

## Enterprise Monitoring for Natural Resources

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Oregon's state natural resources agencies monitor natural resources for a variety of purposes:

- ***Status and trend monitoring*** measures environmental outcomes, such as water temperature, riparian conditions, fish populations, or forest cover at different geographic scales over time, often to determine whether we are making progress toward particular goals;
- ***Effectiveness monitoring*** tracks whether particular projects, actions or management measures are achieving expected outcomes; and
- ***Compliance monitoring*** determines whether legal standards are being met as part of a regulatory program, usually in conjunction with a permit.

Together, these types of monitoring are *the* foundation for natural resources management. They allow us to prioritize resources, to change programs over time to respond to feedback about what is working and what is not, and they allow us to treat landowners and other persons who use resources, equitably. Without adequate monitoring, we are flying blind, managing by best intentions rather than best science and policy.

Oregon's natural resources agencies have built a track record of working together to build monitoring systems that work. A significant effort was made in conjunction with the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds to coordinate monitoring and data collection and use. The Oregon Plan Monitoring Team was specifically tasked with this effort, and much progress was made in aligning data collection, reporting, and decision support tools. Area-specific efforts, under the recently established Conservation Effectiveness Partnership, have demonstrated that coordinated monitoring and targeting of resources leads to significant, demonstrable improvements in environmental conditions, such as those in the Wilson River and Whychus Creek,

Coordinating monitoring efforts takes two forms in Oregon. First, horizontal coordination occurs between agencies, when they work together to identify where monitoring for one entity can be useful to other entities, collectively creating a system that maximizes limited resources. Second, coordination occurs vertically between landowners, resource users, and government, when those on the ground work as part of a



larger monitoring system. The work of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Watershed Councils, and individual landowners is a key part of the overall information base.

Oregon's natural resources agencies are ready to build on the strong foundation created by these prior successes. However, additional resources are needed for the enterprise approach to scale up prior efforts to broader areas of the state and other important natural resource issues such as water quality and quantity. Ultimately, if we want to make sure that Oregonians know where we are succeeding in improving environmental conditions, and maintain public support for those efforts, we need monitoring to be able to document those successes over time. This is a central outcome of the Healthy Environment portion of the Governor's 10-Year Plan for Oregon.

Building Oregon's coordinated approach to monitoring is critical to demonstrating progress toward achieving the environmental outcomes Oregonians want to see.

