

OREGON ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION COUNCIL

AGENCY PROGRAM FUND | NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STAFF REPORT | MAY 06, 2026



Executive Summary

At the December 18, 2025 Oregon Environmental Restoration Council (OERC) meeting, OERC members requested relevant information about state agencies to assist in better understanding what the Agency Program Fund (APF) could be used for and how that information relates to the development of the OERC's strategic priorities. The OERC members requested information about:

- Existing agency strategic plans and priorities;
- Gaps in funding and resources; and
- Areas of opportunities to meet public and resource needs.

Program staff tackled this request in two ways: 1) inviting state agencies to present at OERC meetings, and 2) designing a needs assessment survey to capture high-level information about agency funding priorities consistent with the settlement agreement, to report back to the OERC. Agencies commenced OERC presentations at the March 18 meeting, and these presentations are expected to continue throughout the OERC's 2026 meetings. The needs assessment was deployed to state agencies after initial outreach and engagement meetings.

While the preliminary survey results reflect a small sample size (as of April 2026, nine survey responses have been received with additional responses expected by June 2026), the results indicate a wide range of agency needs and opportunities that align with the purpose of the APF. Synthesized results from the needs assessment are shared. Some of the responses overlap with items previously discussed in OERC meetings relating to strategic priorities, so those can also help inform ongoing discussion of that topic at the May 6, 2026, OERC meeting. With the overlap of information, this staff report is intended to serve as a companion report to the Strategic Priorities staff report for the May 6, 2026 meeting.

Needs Assessment Survey Initial Results

Please see [Appendix A](#) for the needs assessment template.

In the needs assessment agencies provided examples of projects and programs they would be likely to access the APF for funding support once the program is fully implemented. Initial results from the needs assessment indicated a wide range of needs and opportunities exist across the state enterprise that the APF can help to address. While the example projects and programs should not be considered the full scope of all areas of opportunity and need for the APF, they likely offer insight into the types of initial uses agencies hope to access the APF to serve Oregon and Oregonians during the first few years of program implementation.

Projects and Programs

The needs assessment survey asked state agencies 1) to identify projects and programs they would either plan to access or would be likely to access the APF for funding support, and 2) the status of those projects and programs.

Results indicated a balanced need across agencies for APF funding to support a mixture of:

1. Projects and programs not currently being implemented;
2. Expanding existing projects and programs to cover new components; and
3. To replace previously lost funding sources, such as to replace the loss of federal funding sources.

Project and Program Activities

The needs assessment also asked agencies to identify project and program activities the APF would be used for funding support. Agencies reported the following project and program activity types were of significant need to address critical environmental harms in Oregon and on behalf of Oregonians:

- Technical assistance activities (e.g., project planning, site assessments, surveys, etc.)
- Capacity building / staffing (e.g., contracting or staffing costs)
- Education / outreach activities (e.g., community outreach, public engagement, educational workshops, etc.)
- Restoration / Remediation activities (e.g., habitat restoration, contaminated site cleanup, etc.)
- APF dollars as match or leveraged funding
- Grantmaking (i.e., using APF dollars to create grant programs)
- Monitoring activities (e.g., air quality monitoring, stormwater monitoring, conservation outcomes, etc.)

Acquisition projects and programs were also mentioned as an area of potential need for the APF by three agencies in these preliminary results.

Potential APF Funding Areas and Connections to Strategic Priorities

Two initial themes for areas to potentially direct APF funding emerged from the example projects and programs agencies shared: 1) areas of opportunity and 2) areas of compliance need.

Areas of Opportunity

Needs assessment results identified the following potential areas of opportunities for the APF to expand upon or fill in gaps in funding (areas identified that also aligned with previous OERC strategic priority themes and discussions during the December 18, 2025, OERC meeting are **bolded**, see [Appendix B](#) for previous OERC meeting discussion):

- **Projects and programs will result in co-benefits**; co-benefits mentioned include: ecological, health (consumption and clean drinking water), climate/landscape resilience, cultural, community, and housing/economic.
- Projects and programs will benefit disproportionately impacted communities affected by pollution.
- Agencies have many new projects and programs that meet the intent of the Monsanto Settlement Agreement ready to begin planning or implementation phases that have no current or planned funding source.
- **Agencies collaborate and coordinate with vast networks of partners including: Tribes, federal, state, and local governments, environmental justice groups, non-profit organizations, and private timber and agricultural industries.**
- **Agencies have unfunded or underfunded programs that focus on preventative measures of contamination rather than remediation measures.**
- Agencies that work with community groups and engage in community and public processes recommended the OERC consider allowing payment of stipends to advisory and work group members, an activity typically not allowed with traditional funding sources.
- Related to this, agencies reported that the APF could be an opportunity to provide a different approach to funding than what traditional funding sources are often constrained or limited by. In addition to restoration and remediation activities, funding for staffing/capacity, technical assistance activities (such as planning), monitoring, and education/outreach are areas that are currently underfunded by traditional funding sources but are necessary components of building good projects and programs.

- **Agencies reported existing federal and other funding agreements that could be leveraged with APF dollars to maximize on-the-ground restoration and remediation activities.**

Areas of Compliance Need

Agencies identified areas of mandatory responsibilities that are currently unfunded or underfunded and that the APF may help to fill:

- Agencies that have programs with statutory mandates or Executive Orders, but no budgeted funding source, must spend unbudgeted funds to meet requirements (e.g., clean-up sites that have no responsible party)
- Agencies that have lost a funding source, have inconsistent or unreliable funding sources, or funding sources that will be ending and are unlikely to be replaced (e.g., Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) and are responsible for meeting federal and state compliance requirements.

Next Steps

Agency Presentations to the Oregon Environmental Restoration Council

To help provide information requested from the OERC, Oregon Environmental Restoration Program staff invited agencies to present at the OERC meetings about how the agency's strategic plans/priorities, gaps in funding and resources, and needs gaps/opportunities share a nexus with the Fund. At the March 18, 2026 meeting, the OERC heard presentations from Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), and Oregon Health Authority (OHA). The agencies scheduled to present at the May 6, 2026 meeting are Department of State Lands (DSL), Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD). Agency presentations will continue through the July and September meetings and can extend to the November meeting if additional interest is heard from other agencies or requests are communicated from the OERC.

Additional Needs Assessment Survey Results Expected

These initial results are shared with the OERC to offer understanding of where there is opportunity and need across the state enterprise that aligns with the purposes of the APF. While these preliminary results are not currently representative of all agencies that will be accessing the APF, it does offer some early insight into the needs and how the APF may help to fill some gaps in current funding. Additional agencies expect to complete the needs assessment throughout May and June 2026. An additional staff report will be shared with the OERC once all participating agencies have completed the needs assessment.

Appendix A

The following is a copy of the needs assessment shared with Oregon natural resource state agencies in February 2026 to gather information on current and anticipated funding needs that the APF may support.

Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund: Agency Program Fund Needs Assessment

State Agency Needs Assessment Survey

Agency Program Fund – Agency Needs Assessment

Background

In 2022, the state of Oregon secured a historic \$698 million dollar settlement against Monsanto for long term harm caused by the company’s polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) chemicals to Oregon’s land, water, fish and wildlife. In 2024, Governor Kotek signed Senate Bill 1561 into law, creating the Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund (OERF) – a 100-year fund that will make investments to directly benefit Oregon’s environment and its communities.

The OERF has three subfunds: the State Agency Program Fund (APF), the Tribal Nation Natural Resource Program Fund, and the Community Impact Fund. SB 1561 requires that the OERF uses be consistent with the terms of the Monsanto Settlement Agreement. The settlement terms state that the funds must be used for environmental remediation or restitutionary projects or purposes include restoring, maintaining and enhancing the quality of Oregon’s air, land, water and other natural resources.

Senate Bill 1561 authorizes the Oregon Environmental Restoration Council to establish procedures and criteria for eligible state agencies applying for Agency Program Fund dollars. More specifically:

- Allocations must be used for projects and uses that are consistent with the Monsanto Settlement Agreement and the strategic priorities established by Council;
- Allocations may be used to supplement programs or projects, but not replace funding from other available sources; and
- Allocations may be used as matching funds for other funding sources.

Purpose of Needs Assessment

Staff at the Oregon Environmental Restoration Program are conducting outreach with State Agency partners to gather input on the design of the Agency Program Fund. This needs assessment is part of the early outreach and engagement process and will be used by program staff to understand how agencies hope to utilize the Agency Program Fund to support their work. This assessment will ask about **1) projects** and **2) programs** that agencies hope to seek Agency Program Fund funding.

The Oregon Environmental Restoration Council, via rulemaking, has authority to determine eligible fund uses for the Agency Program Fund. To assist with this determination, the Oregon DOJ is providing a review of the Monsanto Settlement Agreement terms to determine any potential ineligible uses for the funds.

This needs assessment will not be used to make funding decisions or bias future funding decisions, but rather to help identify the current and anticipated initial needs of state agencies that will access the Agency Program Fund.

OERF staff cannot guarantee that all needs described by agencies will be supported by Agency Program Fund dollars, however maintaining a comprehensive list of needs will help align eligible uses of the funds with agency needs.

Please submit this survey by Friday, March 6th, 2026. Thank you!

For any questions, please reach out to Rachel Thompson, rachel.thompson@oweb.oregon.gov or Clare Lanusse, clare.k.lanusse@oweb.oregon.gov.

- 1. Please enter the state agency name for this needs assessment.**
- 2. What are the ways your agency achieves conservation / environmental / natural resource outcomes? (Check all that apply)**

- Via staffing for agency programs or projects
- Via grant programs for conservation partners
- Via contracting with external partners
- Other _____

Funding Needs Area: Projects

This section asks about how agencies anticipate or hope to utilize Agency Program Fund dollars to provide funding for projects that support agency mission and objectives and align with the Monsanto Settlement Agreement.

NOTE: The Agency Program Fund dollars must be spent for environmental remediation or restitution projects or purposes including restoring, maintaining, and enhancing Oregon's air, land, water, and other natural resources. Additionally, the funds must be used on new or additive components of programs or projects and cannot be used to replace current funding sources.

- 3. Within the next five years: does your agency anticipate utilizing the Agency Program Fund (APF) to support agency projects?**

*NOTE: OERF staff are defining agency **projects** as limited time initiatives with a specific goal or outcome and defined parameters (e.g., conducting a two-year study on pesticide use, removal of invasive vegetation within a priority Wildlife Area, planning and implementation of six educational workshops of community drinking water protection, etc.)*

- Yes
- No

Anticipated Project Needs

This section will ask about the types of projects that your agency would anticipate supporting with funding from the APF. This will help OERF program staff understand the various needs across the state agency enterprise to align agency needs with eligible fund uses and build an effective program for agencies.

These projects can be existing, planned or ones that you would propose when this new funding source becomes available.

These questions are informational only and will not be used in any future funding decisions by the Council.

4. **Select the status of the projects your agency would hope to fund with Agency Program Fund dollars. Check all that apply.**
- New projects that are not currently being implemented
 - Existing projects that are currently being implemented (*note: APF dollars must support new or additive components that are not receiving current funding*)
 - Projects that were previously funded, but have lost its funding source (e.g., federal funding loss)
 - Other _____
5. **What activities does your agency anticipate or hope to fund with APF dollars. Check all that apply.**
- Acquisition (Land or Water)
 - Capacity Building / Staffing
 - Education / Outreach Activities
 - Grantmaking
 - Match or Leveraged Funding
 - Monitoring Activities
 - Restoration / Remediation Activities
 - Technical Assistance Activities (*e.g., project planning / coordination, assessments, consulting, etc.*)
 - Other _____
6. ***Please share information about the projects within your agency that you would like to access Agency Program Fund dollars to support. If you do not have project ideas ready to share with staff but expect to access the APF for funding support of projects, please share examples of the types of projects your agency would implement.***

*While we recognize there are likely many projects in need of funding support, for the purposes of this exercise, we ask that you limit your responses to **no more than five** projects.*

Project #1

Please provide the following information:

- 1) Project name (if known)**
- 2) Brief description (2 sentences) of the project and its purpose/desired outcomes (*i.e., what does this project support or accomplish*)**
- 3) Plans or frameworks that support the project (*e.g., Oregon Habitat Conservation Plan, Oregon Climate Action Plan, etc.*)**

7. **Project #2 (if applicable)**

Please provide the following information:

- 1) Project name (if known)**
- 2) Brief description (2 sentences) of the project and its purpose/desired outcomes (*i.e., what does this project support or accomplish*)**
- 3) Plans or frameworks that support the project (*e.g., Oregon Habitat Conservation Plan, Oregon Climate Action Plan, etc.*)**

*While we recognize there are likely many projects in need of funding support, for the purposes of this exercise, we ask that you limit your responses to **no more than five** projects.*

8. **Project #3 (if applicable)**

Please provide the following information:

1) Project name (if known)

2) Brief description (2 sentences) of the project and its purpose/desired outcomes (i.e., what does this project support or accomplish)

3) Plans or frameworks that support the project (e.g., Oregon Habitat Conservation Plan, Oregon Climate Action Plan, etc.)

While we recognize there are likely many projects in need of funding support, for the purposes of this exercise, we ask that you limit your responses to **no more than five** projects.

9. **Project #4 (if applicable)**

Please provide the following information:

1) Project name (if known)

2) Brief description (2 sentences) of the project and its purpose/desired outcomes (i.e., what does this project support or accomplish)

3) Plans or frameworks that support the project (e.g., Oregon Habitat Conservation Plan, Oregon Climate Action Plan, etc.)

While we recognize there are likely many projects in need of funding support, for the purposes of this exercise, we ask that you limit your responses to **no more than five** projects.

10. **Project #5 (if applicable)**

Please provide the following information:

1) Project name (if known)

2) Brief description (2 sentences) of the project and its purpose/desired outcomes (i.e., what does this project support or accomplish)

3) Plans or frameworks that support the project (e.g., Oregon Habitat Conservation Plan, Oregon Climate Action Plan, etc.)

While we recognize there are likely many projects in need of funding support, for the purposes of this exercise, we ask that you limit your responses to **no more than five** projects.

Funding Needs Area: Programs

This section asks about how agencies anticipate or hope to utilize Agency Program Fund dollars to provide funding for programs that support agency mission and objectives and align with the Monsanto Settlement Agreement.

NOTE: The Agency Program Fund dollars must be spent for environmental remediation or restitution projects or purposes including restoring, maintaining, and enhancing Oregon's air, land, water, and other natural resources. Additionally, the funds must be used on new or additive components of programs or projects and cannot be used to replace current funding sources.

11. Within the next five years: does your agency anticipate utilizing the Agency Program Fund (APF) to support agency programs?

NOTE: OERF staff are defining agency programs as a longer term set of related projects or policy areas aimed at achieving a larger objective or agency mission / strategic goals. (e.g., support for a statewide

pesticide program that regulates use and provides education of pesticide use, support for a statewide noxious weeds program that regulates and manages for invasive vegetation in priority state Wildlife Areas, support for a statewide community drinking water program that provides education to communities and water system operators on clean drinking water best practices, etc.)

- Yes
- No

Anticipated Program Needs

This section will ask about the types of programs that your agency would anticipate supporting with funding from the APF. This will help OERF program staff understand the various needs across the state agency enterprise to align agency needs with eligible fund uses and build an effective program for agencies.

These programs can be existing, planned or ones that you would propose when this new funding source becomes available.

These questions are informational only and will not be used in any future funding decisions by the Council.

12. Select the status of the internal agency programs your agency would consider utilizing the APF for support.

- New programs that are not currently being implemented
- Existing programs that are currently being implemented (*note: APF dollars must support new or additive components that are not receiving current funding*)
- Programs that were previously funded, but have lost its funding source (e.g., federal funding loss)
- Other _____

13. What uses does your agency anticipate or hope to utilize the Agency Program Fund (APF) for to support agency programs?

- Acquisition (Land or Water)
- Capacity Building / Staffing
- Education / Outreach Activities
- Grantmaking
- Match or Leveraged Funding
- Monitoring Activities
- Restoration / Remediation Activities
- Technical Assistance Activities (*e.g., project planning / coordination, assessments, consulting, etc.*)
- Other _____

14. Please share information about the programs within your agency that you would like to access Agency Program Fund dollars to support. If you do not have program ideas ready to share with staff but expect to access the APF for funding support of programs, please share examples of the types of programs your agency would implement.

While we recognize there are likely many programs in need of funding support, for the purposes of

this exercise, we ask that you limit your responses to **no more than five** programs.

Program #1

Please provide the following information:

- 1) Program name (if known)
- 2) Brief description (2 sentences) of the program and its purpose (*i.e., what does this program support or accomplish*)
- 3) Primary external partners involved and their role in the program, if any (*e.g., coordinating partner, grant recipient, technical advisor, etc.*)
- 4) Plans or frameworks that support the program (*e.g., Oregon Habitat Conservation Plan, Oregon Climate Action Plan, etc.*)

15. **Program #2 (if applicable)**

Please provide the following information:

- 1) Program name (if known)
- 2) Brief description (2 sentences) of the program and its purpose (*i.e., what does this program support or accomplish*)
- 3) Primary external partners involved and their role in the program, if any (*e.g., coordinating partner, grant recipient, technical advisor, etc.*)
- 4) Plans or frameworks that support the program (*e.g., Oregon Habitat Conservation Plan, Oregon Climate Action Plan, etc.*)

While we recognize there are likely many programs in need of funding support, for the purposes of this exercise, we ask that you limit your responses to **no more than five** programs.

16. **Program #3 (if applicable)**

Please provide the following information:

- 1) Program name (if known)
- 2) Brief description (2 sentences) of the program and its purpose (*i.e., what does this program support or accomplish*)
- 3) Primary external partners involved and their role in the program, if any (*e.g., coordinating partner, grant recipient, technical advisor, etc.*)
- 4) Plans or frameworks that support the program (*e.g., Oregon Habitat Conservation Plan, Oregon Climate Action Plan, etc.*)

While we recognize there are likely many programs in need of funding support, for the purposes of this exercise, we ask that you limit your responses to **no more than five** programs.

17. **Program # 4 (if applicable)**

Please provide the following information:

- 1) Program name (if known)
- 2) Brief description (2 sentences) of the program and its purpose (*i.e., what does this program support or accomplish*)
- 3) Primary external partners involved and their role in the program, if any (*e.g., coordinating partner, grant recipient, technical advisor, etc.*)
- 4) Plans or frameworks that support the program (*e.g., Oregon Habitat Conservation Plan, Oregon Climate Action Plan, etc.*)

While we recognize there are likely many programs in need of funding support, for the purposes of this exercise, we ask that you limit your responses to **no more than five** programs.

18. Program #5 (if applicable)

Please provide the following information:

1) Program name (if known)

2) Brief description (2 sentences) of the program and its purpose (i.e., what does this program support or accomplish)

3) Primary external partners involved and their role in the program, if any (e.g., coordinating partner, grant recipient, technical advisor, etc.)

4) Plans or frameworks that support the program (e.g., Oregon Habitat Conservation Plan, Oregon Climate Action Plan, etc.)

While we recognize there are likely many programs in need of funding support, for the purposes of this exercise, we ask that you limit your responses to **no more than five** programs.

Other Needs

19. Are there any other areas of need not reflected in the above questions that you would like to share with OERF staff about how your agency would like to utilize the Agency Program Fund (APF)?

- Yes
- No

20. Please explain what other purposes your agency anticipates utilizing the APF to support

Anything Else OERF Staff Should Know?

21. Are there any final thoughts or questions you would like to share with OERF staff?

Thank You!

Thank you for submitting this needs assessment! Your responses are incredibly helpful to staff and in the building and design of the Agency Program Fund!

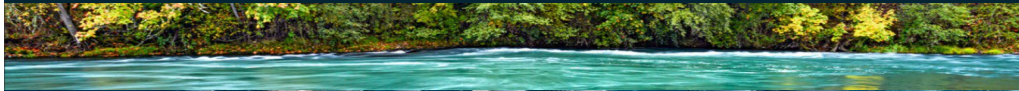
If you would like to stay updated about the Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund, please sign up for notices on GovDelivery: (<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ORWEB/subscriber/new>).

Appendix B

The following slides are from the December 18, 2025 OERC meeting and share the results of the OERC member discussions of the strategic priorities at the OERC meeting.

COUNCIL CHECK-IN SUMMARY: PRINCIPLES

- Fund could support:
 - co-benefits
 - strategic partnerships
- Fund investments should be leveraged with public, private, and philanthropic dollars
- Fund should be durable and adaptable



COUNCIL CHECK-IN SUMMARY: THEMES

- Broad priorities with targeted objectives
- Mix of geographic, ecologic, and time-bound priorities
- Evaluation / prioritization criteria as tool for guiding investments
- A North Star: Monsanto Settlement Agreement
- Current funding/regulatory landscapes and identifying gaps
- *Measurable* impact through investments

