

Legislative Concept 240

Increasing Sequestration on Oregon's Natural and Working Lands



Oregon's natural and working lands — including forests, grasslands, rangelands, farmlands, tidal and subtidal wetlands, and the parks and open spaces in urban environments — provide a range of environmental, social, health, and economic benefits statewide including opportunities to increase carbon sequestration and storage.

In 2021, the Oregon Global Warming Commission engaged Tribes, landowners and managers, federal and state agencies, conservation organizations, environmental justice leaders, technical assistance providers, and scientists to inform the development of the [2021 OGWC Natural and Working Lands Proposal](#). In total, more than 1,000 individuals and organizations provided input regarding the strategies and considerations that should be included in designing policy, practice, and investment frameworks.

Implementing practices that increase sequestration and storage on Oregon's natural and working lands and through the products they produce provides significant co-benefits to Oregon's communities and land managers:

- Planting trees in urban areas reduces heat island effects and improves air quality.
- Restoring coastal wetlands improves fish habitat and protects coastal communities from increasing impacts from storm surges.
- Implementing regenerative farming practices increases soil productivity and moisture-holding capacity.
- Advancing forest management practices that increase sequestration increase long-term fiber supplies.
- Practices that improve the resilience of fire prone forests to uncharacteristically severe wildfire reduces emissions and air quality impacts from wildfire.
- Investing across these practices creates jobs, generates increased revenue for private land managers, reduces energy and health care costs, and improves people's quality of life.

The state can play an important role in helping interested land managers voluntarily adopt such practices, including through the development of incentive programs to mitigate transition costs and by providing technical assistance.

Legislative Concept 240 advances several key recommendations from the proposal, by:

- Defining natural and working lands and waters (N&WLW) in Oregon statute.
- Declaring that it is the policy of the state to advance N&WLW strategies.
- Directing the Commission to create a Natural and Working Lands Advisory Group.
- Directing the Institute for Natural Resources at Oregon State University to support the Commission in the: (a) development of metrics; (b) N&WLW Inventory; and (c) completion of a N&WLW Workforce and Economic Development study.
- Directing agencies to report on metrics and the inventory.
- Changing the Commission's deadline for its Biennial Report to the Legislature and adding responsibility for reporting on progress toward the N&WLW targets and metrics.