

# OREGON ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION COUNCIL

## OERF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### STAFF REPORT | DECEMBER 18, 2025



**REPORT PURPOSE:** This report provides Council with an overview and a proposed process to inform Council's discussion of setting strategic priorities for the Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund (OERF).

#### COUNCIL DISCUSSION ON DECEMBER 18, 2025:

- Strategic priorities development process
- Defining strategic priorities

---

#### BACKGROUND

[SB 1561 \(2024\)](#) authorizes Council to establish strategic priorities to guide how Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund (Fund) dollars are spent for the State Agency Program Fund (APF) and Community Impact Fund (CIF). The Tribal Nation Natural Resource Fund is not required to adhere to strategic priorities set by Council.

Strategic priorities should be consistent with the eligible uses of Fund dollars outlined in SB 1561 and in the State of Oregon-Monsanto settlement agreement. Council may only set strategic priorities after taking the following steps: 1) consultation with state agencies eligible to receive APF dollars and with the Environmental Justice Council, 2) holding a public hearing, and 3) providing an opportunity for public comment. Strategic priorities may be amended by Council as appropriate and following a public engagement process.

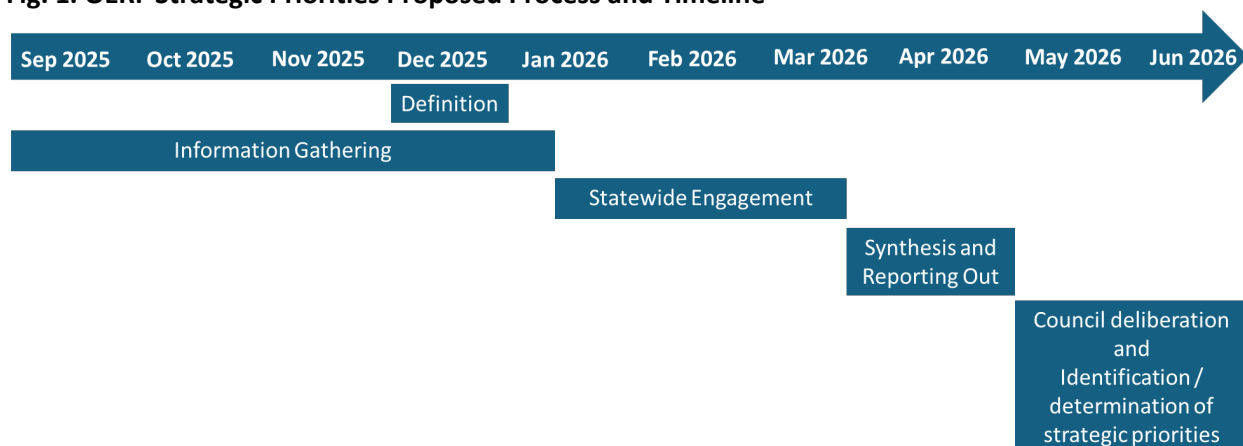
SB 1561 does not provide additional guidance on strategic priorities. Staff will thus facilitate a process to support Council's more detailed definition of a "strategic priority" as well as to determine what the first set of strategic priorities will be for the Fund.

#### PROPOSED PROCESS

Staff has developed an initial draft approach to strategic priority setting for Council to consider:

1. Council defines what is meant by a "strategic priority", including scope, scale, and applicability/role to funding decisions. This topic is the subject of this staff report and Council's discussion at the December 18<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.
2. Information gathering to inform the engagement process and strategic priority setting process. This includes researching other programs utilizing strategic priorities to guide investments. Staff have begun compiling this information.
3. Statewide engagement (see below).
4. Synthesis of findings from engagement process with report back to Council and then publicly.
5. Council deliberation and determination of strategic priorities.

**Fig. 1. OERF Strategic Priorities Proposed Process and Timeline**



### ***Defining a Strategic Priority***

In preparation for the December 18, 2025 Council meeting, Staff will meet with each Council member individually to gather input to define the scope, scale, and applicability/role of the Fund’s strategic priorities.

At the December 18 Council meeting, Staff will present themes from these responses to guide Council’s discussion.

### ***Statewide Engagement***

Following Council’s direction on the scope, scale, and applicability/role of the strategic priorities, staff will design and implement a statewide engagement process to support Council’s identification of the set of strategic priorities that will guide Fund investments. Staff plan to consult with public engagement experts to vet the process and ensure Staff follow best practices in the methodology of the strategic priority engagement. It is anticipated that a broad audience will be asked to participate in this process including: members of the public, Tribes, public agencies (federal, state, and local / special districts), environmental justice groups (including the Environmental Justice Council), nonprofit groups and community organizations, and legislators. Engagement objectives and methodology will be vetted with Council and public engagement experts.

### **COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

At the December 18 Council meeting, Council is being asked to deliberate on a high-level definition of strategic priorities and their use in future funding decisions by Council. This initial discussion is not intended to identify the specific set of strategic priorities that will guide investments; statewide engagement will provide additional information to assist Council with identification and determination of the first set of strategic priorities at a future Council meeting (see Fig. 1 above). As part of the discussion on December 18, Council may wish to consider the following questions:

1. How will strategic priorities be applied to Council funding decisions?
2. Should strategic priorities be broad or narrow in scope?
3. What scale should strategic priorities be for the Fund (e.g., geographic, ecological issue, time frame, other)?
4. How will strategic priorities be evaluated over time?
5. How should state, local, or community-identified priorities be considered in setting strategic priorities for the Fund?