrative rules.
- Recognize difference between urban-rural growth boundaries

LU002

Issue: Big Look Task Force Comments

Solution: Be mindful of what 'Public Comments' represent in the Task Force effort

LU003

Issue: Property Rights compensation to victims of Oregon's Land Use Laws (e.g. Gorge Scenic Act)

Solution: If the public actually supports land takings, require compensation to landowners and a public-funding-in-place requirement to any laws created and/or implemented that violate the property owners rights of Oregon citizens.

LU004

Issue: Public perception of land use by misrepresentation

Solution: Revisit measure 37 and measure 49. Require an independent (unbiased) report to voters on the actual aspects of each with clearly defined corrective legislation that will not require LCDC to interpret the bill post-voter approval

LU005

Issue: Loss of arable land to housing and development.

Solution: Re-examine and change land use policies to encourage local placed-based abilities to maintain working lands

LU006

Issue: There is a lack of ability of the Oregon system of land use planning to change and evolve over time to meet societies changing needs. The current process has allowed the metropolitan-urban region of the state to develop on some of the most valuable agricultural land in the state while refusing the rural areas to develop on less valuable land.

Solution:

- There needs to be a more even handed approach that has the flexibility to respond to rural differences that is geographically balanced
- Draft a legislative concept that will include a 15 year legislative review of land use rules and exceptions by legislators/ public/ tribes
- Limit development to water availability

LU007

Issue: Planning rules require a 20 year inventory of developable lands – they must only be “suitable” not necessarily “available”.

Solution: Require the developable lands inventory to meet the 20-year goal only if the land is both suitable and available

LU008

Issue: Land use laws are an economic development impediment

Solution: Provide adequate inventory of land properly zoned for industrial use

LU009

Issue: Length of time to accomplish Periodic Review in communities is too long

Solution: Simplify the process. Goal is to complete Periodic Review in 18 months

HOUSING

Policy Statement: Decent housing is a significant component of economic development. Rural housing should not have substandard housing because there is not access to financing or lack of comparative sales information

HS001

Issue: Most of existing rural housing is in substandard condition. There is a real need for good single-family dwellings not multi-family. There is also a need for Housing rehab CDBG and HGS resource centers. Rural Oregon has a homeless problem and housing construction creates market rate jobs as well as providing homes for the homeless

Solution:

- Federal statutes need modification
- State administrative rules need modification
- Economic development needs to include housing in the strategy
(Include with finance solutions)
- Develop flexible language for modification of fed and state processing rules
- Develop a rural template for CDBG and financial institutions

Policy Statement: Citizens living in rural communities will have access to opportunities to own their own homes

HS002

Issue: The difficulty for middle class citizens to own their own homes in rural Oregon

Solution:

- Create a mechanism for gap financing
- Simplify the process for finance processing
- Raise the lower income bar to include more middle income families
- Draft a statute and administrative rule change; allow the same blue print to be used on similar projects

HS003

Issue: USDA Rural Housing dollars for direct subsidized loans has been stripped at a time when payment subsidy becomes necessary to own a home. Rural incomes don't work for the non-subsidized guaranteed loans, which Bush endorsed.

Solution: Oregon was a leader for FHA 235 programs of the 1970s, which led to home ownership with graduated payment increases. We need to go back to Congress demanding monies under and for the USDA Rural Direct Housing program with re-evaluated criteria to allow your average rural family to qualify for a home loan.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Policy Statement: Public Safety and Law Enforcement will be provided in the rural areas in the structure that best fits the jurisdictions concerned.

PS001

Issue: In many rural areas there is a duplication of public safety and law enforcement agencies. This also duplicates the costs and encourages turf and control issues that do not need to exist

Solution:

- Services will be consolidated where feasible and desired
- Create joint consolidation service agreements between participating public safety entities based on mutual interests and improving systems

Policy Statement: Justice Courts serve a need in rural Oregon. The Justice Courts that exist currently should be retained and supported against repeated legislative attacks. Where there is a need for a new Justice Court in a rural area they should be created.

PS002

Issue: In many rural areas Justice Courts serve as traffic Courts, Small Claims Courts and Municipal Courts. Justice Courts are not seen as serving a need by legislators from urban areas which encourages repeated legislative moves to eliminate the Justice Court system.

Solution:

- Monitor each legislative session for bills to remove the Justice Courts
- When legislation opposing JP Courts is submitted organize opposition to the Bill by providing information and testimony about how the Justice Courts serve rural needs
- When a new JP Court is needed assist the communities requesting the new Court Identify Justice Court advocates and help keep them informed about adverse legislative

PS003

Issue: The natural resource destruction of rural economies has placed a financial strain on rural counties and creates an inequitable level of public safety and security to rural Oregon residents

Solution: The Governor's office and the State Legislature should immediately and honestly support local and statewide efforts to restore Oregon's natural economic strength and step back from the politics of securing environmental industry votes at the expense of protecting the economy of all of Oregon and in particular the lives of Oregon's rural residents Local government needs to be able to show that their state and federal leadership (the Legislature, the Governor and the entire federal delegation) supports prosperity for all of Oregon (also in Natural Resources)

Related issue

PS004

Issue: The need for law enforcement in rural communities.

Solution: Encourage reimbursement of training cost, encourage regional, not centralized training

PS005

Issue: Expenditure of small rural communities to recruit and train public safety officials only to have them hired away to more lucrative jurisdictions

Solution: The requirement of training reimbursement if officer(s) do not invest a specific amount of time where the training costs were incurred. Reimbursement could be covered by the individual officer or by the jurisdiction that recruits the pre-trained officer activities

Policy Statement: It is in the best interest of the citizens of Oregon that their State government fulfills agreements signed with local jurisdictions

PS006

Issue: The State of Oregon signed legal agreements with all the Counties agreeing to fund county jails. The State is now failing to live up to and fund these 1145" agreements. For the State to not abide by legal agreements with local jurisdictions undermines the legitimacy of current and future inter-jurisdictional agreements.

Solution:

- Draft State legislation as needed. Develop a process for the State and local jurisdictions to sign legal binding contracts when agreements are needed or required.
- Draft legislative concept language that prevents the state from abandoning signed agreements.
- Facilitate AOC, LOC, OSSA, OACD, and ORP, to prevent the State from fracturing a unified solution.

Policy Statement: It is in the best interest of the citizens of the State of Oregon and the Tribes for all law enforcement agencies operating within the state to act in cooperation across jurisdictional lines.

PS007

Issue: There is a lack of jurisdictional cooperation between tribal and non- tribal entities on law enforcement issues

Solutions

- The solutions will have to be local, tribal state and federal
- Discussions-negotiations focused on developing agreements for law enforcement activities and cooperation for on reservation and off reservation lands

Policy Statement: No matter where crime occurs in Oregon, rural or urban, local law enforcement shall have access to the Oregon State Police (OSP) crime laboratory

PS008

Issue: There is a lack of access to OSP crime labs for rural law enforcement

Solution:

- Support or sponsor legislation to provide access for rural local law enforcement
- Draft a legislative concept, or support a legislative concept, to fund adequately each OSP lab within two hours (one way) of every county seat
- Include in the legislation the definition for the OSP mission, to provide crime lab service for all law enforcement agencies in Oregon

Policy Statement: It is in the best interests of the citizens of the State and for all law enforcement agencies, for the OSP to have a stable funding source

PS009

Issue: Local law enforcement needs the OSP to be a stable backup force they can rely on at all times. The repeated rise and fall of funding for OSP places a needless burden on local law enforcement. It also results in an unstable system overall.

Solution

- Legislative concept: Require the legislature to provide stable funding for OSP

Policy Statement: All jurisdictions of the state will have equal access to BPSST training

PS010

Issue: There is a lack of rural access to BPSST training. There is one training facility in Oregon. It is located in the northern section of the Willamette Valley. This requires all rural law enforcement to take time off from their job and travel sometimes hundreds of miles from their homes for training, adding expense to rural law enforcement budgets.

Solution:

- Develop a training system for southern and eastern Oregon
- Draft a legislative concept to create a rural BPSST system for southern and eastern Oregon.
- Identify cost and funding source for inclusion in the Draft legislation

Policy Statement: Training for volunteer fire fighters should be appropriate to the needs associated with their jurisdictions

PS011

Issue: The State Fire Marshall and the State Fire Statutes and Administrative Rules are not based on jurisdiction appropriate reality. Currently, one size fits all volunteer firing training does not take into consideration either the reality of the type of fires rural volunteers face or the sacrifices rural volunteers make to get training. Rural volunteer fire fighters are not paid; they have to take days off of work without pay for training. They also must travel miles, sometimes hundreds of miles in the case of eastern Oregon volunteers, find lodging and meals to take training; all at their own expense.

Solution:

- Draft legislation and or new administrative rules for place-based training
- Develop a rural template for fire fighting training for the legislation.

Policy Statement: The State of Oregon planning for terrorism and bio terrorism will take into planning consideration that any act of terrorism will affect the entire state in some manner. The State will also take into planning consideration, communication, transportation and services are very different in rural Oregon and must be addressed in a correspondingly appropriate manner

PS012

Issue: There is a lack of coordinated effort and information on bio terrorism planning that takes into consideration rural realities

Solution:

- Rural jurisdictions must represent how their systems actually function during discussions with the State. Specific actions and activities for rural communities must be developed to be carried out within the rural systems that exist. New systems for rural support must be developed to operate in conjunction with rural constraints
- Develop a top down process on turf issues
- Make sure training is given to first responders in all rural areas
- Develop a rural template for rural bio terrorism response
- All rural jurisdictions must require the rural template to be incorporated into the current process

Policy Statement: Food Security will become more of an issue as terrorism activity continues. Access to a safe supply of food distribution for all Oregonians, no matter where they live, should be a major focus for Oregon's Home Land Defense planning

PS013

Issue: Currently there is not a wide spread discussion about how rural Oregon, or even urban Oregon citizens, would have access to a safe, sufficient supply of food during and after a major act of terrorism. Much of Oregon is dependent for weekly transportation of food supplies into rural areas. A disruption of transportation could leave hundreds of people without access to food and medicine.

Solution: Create emergency safe food distribution plans implementing HLD planning funds

PS014

Issue: Coast communities need updated tsunami maps to place effective for emergencies in their community.

Solution: Need NOAA to budget and spend the money for LIPAR mapping of Oregon's territorial sea so DOGAMI can do the mapping

FINANCE

Policy Statement: Rural Oregon will have access to short term and medium term financial investment. Rural eastern Oregon will develop systems for taking advantage of local funds and mechanisms for finance packaging, venture capital and leverage.

F001

Issue: There is a lack, in rural Oregon, of the usual financial tools and systems found in urban areas. There is also a perception that rural eastern Oregon has a lack of capital. This perception is held by local residents and urban citizens, the Oregon Legislature, state agencies and Oregon Business Community.

Solution

- Address this perception and determine the facts
- Develop a survey for every eastern Oregon county, city, special district and school district to determine: How much money do they have on deposit in local bank and; how much on deposit in the local pool. This will make the case for how much public investment is occurring in rural eastern Oregon. It will allow the Congress to have documentation that rural communities are not on the public dole or are not contributing to the health of the wealth of the state

TAXING ISSUES

F002

Issue: Oregon Tax Expenditure (i.e. credits) make a huge impact on state tax revenue

Solution: Oregon Legislature should develop criteria with which to measure existing tax expenditures against; the intent would be to eliminate at least 1/3 of them with criteria of eliminating those that benefit the fewest or no longer serve the interests of Oregon

IMPACTS OF GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT SHARED SERVICES

F003

Issue: Revenue loss to counties from tax exemptions and designations by the state

Solution: Prohibit state legislature from authorizing new special assessments (tax exempt designations) without new from impacted counties (example- conservation special assessments)

F004

Issue: State mandated services without adequate financial resources

Solution: It shall be the policy of the state to provide and ensure adequate funding to support the implementation of all state mandated and shared services (example: The Department of Revenue provides mandates for staffing making the counties nothing more than a checkbook for assessment functions and at the expense of other county services...i.e. public safety officers)

GENERAL FUND ISSUES

F005

Issue: shortfall in General Fund revenues

Solution: allow General Fund dollars to be invested in an account similar to PERS, which consistently yields higher revenues

FINANCIAL IMPACTS OF PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP

F006

Issue: Lack of resources from large Public Land Ownership

Solution: Coordination with other states with massive public holdings to address state and county implications; consider sponsorship of an eastern/western legislative concept that would equitable impact the eastern portion of the nation as it has the west

BALLOT ISSUES AND INITIATIVES

F007

Issue: The fiscal impacts of legislative bills and citizen initiatives

Solution: A research project to develop a methodology for assessing and creating a fiscal impacts model.

- The State of Oregon and its initiative petitioners as well as the federal government shall employ the use of cost/benefit analysis to include community/values, life cycle costing and benefits and require in statute that all initiatives and bills before the voters and those before the legislature be accompanied by an audited fiscal impact study, available for public consideration in the voter's pamphlet and from the house/senate legislative bodies Oregon economy in a significant way

Policy Statement: Rural Oregon needs to have financial vehicles to assist local economic development, with criteria and processes that are specific to rural needs and systems.

F008

Issue: There is a lack of finance vehicles to facilitate economic development in rural eastern Oregon. Rural Oregon depends on the State or federal entities to provide financial vehicles that may be accessed for economic development activities and projects. These programs are usually developed for assisting urban communities and projects. Most rural business is small business. Even the component business of agriculture is mostly carried out by small business. Small business owners in rural Oregon do not have the time or ability to seek out management or financial assistance. The entities that provide those services are rarely local or easy to find.

Solution:

- Identify how much money is running through the budgets of rural Oregon entities now
- Develop a regional rural Oregon finance tool
- Create a Finance Authority

- Capitalize the Authority fund by asking local and regional banks to make investments in the fund
- Use one quarter percent of the interest on the fund as venture capital, once the fund reaches an agreed upon level
- Elevate the existing rural financial network in economic development awareness
- Expand the existing lenders forum
- Create new tax credit tools
- Create a new tax credit for rural development by legislation
- Create new value added tax credits by legislation for agricultural products and agricultural systems development
- Clarify and simplify regulations for tax credits and lending
- Create an entity that is focused on providing ongoing management training to loan recipients
- Backstop the rural small business with management technical support including problem solving
- Develop a rural business support entity

F009

Issue: Lack of resources from large Public Land Ownership

Solution: Coordination with other states with massive public holdings to address implications of -eastern/western equitable legislation

TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

Policy Statement: The State of Oregon shall have a clearly defined process for how local government interfaces with the Tribes in all areas where they are separately or jointly involved or access the same programs

Policy Statement: It is in the best interest of the citizens of the State of Oregon and the Tribes for all law enforcement agencies operating within the state to act in cooperation across jurisdictional lines.

TRIB001

Issue: There is a lack of jurisdictional cooperation between tribal and non- tribal entities on law enforcement issues. The State of Oregon has developed statute and process for how it interfaces with the tribal system. Nothing has been developed in statute for how local governments interface or compete for services or program funds. Ignoring the role of local government in connection with Tribal government needlessly exacerbates local government-tribal misunderstandings and conflicts.

Solution:

- Develop a template for how local government and the Tribes interface and compete for services and-or funding
- Recognize by policy the right of any tribe to develop its economy
- Alliance will recognize by policy the right of any jurisdiction other than tribes to develop its economy
- Alliance will recognize by policy that no jurisdiction should develop their economy in a manner that causes adverse public impact to any other jurisdiction either tribal or local
- Alliance will open a dialogue with the tribes on both forms of sovereignty; tribal and local governmental structure
- Alliance will support discussion of successful tribal based natural resource management practices. Alliance will support non-native discussions of good science based management practices
- Alliance will work toward a rural Oregon that recognizes and honors all the people living on the land

TRIB002

Issue: Tribal land transfers – more local control.

Solution: Support the National Association of Counties (NACo) move forward unanimously passed resolutions to 1) expand from 30 – 120 days times counties have to respond to new applications, 2) as constitutionally possible require county agreement to move land into trust, 3) force the federal government to mitigate the effects of casino's/gambling on local communities.

TRIB003

Issue: Expand this qualifications for the creation of new enterprise zones as all available zones have been designated

Solution: Modify the legislation that sets up Reservation Enterprise Zones that will allow all nine Oregon tribes to designate an Enterprise Zone.

TRANSPORTATION

Policy Statement: The State shall work toward limited restriction between the three levels of jurisdictional interaction and mutual assistance on transportation projects.

TRAN001

Issue: There is limited capacity of local road crews. Many do not have engineers or technical people

Solution:

- Share with State and private their expertise requires identifying assets of local government which could be traded to state rather than just money
- Begin to change Administrative Rules at the State and federal level
- Begin the research now. Draft Rule changes shall be ongoing

Policy Statement: State and local transportation departments will work together to address the future shortage of access to rock within the urban region

TRAN002

Issue: Rock sources are becoming scarce in the urban region of Oregon. Rural Oregon has access to many sources. It will become an issue for urban Oregon within the foreseeable future. Rural Oregon jurisdictions should begin to interact with our urban counterparts to solve this issue before it becomes critical.

Solution:

- Inventory all federal, state, county and private rock sources.
- Forecast potential life of these sources
- Begin looking for new sources
- Work through the Area Commissions on Transportation.

Policy Statement: Flexibility shall be maintained in contracting regulations that recognize regional differences in ability to obtain bids on local government road projects

TRAN003

Issue: The contractors associations want all local road projects to go to bid. This may difficult for rural areas where there are few contractors and the contractors in the urban regions do not want to bid projects in very rural areas.

Solution:

- Maintain flexibility in bid regulations.
- Change Bureau of Labor and Industries rules to reflect a rural balance in bid regulations
- Review and offer modification to the existing regulations where necessary

TRAN004

Issue: ODOT and local government ORS 734.051 – OAR Div. 51 requiring language

Solution:

- Need local flexibility to make decisions many require statute change to allow to happen
- We need to be able to deal differently when we are trying to ‘create’ growth rather than having to ‘manage’ growth

Policy Statement: Funding for ODOT District maintenance budgets shall be adequate to maintain safety during winter storm season, across the State.

TRAN005

Issue: Funding for maintenance in the ODOT Districts has fallen in the last few years, this has – safety is an issue no overtime for snowplowing.

Solution: Continuation of current or increased level of funding to maintenance areas

Policy Statement: Rural infrastructure is declining and efforts must be addressed to insure preservation

TRAN006

Issue: Rail Spurs – rail preservation

Solution:

- Keep rail spurs
- Keep right of way in public ownership if rail goes away

Policy Statement: Rural transportation corridors are of value statewide

TRAN007

Issue: Hwy 395 needs to be raised on statewide priority list (noted in Kiplinger letter)

Solution:

- Research and review other states priority level for 395 and also Canada
- Use a criterion other than average daily usage or population
- Study economic impact of manufacturing and distribution using Hwy 395 using our clean air credit to attract businesses that are clean air credit short in their current location i.e. fiberglass manufacturing

TRAN008

Issue: Transportation funds

Solution:

- Find new source of revenue -possibility of license plates earmarked for rural
- Toll road – needs to be very specific
- Protect funds now rather than fragment
- Revisit allocation formula by region

TRAN009

Issue: Misunderstanding of how county road departments are funded

Solution:

- Get back to use of abundant natural resources
- Establish transportation pool of local government money for loans to other Oregon governments
- Work to reauthorize timer funds
- Communicate how we are funded

TRAN010**Issue:** Freight rates**Solution:**

- Coordinate use, hard for private to do.
- Get local businesses that have haul back to talk to one another

TRAN011**Issue:** Bike lanes and facilities safety issues for riders, particularly for young riders.**Solution:**

- Allow local flexibility
- May be important in some communities but unnecessary in others

TRAN012**Issue:** Small airports – commercial service needed in rural Oregon**Solution:**

- Sky taxi model
- Encourage people to use air
- Encourage regional ownership and ridership

TRAN013**Issue:** Public transportation medical/seniors/special needs**Solution:** Partner in local communities with other who are providing some level of transportation without duplicating, coordinate efforts**TRAN014****Issue:** Channel dredging river needs to be viable, don't need more trucks on I-84**Solution:** Make it happen – Federal.**TRAN015****Issue:** Culverts and bridges replacement or install process too long and too regulatory the paperwork is doing nothing, need on the ground assistance.**Solution:**

- Regulatory streamlining office to provide assistance, especially to deal with multiple agencies
- Certification to allow by passing regulation for public entities.
- Identify why time period so long and fix that problem
- Blanket permit using 'best practice'
- Better local planning
- Larger work window (maybe basin by basin)

TRAN016

Issue: The return of rail service to rural communities

Solution: advocate for re-regulation of railroads to ensure service; establish a state rail policy and initiatives to enhance short-line rail viability; advocate for combining passenger and freight to create a financial model that works

TRAN017

Issue: Transportation infrastructure needs

Solution: Continued enhancement and focus on state transportation funding; consideration of the 'system' as a whole, not state-county-city transportation issues

TRAN018

Issue: Gas tax distribution based on population- current allocations do not consider statewide usage needs (example- heavily impacted coastal tourist communities) and provides inadequate revenue

Solution: Revise gas tax allocation to start with a baseline amount then a population component

TRAN019

Issue: The inadequate transportation coordination of Hwy 101

Solution: Assistance and coordination to provide as a public transportation corridor from Brookings to Astoria

TRAN020

Issue: Public transportation corridor through the Columbia Gorge

Solution: Creation of public or private commuter rail service through the Gorge to alleviate unemployment issues and expensive commuter costs, enhance tourism and mitigate pollution

TRAN021

Issue: A lack of unified disaster planning services that serve rural communities

Solution: Debrief the effectiveness of disaster services in previous years floods and develop plans that work; especially for roads

TRAN022

Issue: Restrictions on open waterways

Solution: Apply valid science to waterway issues

TRAN023

Issue: Impacts to local infrastructure and resulting costs born by local governments due to increased traffic at destination resort/casinos

Solution: Clarify Oregon's destination resort statutes to clarify responsibility for transportation impacts so that economic growth predictions are adequately met

TRAN024

Issue: Scenic highways prevent regulations, restrict improvements and create safety hazards due to lack of signage

Solution: Eliminate outdated /useless signage laws that restrict the ability of rural areas to improve their roads, their economies and provide adequate safety signage

TRAN025

Issue: Access management a county and city issue. ODOT not flexible and acting as a land use planning entity. Too long to find an answer when a concern comes up. ODOT is worried about integrity of their facilities.

Solution:

- Threshold criteria to allow exemption of access management
- Allow locality to have more authority to set planning regulations (economic development should carry much weight in planning)
- Decision maker at ground level (ODOT employees) needs ability to make a decision
- Law needs to allow flexibility
- Seek support for LOC and AOC
- The flexibility to protect readiness – Immediate Opportunity Fund or?
- State-rule-modify

TRAN026

Issue: The high cost of interaction with legislative body. All of 'us' going toward Salem/Portland need better use of public owned vehicles

Solution: Public entities (federal, state, county, city) need to talk to one another and car pool; May be a liability issue – may need regulatory statute to fix this

TRAN027

Issue: On system / off system not eligible for county bridge replacement program most at risk bridges are off system due to no funds, may be more of a county issue than one for state

Solution:

- Change federal criteria to allow more off system to on system (need to understand how process is determined and then modify it)
- Re-designate or update routes
- Work with BIA as they can be an asset
- More involvement of local government road supervisors to set priority index
- Better trading of design and 'best practices' between local government
- Work with trucking association to determine future truck designs (increasing weights)
- Work with local truckers and / or to make sure county / city routes needing most capacity are identified.

TRAN028

Issue: Oregon's transportation system is falling apart and beyond the needs for repair and maintenance. If we can't get goods and services to market, if visitors can't travel safely, then all economies suffer.

Solution: Work to develop regional groups, with the Area Commission on Transportation, to give real solutions to the 2009 legislature, groups such as the Transportation Tourism Task Force and other user groups to influence dollars for transportation projects.

TRAN029

Issue: ODOT decisions affect economic development.

Solution: Encourage legislature to continue working with administration to prioritize economic development into ODOT's mission and goals.

TRAN030

Issue: State agencies competing with each other and raising the costs of projects. (e.g. a Highway 30 project was approved by ODOT but because of DSL unrealistic demands the cost doubled and the project is scaled back to what ODOT can afford without dealing with DSL.

Solution: Form a task force of legislators, rural officials and experts to review policies of state agencies and their interaction and where this can be streamlined to save tax dollars and use funding more efficiently.

LOCAL CONTROL

LCN001

Issue: Inability for local government to guide their own future with excess state manipulations and micro-management of state-county shared services

Solution: State should create an equitable funding model for each of the funding streams to counties (i.e. healthcare, roads, schools) and allow each county to make the decisions on how to spend those dollars the most effectively for their particular needs. This would reduce state overhead/ administrative costs and return more money to the ground where it is most needed and better allocated

LCN002

Issue: Population centers, often without an understanding of rural issues or legislative consequences, trump less populated areas, with disastrous results

Solution: Using the federal Government model, change the membership of the Oregon Senate to one senator per county (also in Equitable Representation)

LCN003

Issue: Unintended consequences of Urban Majority-Rural Minority

Solution: Establish an amendment that any Administrative Rule or Standard that has a negative economic impact on counties and is unfounded, must be approved by local voters prior to implementation

LCN004

Issue: The definition of Local Control

Solution: It shall be the policy of the federal (state) government to define local control as being under the control of the specific geographic location where local decisions are being decided and dollars spent

LCN005

Issue: Communities find themselves surrounded by state and federally owned land and yet have little or no voice in shaping their access to or utilization of their surroundings public lands

Solution: aid, encourage, protect and support local control of natural resource lands

LCN006

Issue: Inequities and lack of resources from large public land ownership

Solution: Coordination with other states with massive public holdings to address implications of eastern/western equitable legislation (**also in Finance**)

LCN007

Issue: Inadequate funding for active management of federal lands

Solution: Return to counties those lands which, through budget reductions or litigious wrangling are unable to be managed for the social economic and environmental good of the resource and local communities (see National Association of Counties Public Land 2005 Resolution)

LCN008

Issue: State and Federal control/regulations are abusive and non-productive and are creating state and federal deficits

Solution: Develop County Resource Utilization Plans and return control of common public lands to the county and citizens of each county; allow local communities to manage and utilize the surrounding resources to create healthy communities and forests and stronger economies on all levels

LCN009

Issue: Large federal ownership/landlocked communities (example Mitchell) preventing community growth or activity

Solution: Legislation to allow counties/cities to reclaim USFS/BLM land to enable them to grow/flourish and survive

LCN010

Issue: One size fits all statutes, regulations and rules are too inflexible to allow communities to deal with issues

Solution: It will be the policy of the State of Oregon to craft or change legislation in a manner that will allow rural communities the flexibility to deal with local issues

Similar yet more specific

LCN011

Issue: One-size fits all regulation has proved unworkable in Oregon's land use efforts

Solution: Scrap Comprehensive land use planning and return regulation and implementation to counties for place-based desires and application

LCN012

Issue: Monetarily, lengthy and prohibitive planning requirements (example never-ending EIS requirements)

Solution: Instead of perpetual studies, allow local governments to develop economic/social/environmentally balanced plans

LCN013

Issue: The potential of a centralized water plan/control

Solution: Enact legislation providing and enabling the creation and authority of regional water authorities

LC014

Issue: State control/decision making affecting local economic development.

Solution: 1) Eliminate the requirement for local rural communities to send land use decisions to Salem. Make/Keep the decision local. 2) Adopt the recommendation of the "Big Look" task force.

LC015

Issue: "Get off the air hose!" Get more bang for the rural buck.

Solution:

- Keep studies to a minimum
- Let decisions be made at the lowest level possible
- Get the required skills from as close to the task as possible – local is best
- Avoid rules that cost money.

LC016

Issue: Economic Development

Solution: Abolish the Land Use Board of Appeals and LCDC and transfer control of land use to local municipalities.

LC017

Issue: Lack of understanding and effective results for Eastern Oregon and rural areas.

Solution: 1) Oregon legislature to tell us “you’re on your own”, 2) create a new state of Eastern Oregon.

ENERGY

EN001

Issue: Destruction, breaching and removal of dams that provide low cost power and needed local tax dollars

Solution:

balance the need for human needs with those of fish
spend less money destroying valuable infrastructure and invest that in money retrofitting

EN002

Issue: Intermittent power sources fail to provide “firm” power.

Solution: Require intermittent power developers to also develop storage facilities.

EN003

Issue: We are larger consumers than producers – let’s compete through “free enterprise”.

Solution: Encourage all incentives for energy companies to come to Oregon. This involves tax incentives, less regulation and no litigation threats.

EN004

Issue: The deferred maintenance of federal land management and a failure of the federal government to provide contractually historic funding support from commodities from massive federal land ownership has impacted 617 counties in 39 states and over 4000 school districts

Solution:

Lift restrictions on energy/oil exploration of the Outer Continental Shelf
Support legislative efforts, such as Representative Greg Walden’s SEA act
Eliminate the ban on offshore drilling and permanently allocate a portion of those profits to provide public lands maintenance and contractual funding to counties
Include counties in any consideration of Cap and Trade legislation as a carbon sink with credits (\$) identified and shared in the same manner as shard receipts with local counties/schools (i.e. National Forest Lands, O&C Counties, CBWR and Public Domain Lands)

EN005

Issue: Gasohol is less efficient than gasoline.

Solution: Promote delivery system of E-85 and abandon requirement to blend all gasoline with ethanol

EN006

Issue: State and federal rules, laws and policies create barriers to economic development, in particular new renewable energy development

Solution: Review and revise and align state and federal policies (i.e. ODFW policies on fish passage)

EN007

Issue: Rural Oregon holds most of the renewable energy resources in the state and could lead the nation in planning and development; however no one has quantified those resources or calculated the cost of necessary infrastructure to develop those resources

Solution: Create a fund to enable all counties in the state to complete an inventory/assessment to realize the potential, showcase communities and enhance rural economics

EN008

Issue: The need to support small-scale renewables

Solutions: Support and maintain state policies that protect small-scale projects from manipulation from large utility companies

Encourage individual ownership of all forms of renewables (solar, hydro, wind, geothermal) through additional tax incentives

EN009

Issue: The need to expand transmission capacity for renewables

Solution: Encourage state and federal investment

EN010

Issue: The exclusion of public lands as a source of renewable biomass from the 2007 Energy Bill

Solution: Amend the Energy Bill to include public lands

Make tax and other incentives available to timber producers to provide renewable energy, forest health, economic benefits and a positive beneficial asset for the entire nation

EN011

Issue: Encourage alternative energy, biomass

Solution: Cities and counties work with industry to develop biomass market, which will prompt increased USFS funding for biomass projects; use/capture lessons learned from Malheur and promote that success story, Public incentives to create integrated wood products processing facilities that supply wood pellets/chips, incentives for community or regionally owned renewable energy production

EN012

Issue: New uses of natural resources and expansion removal of traditional energy provisions should involve the tourism industry

Solution: Review county zoning and comprehensive plans and include tourism in the review processes

EN013

Issue: Vulnerability and availability of gas/oil for transportation, industry and agriculture

Solution: Develop a city/county/community peak oil task force to assess vulnerability; encourage legislation that supports exploration of American resources

AIR QUALITY

AQ001

Issue: One size fits all air quality standards need to be flexible and consider geographic and economic impacts and outcomes

Solution: Modify federal air quality standards to adapt to local area, not one size fits all

SPECIFIC STATE AGENCY ISSUES

ALL AGENCIES

SA001

Issue: Manipulation of representative legislation by the agency staff creation of Administrative Rules

Solution: Legislation should be adopted as passed by the legislative body, not rewritten by agency bodies and there should be a regionally representative Rules Committee that must review rules as to negative economic and social impacts

SA002

Issue: Given the abilities and technology of telecommunication more state jobs could be awarded to rural residents who have a better connection to their rural communities and can identify, communicate and reflect first hand the impacts of Salem driven decisions

Solution: The state jobs-to- rural is not a new concept, just one that has not been embraced by Salem. Documentation exists and was championed by former N. East Oregon Employment Director Bob Nelson (Colleen has a copy...will furnish)

Related topic

SA003

Issue: Top down agency management without an understanding of localities

Solution: Prevent state staff from making decisions to eliminate rural programs and move them back to Salem (i.e. State Data Center, Unemployment Benefits)

Related topic

SA004

Issue: Lack of knowledge local issues or impacts prior to decision-making

Solution: Prerequisite site visit and review of impacts by agencies prior to final decisions, less costly upfront than rural community dismantling

SA005

Issue: Lack of agency coordination and communication

Solution: Expand the Economic Revitalization Team efforts to include all agencies. Assess whether the buy in is genuine and review agency-to-agency successes and failures; in healthcare issue allow agencies to work together and not let certification stipulations interfere

ODFW

SA006

Issue: Private landowners bear the cost of wildlife maintenance/feeding

Solution: Require state funded ODFW compensation

SA007

Issue: The support of wildlife predators by ODFW over the public safety of Oregon's rural residents and is decimating Oregon's deer and elk population

Solution: Eliminate the predator reintroduction efforts of ODFW. Allow Oregon residents the ability to protect themselves, their families and their livestock from predators without having to check in first with ODFW. Reinstate sport hunting methods.

OREGON STATE PARKS

SA008

Issue: Oregon State Parks and Division of State Lands property acquisition without conference with local officials affection local needs and local tax bases

Solution: Require by rule that land acquisition by state agencies be in coordination and agreement with local city and county government

DIVISION OF STATE LANDS

Policy Statement: *The Division of State Lands must use good science and stewardship on lands they have over sight on*

SA009

Issue: The Department of State Lands is not practicing good science and stewardship on state lands. Division of State Lands has become aggressive, autonomous, heavy handed and a confiscator in its treatment of land ownership, in particular waterway ownership actions that have been to the detriment of local, long established citizen landowners and businesses

Solution: Legislature needs to review DSL's mission and policies with a specific intent to consider constitutional legalities of takings, their lack of assessment and tendering. On navigability issues establish floatage streams rights instead of claiming ownership of riverbeds and banks up to high water levels

- Review and analyze process and rules to identify where the application of good science needs to be applied
- Draft legislative concept: language based on review
- Use new laws to formalize compliance
- Identify Water line boundaries based on good science
- Discuss existing leases on state land and who should be the steward
- Discuss the efforts of DSL to assume management of federal waterways and whether this is the best stewardship model

CAPACITY

CP001

Issue: Lack of rural administrative capacity

Solution: Rural municipality potential to use existing consortiums (such as The Oregon Consortium) to administer federal funds (i.e. nutrition, healthcare, education, natural resource) to allow appropriate and responsive management of these funds, defined by locals, preventing federal recapture of unused or underutilized funds

CP002

Issue: Loss of public officials due to the newly adopted ethics disclosure legislation that impacts rural areas more severely due to the volunteer nature of service and a smaller pool of candidates for office/boards/commissions as well as the fiscal impact to counties picking up the financial impacts of the GSP expansion

Solution: Repeal the current disclosures requirements

CP003

Issue: Sparsely populated areas lack of human capacity, especially in regards to necessary services that have no monetary compensation

Solution: Provide a tax credit for volunteer EMT's, firefighters, and public safety officers

CP004

Issue: Recall Initiatives – cost of leadership and cost to local rural counties. Recall initiative are easy in rural communities because they require such a low threshold of voter signatures.

Solution: Require a bond to be taken out by the sponsor of the recall. If the recall fails, the sponsor would be liable for the cost of the special election, not the city, county or district

GENERAL

POPULATION LIMITATIONS - EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION (also in Local Control)

Policy: It shall be the policy of the state government to review actual community needs – not use population and its limitations and admitted inaccuracies to control community efforts

GEN001

Issue: Population centers, often without an understanding of rural issues or legislative consequences, trump less populated areas, with disastrous results. It is no longer an historic model, where representation by population worked as when residents were evenly dispersed

Solution: Using the federal government model, change the membership of the Oregon Senate to one senator per county

GEN002

Issue: Population drives funding and allocations to counties – in particular urban growth boundaries – chicken/egg – no expansion, no growth

Solution: Review actual needs

GEN003

SUPPORT OF WESTERN OREGON PLAN REVISION

Issue: Support of the WOPR (Western Oregon Plan Revision for O&C lands)

Solution: Support full implementation of the final EIS and to recognize the difference between BLM managed O&C lands, the 1937 O&C Act and federal forestlands managed by the USFS. Recognize the scope and science that developed the plan

FOOD SUPPLY

GEN004

Issue: Disintegrating rural community food systems that create hunger and food insecurity for rural residents

Solution: Intentional planning of community food systems supported by corresponding state and federal effort; expand use of federal nutrition programs and food stamps; utilize local non-profits to provide and integrate excess harvest foods

HORSE SLAUGHTER PLANTS

GEN005

Issue: The ban on Horse slaughter plants requiring the transportation of horses to Canada for slaughter. This has put a huge damper on million dollar industries, caused many horses to suffer, often for years, needlessly because it is very expensive to destroy them.

Solution: Remove the ban. Encourage Oregon slaughter plants and oppose the federal government shutting down U.S.

Related topic

GEN006

Issue: The need for horse slaughtering and animal waste disposal facilities to remove the dispose of dead animals, offal and trimmings. Horses are being turned loose on public lands to become feral and impact grazing

Solution: Create at least regional facilities to handle the issues. Remove oppressive regulatory barriers and allow free market to solve the problem

GRAVEL

GEN007

Issue: Harvesting of gravel riverbeds

Solution: Require state agencies to acquire timely permits for aggregate collection

GEN008

Issue: State purchases supplies and goods from anyone.

Solution: Purchase goods from Oregon producers. Tax credits for restaurants that locally source food.

Next Steps- Establishing a Permanent Rural Presence

WATCHDOG OFFICE

NS001

Issue: Rural issues and concerns are often forgotten by state and federal and placed on a back burner

Solution: Rural Congress needs to support a watchdog office (i.e. Office of Rural Policy) to be a clearing house, legislative education source and issue disseminator to all rural organizations (coordination with counties/municipalities AOC-LOC, natural resource groups, etc) regarding legislative considerations, a rural coordination source that will also identify and coordinate with other national rural organizations and learn/teach best rural practices

NS002

Issue: Office of Rural Policy.

Solution: Oregon policy – reinstate the eyes/ears of rural Oregon Have '09 Legislature re-instate this program; Draft legislation with broad legislative/county/city support to reinstate and properly fund the Office of Rural Policy. Reinstall at Eastern Oregon University – Oregon's rural university – building on statewide network of regional offices throughout the state via in person and online resources Funding will be made available in the form of a 1 for 1 match of EOA University CTR funds already in place.

NS003

Issue: The need for a permanent rural office/presence/clearing house

Solution: Create an entity that is able to lobby (501c-3?) with a mission to promote and preserve the culture, economy and desire lifestyle of *all* Oregon communities

Structure: Board of Directors of elected officials among the 26 rural counties-communities

Goals:

- Provide a conduit of information to and from rural communities regarding state/federal legislative issues
- promote education on rural issues
- facilitate discussions with urban counterparts
- identify and prioritize issues
- promote sustainable use of natural resources
- promote economic development
- promote maintenance and development of all communities infrastructure
- collect and implement best practices from other states/nations
- promote marketing of Oregon products
- promote the transportation and communication infrastructure of all areas of Oregon
- to work in partnership with AOC and LOC staff
- facilitate annual Congress gatherings

Funding: A percentage of county economic development appropriations apportioned by population, city (?????)

Staff: Executive Director (1), Research Staff (1) with access to county staff personnel as needed regarding eco-dev, tourism, transportation, public health

NS004

Issue: Update of State of Oregon's Benchmarks to adequately reflect rural situations

Solution: Engage citizens, electeds and stakeholders in the refinements and revision of Oregon's Benchmarks

INFLUENCING LEGISLATIVE BODIES (Actions and Ideas)

NS005

Issue: The need for organized effective legislation

Solution: Organize pressure points; be organized, identifiable, in mass and on-point. Make appointments and visit individual legislators in small groups; deliver a succinct (20) minute message; hold press conferences with supportive legislators; send original emails and request response; fill hearing rooms to testify with polite, organized point delivery of everyone who testifies; use affiliated lobbyists to make points and gain legislative leader access, utilize lenders, bankers, builders, realtors