

Collaborative Strategies for Hazard Mitigation in the Mid-Columbia River Gorge

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Table of Contents

<i>Executive Summary</i>	1
Literature on Regional Collaboration.....	1
Case Studies of Collaborative Organizations.....	2
Successful Hazard Mitigation Implementation Strategies.....	3
Review of the Mid-Columbia Gorge Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans.....	4
Interviews and online survey	5
Summary	5
<i>Chapter 1 Introduction</i>	6
<i>Chapter 2 Literature Review</i>	8
Types of Collaboration	8
Critical Success Factors.....	10
Implications.....	11
<i>Chapter 3: Regional Collaboration Case Studies</i>	12
Organizational Structure	12
Funding	14
Decision-Making Structure.....	15
<i>Chapter 4: Successful Hazard Mitigation Implementation Strategies</i>	16
<i>Chapter 5: Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans: A Regional View</i>	20
Methodology	20
A Regional View of Mid-Columbia Gorge Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans.....	20
<i>Chapter 6: Steering Committee Interviews</i>	24
Response Summary:	24
Conclusion.....	25
<i>Appendix</i>	<i>i</i>
<i>Bibliography</i>	6

Executive Summary

In January 2008 the Community Planning Workshop (CPW) at the University of Oregon began researching the feasibility of establishing a regional collaboration for Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler, Morrow and Umatilla (Mid-Columbia Gorge) Counties to implement their Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans on a regional level. These seven counties all have hazard mitigation plans but face challenges with implementation. The purpose of this report is to provide local stakeholders information that will facilitate a dialog about whether regional collaboration is a feasible strategy to implement their hazard mitigation plans.

This summary highlights key findings for the following topics:

- **Review of Existing Literature on Regional Collaboration** – CPW reviewed literature on regional collaboration and hazard mitigation from both academic sources and best-practices guides in order to gain a broader understanding of the body of knowledge surrounding this subject.
- **Case Study Research** – CPW researched 11 different regional collaboratives throughout the United States and compared structure, organization, successes, and other factors to understand how principles from existing literature fit into actual practice.
- **Successful Hazard Mitigation Implementation** – CPW examined two Oregon Counties that have successful collaboratives that focus on natural hazards.
- **Mid-Columbia Gorge Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans Review and Analysis** – CPW reviewed six plans from the Mid-Columbia Gorge Counties, analyzed the plans, and looked for similarities and differences in overall structure as well as between specific goals and action items.
- **Steering Committee Interviews** – CPW interviewed all Steering Committee members to get a better understanding of the perspective and expectations of the Committee.

More detailed information on these topics can be found in the document following the executive summary.

Literature on Regional Collaboration

As the Steering Committee evaluates the feasibility of a regional collaborative it will need to consider the organizational structure of the group, decision-making procedures for projects and policies, and how it will seek funding for the activities of the collaborative. The literature on inter-governmental collaboration presents useful information regarding

potential options for formation, management, and successful implementation of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans. There is no one “right” way to form a collaborative and different types of collaboratives will have different purposes and results. Regardless, there are important elements existing literature identifies as necessary for all collaboratives.

- *Organizational Structure* - Models of collaboration range from informal and simple to formal and complex and include inter-local service agreements, special districts, and councils of governments. It is likely that the Mid-Columbia Gorge counties will choose to combine elements from multiple models to create their own structure.
- *Key Elements of Collaboration* - Regardless of the organizational structure, the process of collaboration requires certain key elements in order to be successful. These elements include:
 - Clear communication;
 - Shared vision;
 - Inclusiveness;
 - Transparency;
 - Participant driven;
 - Involvement of political officials;
 - Written agreements;
 - Diversification of funding streams;
 - Recognizing local history and politics;
 - Having a champion;
 - Building off existing organizations; and
 - Synchronization with federal and state policies.

Case Studies of Collaborative Organizations

CPW investigated 11 organizations¹ to describe how successful collaboratives deal with issues of organizational structure, decision-making, and funding. Though these groups varied in mission, duration of existence, budget, jurisdiction and structure, they have many commonalities. In examining these groups, CPW identified the critical conditions under which collaboration exist.

Organizational Structure

- *Horizontal Collaboration* - The most common form organizational structures take is the executive committee or board with the committee being a central meeting point for collaboration members.
- *Vertical Collaboration* - One overarching organization arises to function as a clearinghouse for other often-smaller organizations. This clearinghouse-type organization does not dictate the actions of

¹ A list of the organizations is included in the Appendix II.

the groups it serves, but provides forms of technical or financial assistance.

Funding

- CPW found funding was a key issue and constant worry for most organizations. Collaboratives that relied on one or two funding sources had a relatively limited scope throughout their lifespan. While this is not necessarily bad, collaboratives that drew upon a diverse range of funding sources were able to grow and branch out into other areas.
- Existing or mandatory programs and actions can be an excellent starting place for a mitigation activity. For example, mitigation components could be added to infrastructure development and capital improvement projects. In doing this, disaster resilience can be built into community and economic development.

Decision-Making

- Clear and objective decision-making is crucial to the collaborative process. If the decision-making process is transparent and sound decisions are made, members are more likely to stay involved.
- The more organizations involved in a decision-making process, the more complicated it can become.
- The Mid-Columbia Gorge counties will need to make decisions in a way that provides equity among participating communities. Equity could be defined in several ways: the amount of money that each participating jurisdiction receives over a specific period relative to population, benefits each jurisdiction receives relative to staff and financial commitments, and directing funding to areas with the most risk are all potential definitions.
- Honor the decision-making process. It should not be changed without the consent of those responsible for oversight of the collaborative.

Successful Hazard Mitigation Implementation Strategies

CPW focused on two natural hazard mitigation success stories within Oregon: Clackamas County and Tillamook County. Both counties had different collaborative approaches to their mitigation projects, and both offer valuable strategies for plan implementation.

Organizational Structure

- In Clackamas County, a Steering Committee made up of members from County Departments (Planning, Building, Finance, Public Works, Roads, Fire Defense, and Fire Prevention) worked to create

and implement the plan. In addition, the Community Planning Citizens at Large group represented the public on the committee.

- Clackamas County hired a full-time facilitator using both FEMA and county funds. The facilitator wrote grants and was responsible for updating the pre-disaster mitigation plan every five years, a requirement for eligibility for Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding.
- Tillamook County formed a Steering Committee to prioritize their mitigation projects and oversee implementation of their plan. The Tillamook County Emergency Management Director is responsible for overseeing implementation of the plan.

Funding

- Clackamas County made an initial investment in their plan. This investment allowed them to receive pre-disaster mitigation grants and begin mitigation efforts for future disasters.
- As a result of the 1996 flood/landslide event, a federally-declared disaster, Tillamook County received post-disaster mitigation funds for hazard mitigation actions. Tillamook, together with a portion of Columbia County, received over \$10,000,000 in Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds for their respective projects.
- Most grants require communities to match a percentage of the funding for a mitigation project, a frequent challenge for many communities. Because of repeated flood damage, Tillamook County, received money from a \$500,000 state fund set aside for municipalities unable to meet the matching fund requirements.

Decision-Making

- In both Clackamas and Tillamook Counties, a Steering Committee is responsible for prioritizing mitigation projects.

Review of the Mid-Columbia Gorge Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans

There are many similarities in goals, objectives and action items in the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans for the Mid-Columbia Gorge counties. As a region they face similar hazards and have similar concerns. While there are differences in how the plans focus on funding and how they prioritize action items, these differences are outnumbered by similarities.

Floods are the greatest risk for all counties, due to their frequency of occurrence. All of the counties face additional hazards that include landslides, wild fires, severe storms, earthquakes and volcanoes. Because floods are the most common natural hazard in this region they have the most associated action items.

The plans have three common goals:

1. Protection of Life and Property
2. Increased or Enhanced Emergency Services or Response
3. Improved coordination and collaboration

Interviews and online survey

After reviewing the hazard mitigation plans, CPW conducted interviews with the Mid-Columbia Gorge Steering Committee members. These interviews focused on the barriers, strategies and resources associated with plan implementation and collaboration. The following is a brief summary of findings from these interviews:

Implementation Barriers

- Funding and personnel are the largest barriers to implementation.

Strategies to Address Barriers

- Partner with the University of Oregon, Community Service Center, and Resource Assistance for Rural Environments Program.
- Work collaboratively to fund staff for the region.
- Seek grant funds for implementation.
- Have a regional representative to implement actions.

Overall the Mid-Columbia Gorge Steering Committee members were optimistic about this process and eager to move forward.

Summary

The research on regional collaboration and hazard mitigation serves as an information base to better understand potential implementation options for natural hazard mitigation plans. This information is intended to help the Steering Committee engage in an informed dialog about the future direction of the collaborative process.

CPW identified a considerable body of literature on collaboration. In reviewing this literature and considering it in the local context, it is our assessment that a regional collaborative that focuses on implementation of natural hazard plans has potential. In other words, circumstances exist that make collaboration an attractive option. That said, our research to date is relatively general and CPW will use Steering Committee feedback to provide more concrete collaborative strategies.

Chapter 1 Introduction

In 2004, the Mid-Columbia Gorge region partnered with the Oregon Partnership for Disaster Resilience (PDR) at the University of Oregon to develop a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning Grant. The PDR received grant dollars in 2005 to facilitate a planning process that would result in pre-disaster mitigation plans for the seven participating counties and many cities within the counties. Presently, most communities in the region have adopted mitigation plans and are eligible to seek funding to implement the mitigation strategies outlined in their plans. These plans require that communities look for multi-objective opportunities to implement mitigation through existing plans and programs such as capital improvements plans, comprehensive land use plans and economic development strategic plans.

In January 2008 the Community Planning Workshop (CPW) at the University of Oregon began researching methods of regional collaboration with the intent of finding a feasible regional model for Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler, Morrow and Umatilla Counties to implement their Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans collaboratively.

The Challenge of Implementation

Despite having mitigation plans in place, communities in the Mid-Columbia Gorge recognized that they lack the human and financial resources to implement the strategies identified in the plans. In many communities the plan's convener is either a Planning Director or an Emergency Manager. Typically, these positions oversee a number of different programs and grants – natural hazard mitigation is only a small fraction of what they do on a daily basis. As such, the communities are not able to spend the time and resources necessary to implement the strategies outlined in their plans. In addition, hiring a mitigation specialist in each community in the Mid-Columbia Gorge region is not an option because of limited resources.

Methodology

CPW engaged in a number of research activities to assist the Steering Committee in identifying potential strategies for regional collaboration and hazard mitigation implementation:

Review of Existing Literature on Regional Collaboration - CPW reviewed approximately 15 publications on regional collaboration and hazard mitigation from both academic sources and best-practices guides in order to gain a broader understanding of the body of knowledge surrounding this subject.

Case Study Research – CPW researched 11 different regional collaboratives throughout the United States and compared the structures, organization, successes, and other factors to gain a greater understanding of how principles from the existing literature fit into actual practice.

Successful Hazard Mitigation Implementation – CPW researched two counties in Oregon that have successfully used collaborative approaches to help implement their hazard mitigation plans.

Mid-Columbia Gorge Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans Review and Analysis – CPW reviewed six plans from the Mid-Columbia Gorge counties, analyzed the plans, and looked for similarities and differences in overall structure as well as between the specific goals and action items.

Steering Committee Interviews – CPW interviewed all members of the Steering Committee to get a better understanding of the perspectives and expectations of the Committee.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

To provide accurate and useful information regarding collaboration, CPW conducted a literature review of both professional reports and academic research. This process provided information about different collaborative structures and factors that are critical for success.

The literature suggests that there is no one “right” way to form a collaborative; different types of collaboratives have different purposes and thus have different results. Regardless, there are important elements that the existing literature identifies as necessary for all collaboratives.

What is collaboration?

Collaboration is a strategy for planning, project implementation or problem solving on a regional scale. Collaboration comes into play when a local government or organization does not have the capacity to resolve existing issues or has a shared interest with neighboring jurisdictions. Collaboration is a process through which “parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible” (Gray, 1989, pg. 5)²

Types of Collaboration

In 1987 David Walker, a professor from the University of Connecticut, identified and defined seventeen types of collaborations. The National League of Cities accepts these as the basic models for inter-governmental collaboration. Based on the size of the Mid-Columbia River Gorge and the nature of Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans, five of the models are described below as potential structures for the collaborative.

² (Margerum, *Getting Past Yes: From Capital Creation to Action*, Spring, 1999)

Table 1. Types of Collaboration

Type of Collaboration	Informal/ Formal	Level of Difficulty*	Advantages	Challenges
Informal Cooperation	Informal	Easy	Requires the least amount of support and coordination to arrange. Does not require additional funding or complicated agreements.	Short lifespan No stable structure or official agreements. Changes in politics or personnel may disrupt the collaborative.
Interlocal Service Contracts	Informal	Easy	Involves a “formal agreement” between governments without adding to the existing government structure Cost effective	It may be difficult to determine equitable costs and services for all partners.
Joint Powers Agreements	Informal	Challenging	Cost-effective Formal agreement Local governments work cooperatively. Opportunity for synergy	Each party must perceive a benefit from the agreement for the negotiation to be successful.
Single-Purpose Regional Bodies	Informal	Challenging	Easy to establish Helpful and non-threatening planning role for the region.	Single issue oriented Lack of a comprehensive approach May exclude parts of a region No method of enforcement for the vision and goals
Special Districts and Authorities	Formal	Difficult	May have the capability to issue bonds Can generate revenue through fees for service.	Politically challenging Suitable for smaller areas geographically

*Difficulty is determined using the scale developed by David Walker in 1987.

Source: Parr, John, Riehm, Joan, and McFarland, Christina. “Guide to Successful Local Government Collaboration.” Washington DC, National League of Cities, October, 2006. Pgs. 1-52.

Some elements of the models are appropriate for Hazard Mitigation in the Mid-Columbia River Gorge, while others are not. It is likely that the jurisdictions in the Mid-Columbia Gorge will choose to combine elements from multiple models to create their own structure. The members of the Steering Committee will have to decide which, if any, of these options may be realistic for further pursuit. It is important to note that the initial structure of the organization is not necessarily permanent. The Steering Committee may choose to begin with an informal structure and transition into a more formal organization as they build success and support.

Critical Success Factors

Regardless of the organizational structure, the process of collaboration requires certain key elements to be successful. After reviewing a variety of resources, CPW identified the following key components³.

Communication – Open and effective communication is of the highest importance in collaboration. It is important to establish clear and accessible channels for information: Poor communication is extremely detrimental to the collaborative process.

Shared Vision – It is imperative that all members of the group have the same information and the same expectations for the collaborative. A shared vision allows members to work as a unified front to solve regional problems instead of working to promote personal agendas. It is crucial that the group adopt a mission statement that expresses their common interest.

Inclusive – While not all community members will have the capability or interest in participation, it is important to ensure that the process is inclusive as it progresses forward.

Transparency – Hand in hand with outreach, transparency in the process is equally important to success. The formation of the collaborative and its future work should be open and available to all stakeholders.

Participant Driven – While many collaboratives have an outside facilitator or staff to manage the process of collaboration, the group itself should determine the actions and goals of the organization.

Involve Political Officials – Elected officials are an important part of the process. If they are unwilling to add time, funds, or other assistance, their jurisdiction may not be able to participate in the collaborative. Additionally, if a collaborative chooses the route of a formal agreement it will need the support of elected officials.

Have written agreements – Although a collaborative may have an informal agreement, it is important to keep a written record to ensure mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities within the group.

Address turf issues and recognize history and politics – It is important to recognize issues that may come into play within the collaborative and deal with them in a proactive manner.

³ Margerum, Collaborative Planning: Building Consensus and Building a Distinct Model for Practice 2008,
Margerum, Evaluating Collaborative Planning: Evaluation from an Empirical Analysis of Growth Management 2002,
Margerum, Getting Past Yes: From Capital Creation to Action Spring, 1999
Mattesich and Monsey, Collaboration: What Makes it Work? , 2001
Parr, Riehm and McFarland, Guide to Successful Local Government Collaboration, 2006

Have a Champion - A member of the collaborative or a politician who believes strongly in the issues can add an important driving force that motivates others.

Build off of existing organizations - It is easier to add a process or a responsibility to an existing organization than it is to start from scratch. When starting up, a regional collaborative should build off the existing resources in the region.

Funding - While the purpose of many collaboratives is to bridge a financial gap, most organizations require match funding or other financial support from participants. It is also important to avoid over dependence on grant funding.

Implications

The information in this chapter will provide the Steering Committee with an understanding of different collaborative structures. Additionally, the Critical Success Factors portion provides a checklist to use as the Steering Committee moves forward. Since the Mid-Columbia Gorge representatives know their capability best, it is up to them to decide how to most effectively use the information in this chapter to create their own collaborative structure.

Chapter 3: Regional Collaboration Case Studies

The seven counties in the Mid-Columbia Gorge all face similar obstacles and challenges when planning for hazard mitigation. Hazard mitigation competes with other local government functions such as economic development, capital improvements, and public safety. Additionally, lack of funding and staff make implementing hazard mitigation actions difficult. It is because of these limited resources that the region is investigating strategies for collaboration.

To explore collaboration as a means to address limited resources, CPW investigated numerous organizations to see how other collaboratives deal with organizational structure, decision-making, and funding. Though these groups varied in mission, duration of existence, budget, jurisdiction, and structure, they displayed common collaborative successes. By reviewing these commonalities CPW identified some of the necessary and sufficient conditions under which collaboration exist. With an emphasis on successful strategies from the case study organizations, the observations and recommendations in this chapter are intended to help inform decisions the Steering Committee will make.

Case Study Research

CPW studied eleven different organizations or plans; three environmental organizations, three disaster plans, two economic development districts, two regional planning councils, and a council of governments. Most of these organizations are based in or around the Pacific Northwest and the remainder from other parts of the United States. A full list of the organizations, along with the details of the case studies can be found in the Appendix.

CPW chose these case studies for several reasons. They had clear decision-making structures, demonstrated success through longevity, had secured funding and showed examples of different types of effective organizational structures. These findings are organized into three categories: organizational structure, funding, and decision-making. A discussion of the implications of the research to the Steering Committee follows each section.

Organizational Structure

There are two basic organizational structures: a horizontal structure that is committee based and a vertical structure that functions as a clearinghouse for smaller organizations. The type of structure selected is based on the needs of the organization.

Horizontal Collaboration

The most common form organizational structure takes is the executive committee or board. This is a horizontal form of collaboration, with the committee being a central meeting point for members. Committee members typically include representatives of counties, municipalities, federal agencies, or non-governmental organizations. In this form, each of the members is a stakeholder to the problem or issue the collaboration is seeking to address and has the ability to represent specific interests in the meetings.

Underneath the executive committee is a staff of varying size. This staff generally has two roles. It is responsible for carrying out the directives of the committee, as well as bringing issues and items of interest to the committee's attention.

The Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LoSRC) in North Carolina is horizontally organized. It consists of over twenty board members from four counties and eleven municipalities. The board makes policy decisions on a range of economic, social and environmental issues. The staff then carries out their directives.

A horizontal structure is most effective in addressing large-scale, multifaceted problems. It allows flexibility on the number of members included and is useful for problems that require many organizations to be involved. Both economic development and regional planning use a committee because they require a large number of actors with different interests that need to be involved in creating the group and making decisions. For example, the Northeast Oregon Economic Development District has an executive board that has equal representation from all three counties within the district. This provides equity for the region when the board makes decisions.

Vertical Collaboration

Another form of collaboration is more vertical in nature. Instead of all actors coming together to deal with a problem, one overarching organization arises to function as a clearinghouse for other often-smaller organizations. This clearinghouse-type organization does not dictate the actions of the groups it serves, but provides technical or financial assistance. This form is best suited to address an issue that is both limited and specific in scope. Land trusts or watershed councils are two examples of this model.

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) is a statewide organization that helps local watershed boards in a variety of ways. They provide funding for project planning, creation of action plans, watershed monitoring and on-site watershed enhancement projects. The funds are awarded through a grant program in which applications are submitted and objectively scored by a review team.

OWEB utilizes local and participant-driven watershed boards to enhance watersheds. This lets the local community set the goals and objectives for their watershed board while OWEB provides support and assistance.

Implications

- For the horizontal committee structure, the committee should have the authority to set policy and make decisions for all member organizations.
- For the vertical clearinghouse structure, the clearinghouse organization must be able to guide the differing jurisdictions while keeping the interests of the whole region in mind. This form also requires more funding to support the technical and financial assistance it provides.
- The executive committee (horizontal structure) should be made up of representatives from all seven counties.
- Staff is an important part of any organizational structure. The Mid-Columbia Gorge counties will be more successful if they have staff support.

Funding

A collaborative can have a sound structure and mission but have difficulty implementing programs if it has no funding source.

CPW found that funding was a key issue and constant worry for most organizations. Those collaboratives that relied on one or two funding sources had a relatively limited scope throughout their lifespan. This is not necessarily a problem: Oregon's Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs) make recommendations to the Oregon Transportation Commission regarding highway modernization projects. The ACTs have a single funding source and a single purpose.

Collaboratives that address a broader range of issues tend to draw upon a diverse range of funding sources. By harnessing federal, state, county, municipal and non-profit funding, these collaboratives can create more opportunities. If a collaborative does not seek funding from multiple sources, it is imposing limits on its potential scope of work.

One positive example of funding evolution is the Northeast Oregon Economic Development District (NEOEDD). Originally funded by Economic Development Agency (EDA) grants, NEOEDD has since diversified its funding stream to include Community Development Block Grants, the Oregon Economic & Community Development Department, as well as private foundations. They also offer a number of contract services on a fee for service basis. By having many different funding sources, it decreases the dependence on any one of them and allows for a more stable organization.

One strategy collaboratives use to address funding barriers is to piggyback on projects and plans that are already approved. For example, if an economic development grant is approved for a municipality or county it may be possible to add a mitigation component to the project. In this way, mitigation becomes a part of creating disaster-resilient economic development. By partnering different projects it is possible to find a creative way of matching funds, and often times new streams of funding become available to both projects.

Implications

- Consistent funding will rely on multiple sources. Federal government grants alone will not allow a collaborative to reach its potential.
- Existing or mandatory programs and actions can be an excellent starting place for mitigation.

Decision-Making Structure

The most important element in a decision-making structure is that it is agreed upon by the organization using it. Sound decisions are going to occur when the process fosters consistency and inclusion. To formalize such procedures, many organizations adopt by-laws that articulate how the group functions.

Collaborative organizations make decisions in several ways. Some processes are straightforward, with elected representatives voting on projects and funding those with a majority. Other organizations make decisions according to their mission statement and a set of core values. In NEOEDD, voting takes place after the staff makes their recommendations. A week before meeting, staff sends out detailed information regarding decisions the board will make.

Procedures to prioritize goals and objectives tend to have one structure. Most of these types of decisions are made by a majority vote of the board. These decisions are no less important than funding decisions as goals and objectives heavily influence both the direction of the collaborative and what projects to seek funding for.

Implications

- With seven independent counties and multiple cities interested in collaboration, a decision-making process must be one that is agreed upon by all.
- The Mid-Columbia Gorge counties will need to make decisions in a way that provides equity among participating communities.
- Honor the decision-making process and do not change it without the consent of those responsible for oversight of the collaborative.

Chapter 4:

Successful Hazard Mitigation Implementation Strategies

To help the Steering Committee create strategies to implement their plans, CPW reviewed examples from other regions that have successfully implemented mitigation actions. These success stories illustrate how different regions have overcome similar barriers surrounding implementation.

CPW focused on two success stories within Oregon: Clackamas County and Tillamook County. Both counties had different collaborative approaches to implementing their mitigation projects, and both offer valuable strategies for plan implementation. In researching these examples, CPW conducted interviews with the people responsible for plan implementation and focused on the following elements:

1. Structure of the group responsible for plan implementation
2. Decision making strategies for prioritizing mitigation projects
3. Funding for mitigation projects
4. Examples of successfully implemented projects

Clackamas County, Oregon

Clackamas County elected to pursue primarily Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program (PDM) funds. Eligibility for these funds requires counties to have a FEMA approved Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. Clackamas also applied for post-disaster funds, which are available only in the event of a federally declared disaster.

Structure

A Steering Committee made up of representatives from County Departments (Planning, Building, Finance, Public Works, Roads, Fire Defense, and Fire Prevention) worked to create and implement Clackamas County's Hazard Mitigation Plan. In addition, a group known as the Community Planning Citizens at Large represented the public on this committee. The committee is responsible for prioritizing mitigation projects.

Clackamas County hired a full-time coordinator to facilitate implementation efforts. The coordinator wrote grants and was responsible for updating the plan every five years; a requirement for eligibility for continued PDM and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding. Clackamas County's success in implementing action items can be attributed in large part to the fact that they hired a full-time staff person.

Decision-Making

The Steering Committee struggled with finding an optimal method for prioritizing projects. In the beginning they used the FEMA-recommended methodology. When that proved too slow and cumbersome, they moved to a point-based system in which they assigned points to a project based on ease of implementation, availability of matching funds and level of community risk. For projects that required a cost-benefit analysis, the Steering Committee contracted with a third party.

Funding

Clackamas County applied primarily for Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) funds and secured \$6,000,000 for hazard mitigation projects. They also applied for HMGP funds, which they secured and used to raise structures above the floodplain.

Successful Projects

With grant funding, Clackamas County accomplished several successful mitigation projects including seismic retrofits to public facilities and the formation of a cooperative technical partnership with FEMA, allowing them access to floodplain mapping data. Additionally, the County GIS department created an interactive website on mitigation projects.

In terms of outcomes, one County Commissioner echoed a FEMA report that estimated for every dollar spent on mitigation, they saved four dollars. Additionally, their hazard mitigation plan allowed residents with flood insurance to receive a 25% discount on their policy.

Key Findings:

- Multiple county departments and the public were involved in a collaborative effort to implement the hazard mitigation plan.
- Rather than divide the task of implementation amongst the county departments, Clackamas hired a full-time, paid coordinator who wrote grants and maintained the plan.
- Because Clackamas County made an initial investment in time and money in their plan, they received grant funds and were able to complete their mitigation projects.

Tillamook County, Oregon

Located near the confluence of five major rivers, Tillamook County is subject to frequent flooding. A 1996 flood and landslide event in Tillamook County caused massive amounts of damage throughout the area and was officially declared a federal disaster. As a result, Tillamook County received Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds to implement hazard mitigation action items.

Structure

FEMA requires an adopted, approved hazard mitigation plan for local governments to be eligible for HMGP funds. To be in accordance with this requirement Tillamook County formed a Steering Committee to develop and implement the plan. Tillamook's Steering Committee is headed by a County Commissioner and includes the County Emergency Management Director, who is responsible for managing implementation, along with a representative from each community (usually the Mayor or a Council Member). Members of the planning department and the Sheriff are also involved in the Committee as well as representatives from neighboring Columbia County.

Decision-Making

To prioritize projects for the post-disaster HMGP funds, the Tillamook Steering Committee used a balloting process. All members received a copy of the projects prior to meeting. At the meeting each member pitched their respective project(s) after which they ranked the projects using a list of 12 criteria (see Table 2). After tallying the results the committee commented on the ranking. Since there was no dissent, they adopted the prioritized list. In the event that the committee faced decisions they could not resolve, they would have hired third party arbitration.

Table 2. Tillamook Prioritization Criteria

Criteria for Mitigation Prioritization
1. Does the project conform to your State's Hazard Mitigation Plan?
2. Does the project provide a beneficial impact on the disaster area?
3. Does your project solve a problem?
4. Is your project cost-effective?
5. How much does your project cost? Are we spending our entire allocation on your project?
6. Does the project reduce loss of life, loss of essential services, damage to critical facilities, or severe economic hardship?
7. Does the project reduce future losses after examining the alternatives available?

8. Is there a repetitive history of damage at the site?
9. What is the severity of hazard and vulnerability at the project location?
10. Does the project accomplish multi-objectives, including damage reduction, environmental enhancement, and economic recovery?
11. Are we protecting primary residences versus secondary homes?
12. Is there local commitment and public buy-in if we choose this project?

Funding

Tillamook and Columbia County received over \$10,000,000 in HMGP funds for their respective projects. However, most grants require communities to match a percentage of this grant funding, a frequent challenge for many smaller communities. Tillamook County received money from a \$500,000 state fund set aside for municipalities unable to meet this requirement.

Successful Projects

Tillamook County used HMGP funds to raise several structures above the floodplain and relocate others out of the floodplain. In one case the County raised an entire strip mall six weeks prior to the 2007 floods. The businesses in the mall sustained minimal damage and were able to reopen immediately after the waters receded. The County also encouraged businesses to relocate out of the floodplain by using HMGP funds to purchase properties and turn them into open space.

As a result of their efforts, FEMA recognized Tillamook County in January 2008 as a best practices case for natural hazard mitigation.

Key Findings:

- Multiple county departments and community members from two separate counties collaborated to form the Steering Committee for plan implementation.
- The County Emergency Management Director manages the implementation of their hazard mitigation actions.
- Because Tillamook County had an approved plan, they were eligible to receive post-disaster funding following federally declared disasters.
- Committee members from all communities reached consensus on mitigation projects.

Chapter 5: Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans: A Regional View

CPW reviewed each county's Natural Hazard Mitigation plan with the goal of identifying how many action items each disaster had as well as which type of organization was taking the lead on the action. The intent in reviewing these plans is to quantify common goals and actions and demonstrate to the Steering Committee the possibilities for collaborative success.

Methodology

In order to review the plans, CPW developed a system for categorizing elements of the plans. Specifically, we looked at:

- Steering Committee Make-Up
- Relation to Other Plans
- Plan Conveners
- Goals
- Action Items
- Leadership and Partners for Action Items
- Breakdown of Multi-Hazard Action Items
- Categorization of Action Items

After reviewing the plans, CPW drew linkages and sifted out the differences that will allow the Mid-Columbia Gorge Counties to view their plans in a regional context.

A Regional View of Mid-Columbia Gorge Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans

Regional Risk

Because of their frequency, floods are the greatest risk for all counties and have the most associated action items. All of the counties face additional hazards that include landslides, wild fires, severe storms, earthquakes and volcanoes.

Regional Goals

The six Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans all share similar goals:

1. Protection of life and property
2. Increased or enhanced emergency services or response
3. Improved coordination and collaboration

Though all counties did not identify the following goals, action items from all of the plans reflect these goals.

- Education and outreach
- Natural resources
- Intergenerational equity
- Disaster resilient economy
- Structural projects
- Preventative
- Acknowledge responsibility

The shared goals can help serve as a base for the region to develop regional goals and a mission for collaboration. Even if it does not appear that there are numerous similarities, it is important to take into account that each plan places actions differently.

Plans that only had three goals tended to group action items together that were separated in plans with more goals. For example, Morrow County has a goal for structural projects. The action items that they list under structural projects are no different from many of the action items identified by Gilliam County listed under the goal of protecting life and property.

Regional Action Items

Table 3 shows the total number of action items in the region for each major hazard.

Table 3. Regional Action Items

Type of Natural Hazard	Number of Action Items (in Region)
Multi-Hazard	70
Drought Hazard	7
Flood Hazard	51
Earthquake Hazard	11
Landslide Hazard	12
Severe Storm Hazard	16
Wildfire Hazard	26
Volcanic Hazard	10

While these numbers tell us the types of hazards that present risk to counties in the Mid-Columbia River Gorge, they do not give us a sense of the kind of projects involved in addressing these hazards. Table 4 breaks

action items down by category of work to show the types of projects that can be addressed at a regional level.

Table 4. Action Item Categories

Category	Category Definition	Number of Region-wide action items
Education and Outreach	Actions that involve educating the community or land owners about how to protect themselves from natural hazards	Total: 46 Gilliam (9), Sherman (9), Wheeler (8), Hood River (8), Wasco (8), Morrow (4)
Training, Volunteers, and Human Resources	This includes action items that address training for fire departments, Red Cross volunteers, and hiring staff to handle disaster mitigation	Total: 9 Gilliam (1), Sherman (1), Wheeler (1), Hood River (3), Wasco (2), Morrow (1)
Infrastructure Projects	This includes any action that addresses physical changes to the roads, drainage systems, or other publicly owned thing	Total: 36 Gilliam (1), Sherman (1), Wheeler (1), Hood River (4), Wasco (3), Morrow (26)
Emergency Response and Post-Disaster Recovery	Includes tools, communication systems, and capacity building for emergency response (generators, etc.)	Total: 22 Gilliam (2), Sherman (2), Wheeler (2), Hood River (3), Wasco (3), Morrow (10)
Planning, Analysis, Studies, Research, and Coordination	This is a broad category that includes any future research, studies, or planning for projects that have not been fully developed. It also includes coordination and inter-agency cooperation. Includes updates to the comprehensive plans.	Total: 70 Gilliam (5), Sherman (5), Wheeler (9), Hood River (21), Wasco (23), Morrow (7)
Resource Development	Any action item that involves raising or seeking funding for either hazard mitigation or staff to implement hazard mitigation	Total: 7 Gilliam (1), Sherman (1), Wheeler (1), Hood River (2), Wasco (2), Morrow (0)
Regulatory	Action items that relate to updating or enforcing zoning or other ordinances	Total: 11 Gilliam (1), Sherman (1), Wheeler (1), Hood River (5), Wasco (3), Morrow (0)

Other	Wildfire reduction projects, utility line maintenance, and other miscellaneous projects	Total: 13 Gilliam (1), Sherman (1), Wheeler (1), Hood River (4), Wasco (5), Morrow (1)
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Regional Partners

All of the plans included information regarding the leadership and responsibility of individual action items and partnering agencies. In some cases the leadership is associated with a specific department such as public works, planning, GIS, or Emergency Management/Services. Regardless of which agency is deemed responsible it is clear there are many partners identified in the plans. This demonstrates ample opportunity for collaboration.

Regional Considerations

There are strong regional commonalities in the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans. CPW has identified the following issues the Steering Committee may need to consider depending on the nature and type of collaborative they choose to form.

- **The geographic nature of action items** - Some plans identify actions by city, while others address general county actions. Regardless of locality, many of the actions remain comparable.
- **Plan Development** - Not all counties address priority within their action items. This may need to be addressed as the collaborative progresses.
- **Funding** - There is no distinct funding pattern in the plans, this will allow county's to utilize the collaborative to identify funding opportunities.

Chapter 6:

Steering Committee Interviews

Members of the Mid-Columbia Gorge Steering Committee represent five different Counties: Hood River, Morrow, Gilliam, Wasco and Sherman. The committee includes planners, emergency managers, a regional government representative and an elected official. As part of our regional assessment, CPW conducted interviews with the Mid-Columbia Gorge Steering Committee. These interviews helped gauge perceptions regarding the ability of counties to implement hazard mitigation plans and initial reactions from the committee on working within a regional collaborative.

Response Summary:

Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Implementation

Topic of Question	Steering Committee Responses
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money and personnel were their biggest barriers to implementation. • Coordinating between different departments within County.
Strategies to Address Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hope the collaborative will help address barriers. • Apply for grants. • Educate members of the community. • Utilizing rare.
Resources Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using collaborative to obtain funding for staff or implementation actions. • Find money for capital improvements, as they are the most expensive.
Strategies to Achieve Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine resources to increase staff dedicated towards implementation. • Use current county tools to educate population (ex. Newsletters)

Collaboration

Topic of Question	Steering Committee Responses
Who should be involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency managers • Planners • Anyone involved in implementing action items.
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not too many people • Having small working subgroups

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> involved with the overall committee • Having a regional facilitator
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring regional representation • No personal agendas • Getting along regionally • Time and money spent traveling to the meetings
Goals and Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work together (often looks attractive to grant funders to be working collaboratively) • Identify high priority projects • Clear direction as to the implementation of their plans • Pool resources to get staff to assist in implementation
Resources Needed for Collaborative Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have someone facilitate regionally • Money • Initial investment from each county (does not have to be money could be supplies, building space, etc.)
Strategies to make Collaborative Successful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A staff person to coordinate counties involved • Someone to help identify priorities and complete projects • Money • Shared vision • Investment from each county • Good communication
Barriers to Regional Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability of each county to compromise • Sharing • Time commitment • Money commitment • Ability of the collaborative to cross diverse and large terrain

Conclusion

Overall the Mid-Columbia Gorge Steering Committee members were optimistic about this process and would like to move forward. Their concerns over possible barriers are genuine and valid. The information CPW gathered was essential in establishing a general basis for regional concerns.

Appendix

Appendix I: Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Review Tools

The following tables are some of the analysis tools CPW used to look at the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans on a regional scale.

COUNTY	Total Goals	Goals								
Gilliam	3	Ability to respond effectively and swiftly	Safety of Life and Property	Increased cooperation and collaboration between groups and agencies						
Hood River	8	Education and Outreach	Disaster Resilient Economy	Protection of Life and Property	Intergenerational Equity	Acknowledge Responsibility	Facilitate Partnership and Coordination	Natural Resource Systems Protection	Emergency Services Enhancement	
Morrow	7	Protection of Property	Education and Outreach	Preventative	Partnership and Coordination	Structural Projects	Natural Resources	Emergency Services		
Sherman	3	Ability to respond effectively and swiftly	Safety of life and property	Increased cooperation and collaboration between groups and agencies						
Wasco	8	Protection of Life and Property	Partnerships and Coordination	Acknowledge Responsibility	Emergency Services Enhancement	Education and Outreach	Disaster Resilient Economy	Intergenerational Equity	Natural Resource System Protection	
Wheeler	3	Ability to respond effectively and swiftly	Safety of Life and Property	Increased cooperation and collaboration between groups and agencies						

COUNTY	Number of Total Actions	Actions by Hazard Addressed (no #)								Actions by Time-Frame	
		Multi-Hazard (MH)	Drought (DH)	Flood (FH)	Earthquake (EH)	Landslide (LS)	Severe Storm (SH)	Wildfire (WH)	Volcanic (VH)	Short-Term (ST)	Long-Term (LT)
Gilliam	21	7	1	3	1	1	3	3	1	15	8
Hood River	51	17	2	8	4	5	6	6	3	20	31
Morrow	50	22	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	43	10
Sherman	20	7	1	3	1	1	3	3	1	11	1
Wasco	47	10	2	7	4	4	4	13	3	20	27
Wheeler	24	7	1	3	1	1		1	2	7	1
TOTAL	213	70	7	51	11	12	16	26	10	116	78

	Post Disaster Response		Training and HR Capacity Building /	Research/Analysis/ Studies/	Resource	Education and Outreach	Miscellaneous	Regulatory
	Infrastructure	Tools/systems	formation of groups	coordination/maps	Development			
Gilliam	1	2	1	5	1	9	1	1
Sherman	1	2	1	5	1	9	1	1
Wheeler	1	2	1	9	1	8	1	1
Hood River	4	3	3	21	2	8	4	5
Wasco	3	3	2	23	2	8	5	3
Morrow	26	10	1	7		4	1	
TOTAL	36	22	9	70	7	46	13	11

Appendix II: Case Study Analysis Tool

Regional Collaboration Case Studies Matrix

Organization	Basic Facts	Mission/Charter	Organizational Structure	Decision Making Structure	Funding Stream	Success/Outcomes
	Purpose, What is the purpose of the collaboration? Where do they serve? How long have they been operating?	Do they have a mission or charter for the organization, if so what is the basis/premises of the collaboration?	Is this a board, commission, committee? Volunteer run? Staff? How often do they meet? How did they decide who is involved? How are the areas represented?	Is there a process for decision making? If so, what is it? Who is involved? Does staff make recommendations? Is there a champion or leader?	How is the organization funded? Where do they get funds to do their projects? Have they used the collaborative to maximize funding streams?	Is/has the organization accomplished what it set out to do? Do they have measures in place for the success of their organization?
Northeast Oregon Economic Development District	Economic Development, formed in 1985, serving Baker, Union, and Wallowa County.	to provide resources and facilitate quality decision making for the benefit of entrepreneurs, businesses and communities in Northeast Oregon.	Governed by a board of 18, 6 members from each county, includes, 2 private, 2 public, and 2 citizen members. It has a staff of 3 but has varied from 1-5 over the years. The board meets quarterly. Each county involved has an equal number of represented	Yes, staff makes a recommendation and the board members vote. They must have 9 members present to vote and it must pass by a majority. The staff has a strong role in driving the efforts of this organization.	Originally the organization was funded solely by EDA grants, but has branched out to take advantage of HUD, CDBG, private foundations, and OECDD Cluster funds, etc.	They have successfully completed many projects that have increased the economic diversity and activity in the region. Some of the programs and grants have measures of success.
Clackamas County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan 2002	A five year action plan matrix for public and private sector organizations along with residents of Clackamas County interested in planning for natural hazards.	To promote sound public policy designed to protect citizens, critical facilities, infrastructure, private property, and the environment from natural hazards.	The Board of County Commissioners is responsible for adopting the plan and the Hazard Mitigation Advisory Committee is responsible for implementation.	The Board of County Commissioners is responsible for adopting the plan and the Hazard Mitigation Advisory Committee is responsible for implementation which is overseen by one employee.	The BCC adopts the plan, and then the County Emergency Manager submits it to OEM who in turn submits it to FEMA for review. FEMA grants funds upon acceptance.	

Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan for San Diego County 2004	[The Plan] was prepared from input from county residents, officials, URS Corporation consultants, and the California office of emergency services and security (COESS) and FEMA in order to guide the county towards greater disaster resistance.	Increases amount of HMGP funds to communities with comprehensive mitigation plans in effect. Intent is to facilitate cooperation between state and local authorities.	The incorporated cities of San Diego County created the Unified San Diego County Emergency Services Organization (USDCEO) and formed a joint powers agreement with the Unified Disaster Council (UDC).	The county and city councils from each participating municipality are required to adopt the plan prior to its approval to COESS and FEMA.	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds (HMGP). FEMA	
Land-of-Sky Regional Council	Founded in North Carolina in 1966, LoSRC is a forum to allow city and county government officials to deal with regional economic, environmental, and social problems. It serves 4 counties and 16 municipalities.	Work with local governments, the Region's leadership and state and federal agencies to foster desirable social, economic, cultural, and ecological conditions in Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania Counties.	The Council is made up of chief elected officials - mayors and county commission chairpersons and alternates - from member governments, one private representative of economic development interests in each county and two at-large members. Members meet monthly	The Council makes sets policy and is guided by a set of core values.	In the 2007 Fiscal Year, the roughly \$8,500,00 budget was funded through federal sources (60%), and state sources (30%), with the remaining 10% being made up through local dues, in-kind donations and contract work.	Given the wide range of issues and topics the LoSRC deals with, it couldn't be said to have completed its mission. No metrics were found for quantifying the LoRSC's work.
Columbia River Gorge Commission	To manage the National Scenic Area established in 1986. Serves 6 counties and 8 local governments (Hood River, Multnomah, Wasco, Clark, Klickitat, Skamania).	To protect and to provide for the enhancement of the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the Columbia River Gorge; and to protect and support the economy of the Columbia Gorge area by encouraging growth to occur ...	Created by interstate Compact between Oregon and Washington, under authority of federal law. Responsible for regional planning and land use regulation in the Scenic Area. There is a staff for the commission that consists of 10 people. 1 executive dire	Composed of 12 voting members. Gorge counties each appoint one member; the Governors of Washington and Oregon each appoint three members	Funded equally by the Washington and Oregon State Legislatures	Certifies grants and loans by states' Investment Boards to bring jobs to the Gorge. Serves as appeals board for Scenic Area land use decisions by counties with Scenic Area ordinances. Develops, adopts land use & resource protection plans.

<p>Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board</p>	<p>OWEB provides funding for education and on-site watershed enhancement projects. OWEB also supports watershed councils by providing grants for project planning, watershed assessments, development of action plans, watershed monitoring and watershed council</p>	<p>OWEB programs support Oregon's efforts to restore salmon runs, improve water quality, and strengthen ecosystems that are critical to healthy watersheds and sustainable communities. OWEB administers a grant program. The grant program supports voluntary efforts</p>	<p>The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) is a state agency led by a 17-member policy oversight board</p>	<p>The review team members score applications individually and then meet to discuss the proposals and determine which projects to recommend for funding. The review team recommendations are reviewed by staff, who then recommend projects based on the available</p>	<p>funded from the Oregon Lottery, as a result of a citizen initiative in 1998, federal funds and salmon license plate dollars</p>	<p>Yes, but this is not necessarily a case of regional collaboration, it's more a well funded state agency, so anything they have accomplished it is through resources.</p>
<p>Mid-Columbia Council for Economic Development</p>	<p>Economic Development. Serving Hood River, Wasco, Sherman counties in Oregon, and Skamania and Klickitat counties in Washington. Started in 1969.</p>	<p>To promote the creation of family-wage jobs, the diversification of the economic base, and the growth, development and the retention of business and industry within the five-county district."</p>	<p>MCEDD is governed by a twenty member board of directors representing the five counties of the district (5), a representative of the cities of each county (5), representatives of the Ports (2) and Chambers of Commerce (2) of each state, as well as six priv</p>	<p>Vision and goals created by the board. Updated every year with action items relating to goals.</p>	<p>Funded through a variety of sources. Grants from the EPA, Department of Agriculture, CDBG, Oregon Investment Board, and a stream of revolving loans subject to local match.</p>	<p>While economic development is never fully reached, MCEDD monitors demographic information on the 5 counties served as well as the states of Oregon and Washington. Also, an evaluation of the previous year's action items and goals is done at the beginning o</p>
<p>North Central Florida Regional Planning Council</p>	<p>Regional economic, transportation, and land use planning. Serves 11 counties and 33 municipalities Started in 1974.</p>	<p>To improve the quality of life of the Regions citizens, by coordinating growth management, protecting regional resources, promoting economic development and providing technical services to local governments.</p>	<p>Has 47 board members, one-third of which appointed by the governor, with the remaining two-thirds being appointed by local governments. They meet monthly and have 18 staff members.</p>	<p>Vision and goals set forth in strategic plan, which must be consistent with the state comprehensive plan. Updated periodically.</p>	<p>Funded mostly through local planning contracts and state funding. Some comes through dues and federal government.</p>	<p>Ongoing work is being done. An evaluation is done on the regional strategic plan periodically, but the latest evaluation is older than the current strategic plan.</p>

<p>Curry County Wildfire Protection Plan</p>	<p>The purpose of this collaboration is to help the Curry County community implement their wildfire protection plan. (pg.2 MOU). It is a new collaboration, but involves many parties. Serves Curry County, Coos Bay and Rogue River Siskiyou National Forest.</p>	<p>No they currently have a Memorandum of Understanding. It does not appear</p>	<p>This collaboration is very diverse. Many parties are at the table trying to help with wildfire protection. Curry County, forest protective association, fire agencies, BLM, Watersheds and fire marshals amongst others. It appears to be very representative</p>	<p>Does not appear to have a decision making process documented.</p>	<p>It appears that they all use their own resources to implement their own action items. They are also using grant money to accomplish action items. These funds would benefit all, as wildfire does not have any boundaries.</p>	<p>Evaluation guide will be done by June 2008</p>
<p>Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Collaborate to make land use, transportation and community development more efficient. They serve the Southern two thirds of Worcester county in MA. This collaboration has been intact since 1965.</p>	<p>the goal "of balancing the needs of different actors and interests in different political jurisdictions within the same economic region. It requires the identification of common issues and joint commitment to success"</p>	<p>They are run by commission. They adequately represent cities and communities of the region by including them all in the process. The group as a whole meet quarterly but they also have committees that meet more frequently, monthly.</p>	<p>By committee recommendation, the commission can get an idea of what is happening in the sub committees and help make informed regional decisions.</p>	<p>This collaboration is very large. Through State funding, federal funding, grants they all work from different departments but they know their strategies of attack based on the regional recommendations. This ends up being beneficial for the region.</p>	<p>This is a very successful regional collaboration. Although it is large they are set up in a fashion that appears to really benefit the region as a whole. Having subcommittees meet more frequently uses time wisely and helps the regional commission know w</p>

<p>Sherman County Soil and Water Conservation District</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil and Water Conservation - Reduce soil erosion and improve water quality • Watershed Enhancement and Restoration - In conjunction with Senate Bill 1010 and The Oregon Plan • Agricultural Water Quality Management Plans - Lower Deschutes and Lower John Day 	<p>strives to promote and protect the natural resources of not only Sherman County, but also all the areas included in our watershed drainages'</p>	<p>5 person board with a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and member at large. There is also a paid staff that includes a District Coordinator, Watershed Coordinator, 2 district technicians, and 1 CRP technician</p>	<p>The district established Watershed Councils (local citizens groups) to take advantage of local knowledge and involvement in resource issues. These groups are tasked to develop action plans based on local resource priorities identified in the assessments.</p>	<p>Using BPA and ODA funds to help cover our technicians' salary, the SWCD has been actively developing riparian buffer plans for area streams in partnership with USDA. The first buffer was established in Sherman County in 2001 and as of April 30, 2006 there</p>	<p>the SWCD has played key roles in a variety of projects, often in the position of bringing multiple agencies together to problem solve and obtain funding</p>
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