

The Oregon Resilience Plan

**Reducing Risk and Improving Recovery for the Next Cascadia
Earthquake and Tsunami**

***Save Lives, Preserve Our
Communities and Our Economy***



Report to the 77th Legislative Assembly

from

Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission

Salem, Oregon

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*Retired from the commission in June 2012.

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Project Team and Acknowledgments

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Business and Work Force Task Group: **Susan Steward** (Co-Chair), **Gerry Williams** (Co-Chair), Lori Chamberlain, Patrick Estenes, Kelley Okolita, Patrick Slabe, Bert Sorio, Jeffrey Soulages, Rick Van Dyke, and Bryce Ward.

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Water and Waste Water Task Group: *Mike Stuhr* (Co-Chair), *Mark Knudson* (Co-Chair), Don Ballantyne, Steve Behrandt, James Bela, Andy Braun, Scott Burns, Mel Damewood, Jim Doane, Michael Doane, Tom Hickmann, Gary Irwin, Gwynn Johnson, Jeff Leighton, Arturo Leon, Ian Madin, Jim Male, Jim Newell, Bob Patterson, Sherry Patterson, Todd Perimon, Brad Phelps, Jeff Rubin, Rob Schab, Ken Schlegel, Brian Stahl, and Jeffrey H. Winchester.

Dr. Kyra L. Nourse compiled and edited the *Oregon Resilience Plan*, with assistance from my OSSPAC colleagues Dr. Althea Rizzo, Jay Wilson, Ian Madin and from Edward Wolf. We are grateful to FEMA for financial support, through a grant administered by Oregon Emergency Management, for the technical editing of the plan.

The Port of Portland hosted our workshops on January 26, 2012 and October 5, 2012 in its headquarter building. We want to thank Michelle Walker for her planning and coordination to make the workshops successful. Cascadia Region Earthquake Workgroup (CREW) provided their endorsement for our resilience planning efforts, and also helped sponsor our January 26, 2012 workshop. We want to thank Cale Ash (then President of CREW) and John Schelling (Washington State Emergency Management) for their participation and for sharing their resilience planning experience with us.

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Many other individuals have generously shared their expertise and perspective with us during the creation of this plan. OSSPAC bears the sole responsibility for any errors or omissions it contains.

Kent Yu, Ph.D.

Chairman, Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission

Salem, Oregon

January 2013

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Foreword

“If we cannot control the volatile tides of change, we can learn to build better boats.”

—Andrew Zolli and Ann Marie Healy, *Resilience: Why Things Bounce Back* (2012)

For more than 300 years, a massive geological fault off America’s northwest coast has lain dormant. Well into that interval, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark journeyed to the mouth of the Columbia River and returned to Washington, D.C. to tell the new United States about what came to be known as the Oregon Country. Tens of thousands of settlers crossed the Oregon Trail to establish communities throughout the Willamette Valley, in coastal valleys, and beside natural harbors. With the provisional government established in 1843 followed by statehood in 1859, the modern history of Oregon began. Industries rose and fell, cities and towns grew . . . and still the fault lay silent.

Not until the 1980s did scientists recognize the Cascadia subduction zone as an active fault that poses a major geological hazard to Oregon. A decade later, the state’s building codes were updated to address this newly revealed earthquake threat to the built environment.

Since that time, scientists have documented a long history of earthquakes and tsunamis on the Cascadia subduction zone, and state and local officials have urged Oregonians to prepare for the next one. In 1999, the state’s Department of Geology and Mineral Industries published a preliminary statewide damage and loss study identifying the dire consequences of a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami for Oregon’s infrastructure and for public safety.

One official who took that warning seriously was Senator Peter Courtney, Oregon’s unchallenged champion of earthquake safety and advocate for measures to protect students who attend unsafe schools. His legislative efforts over more than a decade launched a statewide assessment of schools and emergency response facilities and established a state grant program to help fund seismic upgrades to hazardous schools and other critical facilities. Other than California, no state has done as much—yet the hazard surpasses the commitments Oregon has made to date.

In early 2011, we suggested in the pages of *The Oregonian* that Oregon should take new steps to make itself resilient to a big earthquake. Less than two months later, the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami disaster in Japan provided the occasion for Representative Deborah Boone to introduce a House Resolution calling on Oregon to plan for the impacts of a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami here.

House Resolution 3 directed Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission to lead the planning effort. Chairman Kent Yu, Ph.D., has skillfully guided more than 150 volunteer professionals, including noted experts, to develop a landmark report on Oregon’s priorities to survive and bounce back from a magnitude 9.0 Cascadia earthquake and tsunami.

The authors of this Oregon Resilience Plan set out to help Oregonians know what to expect from the state's infrastructure should that disaster strike this year, and to propose the level of infrastructure reliability that a resilient state should provide. The plan's recommendations highlight ways to close the gap that separates expected and desired performance.

Business leaders engaged in this resilience planning effort have indicated that in a major disaster, interruptions of infrastructure services lasting longer than two weeks will put their enterprises at risk. Yet, under present conditions, we can expect some interruptions to last much longer, in some cases from 18 to 36 months or more. The state, in tandem with the private sector, has much to do to improve the reliability of basic services. Citizens, too, need to plan to be self-sufficient for far longer than the 72-hour period commonly advised for disaster preparedness.

The most recent Cascadia earthquake struck at around 9:00 p.m. on a late January evening; the next could shake a mid-July morning when hundreds of thousands of Oregonians and visitors are enjoying coastal beaches and towns. No one can predict the next time the Cascadia fault will rupture, and *today* is just as likely as fifty years from now. If we begin now, it is possible to prevent that natural disaster from causing a statewide catastrophe. Now is the time to have a plan. Now is the time to close Oregon's resilience gap.

The Oregon Resilience Plan maps a path of policy and investment priorities for the next fifty years. The recommendations offer Oregon's Legislative Assembly and Governor immediate steps to begin a journey along that path. The plan and its recommendations build on the solid foundation laid over the past quarter century by some of Oregon's top scientists, engineers, and policymakers.

As we wrote two years ago, adopting and implementing such a plan can show "Oregon at its best, tackling a risk with imagination and resourcefulness while sharing the knowledge gained."

YUMEI WANG, JAY RASKIN, AND EDWARD WOLF

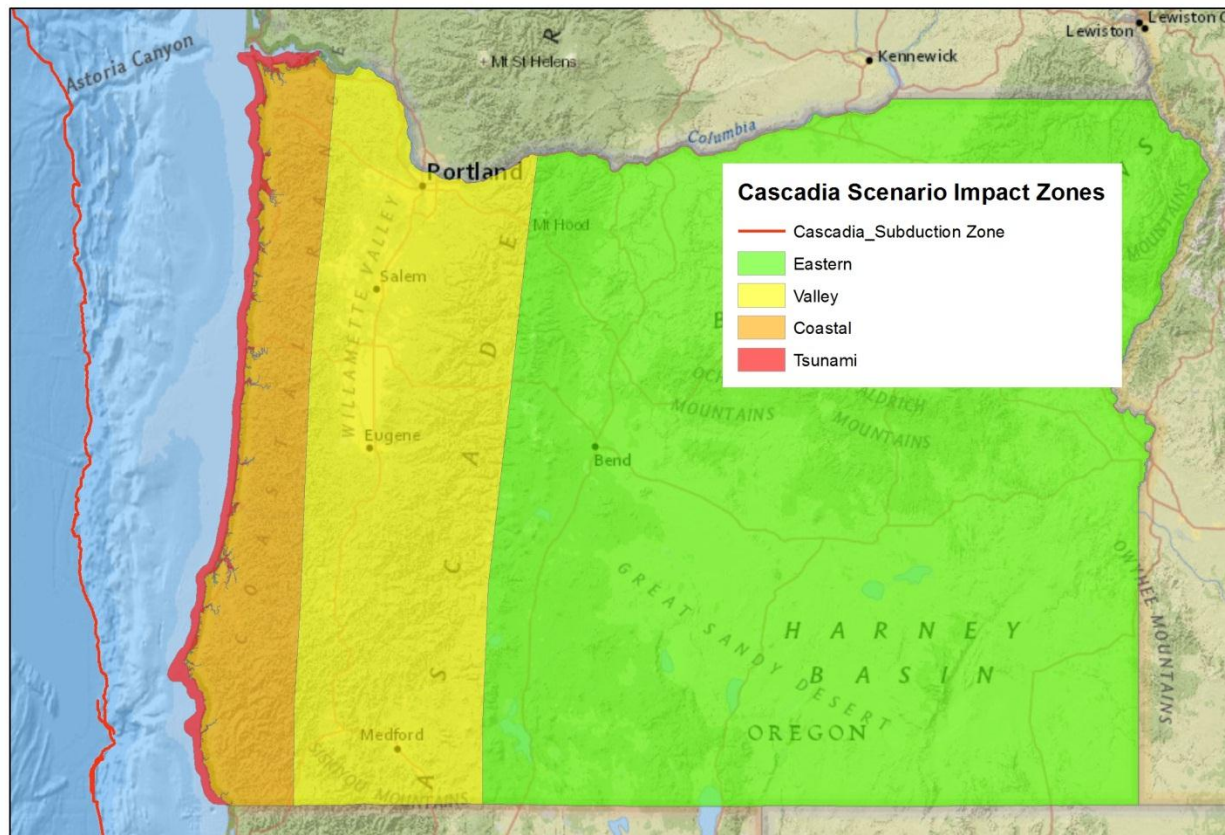
Portland, Oregon

November 2012

Yumei Wang, Jay Raskin, and Edward Wolf are the co-authors of "Oregon should make itself resilient for a big quake," *The Sunday Oregonian*, January 9, 2011.

Executive Summary

Very large earthquakes will occur in Oregon's future, and our state's infrastructure will remain poorly prepared to meet the threat unless we take action now to start building the necessary resilience. This is the central finding of the *Oregon Resilience Plan* requested by Oregon's 76th Legislative Assembly.



Impact zones for the magnitude 9.0 Cascadia earthquake scenario. Damage will be extreme in the tsunami zone, heavy in the Coastal zone, moderate in the Valley zone, and light in the Eastern zone.

About the Plan

House Resolution 3, adopted in April 2011, directed the Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission (OSSPAC) “to lead and coordinate preparation of an Oregon Resilience Plan that reviews policy options, summarizes relevant reports and studies by state agencies, and makes recommendations on policy direction to protect lives and keep commerce flowing during and after a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami.” OSSPAC assembled eight task groups, comprising volunteer subject-matter experts from government, universities, the private sector, and the general public. An Advisory Group of public- and private-sector leaders oversaw the Task Groups’ work, assembled in the portfolio of chapters that make up the plan.

OSSPAC offered the following definition of the seismic resilience goal:

“Oregon citizens will not only be protected from life-threatening physical harm, but because of risk reduction measures and pre-disaster planning, communities will recover more quickly and with less continuing vulnerability following a Cascadia subduction zone earthquake and tsunami.”

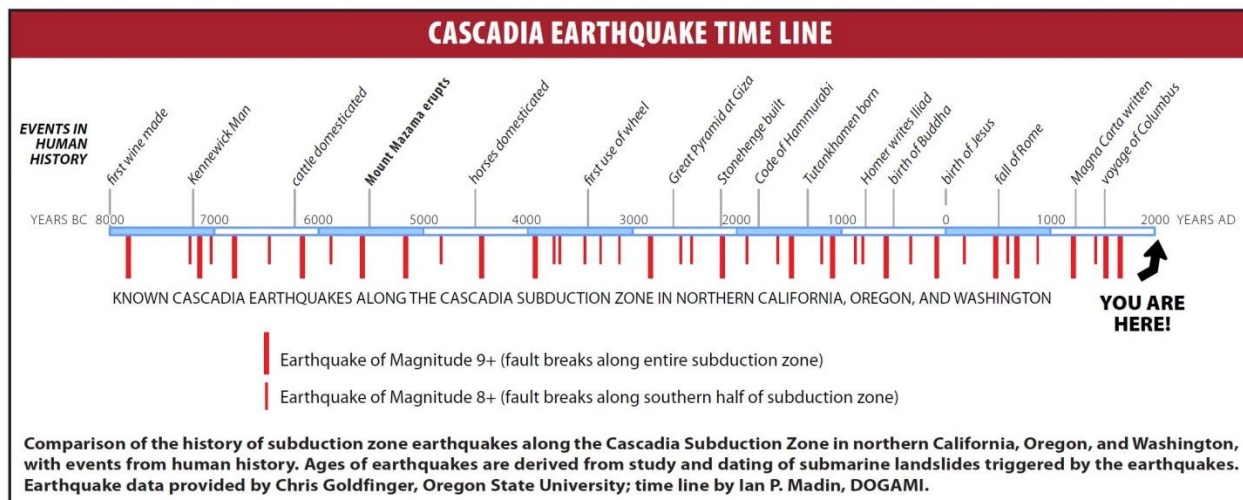
Each group was charged with three tasks for four affected zones (tsunami, coastal/earthquake only, valley, and central/eastern Oregon):

1. Determine the **likely impacts** of a magnitude 9.0 Cascadia earthquake and tsunami on its assigned sector, and estimate the time required to restore functions in that sector if the earthquake were to strike under present conditions;
2. Define **acceptable timeframes** to restore functions after a future Cascadia earthquake to fulfill expected resilient performance; and
3. Recommend **changes in practice and policies** that, if implemented during the next 50 years, will allow Oregon to reach the desired resilience targets.

The purpose of the analysis is to identify steps needed to eliminate the gap separating current performance from resilient performance, and to initiate that work through capital investment, new incentives, and policy changes so that the inevitable natural disaster of a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami will not deliver a catastrophic blow to Oregon’s economy and communities.

Overview of the Task Groups

The **Cascadia Earthquake Scenario Task Group** (Chapter One) reviewed current scientific research to develop a detailed description of the likely physical effects of a great (magnitude 9.0) Cascadia subduction zone earthquake and tsunami, providing a scenario that other task groups used to assess impacts on their respective sectors.



This timeline compares the 10,000-year-long history of Cascadia earthquakes to events in human history.

The **Business and Workforce Continuity Task Group** (Chapter Two) sought to assess the workplace integrity, workforce mobility, and building systems performance – along with customer viability – needed to allow Oregon’s businesses to remain in operation following a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami and to drive a self-sustaining economic recovery.

The **Coastal Communities Task Group** (Chapter Three) addressed the unique risks faced by Oregon’s coast, the region of the state that will experience a devastating combination of tsunami inundation and physical damage from extreme ground shaking due to proximity to the subduction zone fault.



Critical Facilities in the Tsunami Zone – Minamisanriku, March 14, 2011. Because their hospital, emergency operation center, and other government and community service facilities were located in the tsunami inundation zone, the surviving community lost nearly all of its capacity to respond and implement recovery efforts. Source: Asia Air Survey Co., Ltd.



Tsunami Vulnerability: City of Seaside with 83% of its population, 89% of its employees and almost 100% its critical facilities in the tsunami inundation zone. Source: Horning Geosciences

The **Critical and Essential Buildings Task Group** (Chapter Four) examined the main classes of public and private structures considered critical to resilience in the event of a scenario earthquake, and sought to characterize the gap between expected seismic performance (current state) and desired seismic resilience (target state). The group also assessed buildings deemed vital to community resilience, and addressed the special challenges posed by unreinforced masonry (URM) and non-ductile concrete structures.



Many of existing public and private buildings such as the State Capitol Building were built prior to our knowledge of the Cascadia subduction earthquake. They are not seismically safe, and pose significant life-safety threat to the building occupants.

The **Transportation Task Group** (Chapter Five) assessed the seismic integrity of Oregon's multi-modal transportation system, including bridges and highways, rail, airports, water ports, and public transit systems, examined the special considerations pertaining to the Columbia and Willamette River navigation channels, and characterized the work deemed necessary to restore and maintain transportation lifelines after a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami. The group's scope included interdependence of transportation networks with other lifeline systems.



The approach (foreground) to the 1966 Astoria-Megler Bridge that spans the Columbia River has major structural deficiencies that could lead to a collapse following an earthquake. Damaged bridge sections could block waterway access to the Critical Energy Infrastructure Hub. (DOGAMI photo)

The **Energy Task Group** (Chapter Six) investigated the seismic deficiencies of Oregon's energy storage and transmission infrastructure, with a special emphasis on the vulnerability of the state's critical energy infrastructure (CEI) hub, a six-mile stretch of the lower Willamette River where key liquid fuel and natural gas storage and transmission facilities and electricity transmission facilities are concentrated.



Left: Site map of the Critical Energy Infrastructure (CEI) Hub on the western bank of the Lower Willamette River area in NW Portland, Oregon. The CEI Hub, outlined in red, stretches for six miles. (Google Earth) Right: Oil terminals in the CEI Hub. (DOGAMI photo)

The **Information and Communications Task Group** (Chapter Seven) examined the inherent vulnerabilities of Oregon's information and communications systems and the consequences of service disruptions for the resilience of other sectors and systems. The group explored the implications of co-location of communications infrastructure with other vulnerable physical infrastructure (e.g., bridges), and specified the conditions needed to accomplish phased restoration of service following a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami.



Left: These high voltage electrical transmission towers are built on a river bank in the Critical Energy Infrastructure (CEI) Hub susceptible to lateral spreading. (DOGAMI photo) Right: Structural damage to a high voltage transmission tower located at a river crossing in 2010 Chile earthquake (Technical Council on Lifeline Earthquake Engineering – TCLEE)

The **Water and Wastewater Task Group** (Chapter Eight) reviewed vulnerabilities of the pipelines, treatment plants, and pump stations that make up Oregon’s water and wastewater systems, and discussed the interventions needed to increase the resilience of under-engineered and antiquated infrastructure at potential failure points. The group proposed a phased approach to restoration of water services after a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami, beginning with a backbone water and wastewater system capable of supplying critical community needs.

Key Findings

Oregon is far from resilient to the impacts of a great Cascadia earthquake and tsunami today.

Available studies estimate fatalities ranging from 1,250 to more than 10,000 due to the combined effects of earthquake and tsunami, tens of thousands of buildings destroyed or damaged so extensively that they will require months to years of repair, tens of thousands of displaced households, more than \$30 billion in direct and indirect economic losses (close to one-fifth of Oregon’s gross state product), and more than one million dump truck loads of debris.

A particular vulnerability is Oregon’s liquid fuel supply. Oregon depends on liquid fuels transported into the state from Washington State, which is also vulnerable to a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami. Once here, fuels are stored temporarily at Oregon’s critical energy infrastructure hub, a six-mile stretch of the lower Willamette River where industrial facilities occupy liquefiable riverside soils. Disrupting the transportation, storage, and distribution of liquid fuels would rapidly disrupt most, if not all, sectors of the economy critical to emergency response and economic recovery.

Business continuity planning typically assumes a period of two weeks to be the longest disruption of essential services (*i.e.*, utilities, communications, etc.) that a business can withstand, and service disruptions lasting for one month or longer can be enough to force a business to close, relocate, or leave

the state entirely. Analysis in the *Oregon Resilience Plan* reveals the following timeframes for service recovery under present conditions:

Critical Service	Zone	Estimated Time to Restore Service
Electricity	Valley	1 to 3 months
Electricity	Coast	3 to 6 months
Police and fire stations	Valley	2 to 4 months
Drinking water and sewer	Valley	1 month to 1 year
Drinking water and sewer	Coast	1 to 3 years
Top-priority highways (partial restoration)	Valley	6 to 12 months
Healthcare facilities	Valley	18 months
Healthcare facilities	Coast	3 years

Resilience gaps of this magnitude reveal a harsh truth: a policy of business as usual implies a post-earthquake future that could consist of decades of economic and population decline – in effect, a “lost generation” that will devastate our state and ripple beyond Oregon to affect the regional and national economy.

- After the February 27, 2010 M8.8 Maule Earthquake, Chile was able to restore 90% communication services and 95% power supply within two weeks, and re-start commercial flights after ten days.
- After the March 11, 2011 M9.0 Tohoku Earthquake, Japan was able to restore more than 90% power supply in ten days, 90% telephone lines in two weeks, and 90% cellular base stations in 19 days.

Recommendations

Based on the findings in this *Oregon Resilience Plan*, OSSPAC recommends that Oregon start now on a sustained program to reduce our vulnerability and shorten our recovery time to achieve resilience before the next Cascadia earthquake inevitably strikes our state.

OSSPAC urges systematic efforts to assess the Oregon's buildings, lifelines, and social systems, and to develop a sustained program of replacement, retrofit, and redesign to make Oregon resilient.

Sector-by-sector findings and detailed recommendations are presented in each chapter of the *Oregon Resilience Plan*. Overarching priorities, illustrated with examples selected from the chapters, include new efforts to:

1. Undertake **comprehensive assessments** of the key structures and systems that underpin Oregon's economy, including
 - a. Completing a statewide inventory of critical buildings (those needed for emergency response and the provision of basic services to communities) in both public and private sectors (Chapter Four);
 - b. Completing an updated inventory of the local agency, transit, port, and rail assets that assure access to school buildings and hospitals and could be used during emergencies (Chapter Five);
 - c. Charging the Oregon Public Utility Commission to define criteria for seismic vulnerability assessments that will be applied by operating companies in the energy and information and communications sectors (Chapters Six and Seven); and
 - d. Requiring all water and wastewater agencies to complete a seismic risk assessment and mitigation plan as part of periodic updates to facility plans (Chapter Eight).
2. Launch a sustained **program of capital investment** in Oregon's public structures, including
 - a. Fully funding Oregon's Seismic Rehabilitation Grants Program for K-12 schools, community colleges, and emergency response facilities (Chapters Two and Four);
 - b. Seismically upgrading lifeline transportation routes into and out of major business centers statewide by 2030 (Chapter Five); and
 - c. Establishing a State Resilience Office to provide leadership, resources, advocacy, and expertise in implementing statewide resilience plans (Chapter Four).
3. Craft a **package of incentives** to engage Oregon's private sector in efforts to advance seismic resilience, including
 - a. Developing a seismic rating system for new buildings to incentivize construction of buildings more resilient than building code compliance requires and to communicate seismic risk to the public (Chapters Two and Four);
 - b. Tasking the Oregon Public Utilities Commission to provide oversight for seismic preparedness of the energy providers currently under its jurisdiction (Chapter Six); and

- c. Working with the hospitality industry to develop plans to assist visitors following a major earthquake and tsunami and to plan strategies to rebuild the tourism industry (Chapter Three).

4. **Update Oregon's public policies, including**

- a. Revising individual preparedness communications to specify preparation from the old standard of 72 hours to a minimum of two weeks, and possibly more (Chapters Two and Three);
- b. Developing a policy and standards for installation of temporary bridges following earthquake disruption (Chapter Five); and
- c. Adopting a two-tiered ratings system that indicates the number of hours/days that a citizen in a community can expect to wait before major relief arrives, and the number of days/months that a citizen can expect to wait before the community itself achieves 90 percent restoration of roads and municipal services (Chapter Two).

These and other recommendations may be refined and implemented via a combination of new legislation, regulations, administrative rules, budget priorities, and in consultation with private sector leaders as appropriate.

Looking Ahead

This *Oregon Resilience Plan* emphasizes the resilient physical infrastructure needed to support business and community continuity. The policy recommendations presented here, if implemented over the next 50 years, will enhance our infrastructure resilience, help preserve our communities, and protect our state economy.

This is a timeframe much longer than typical of government planning efforts. To affirm Oregon's commitment, OSSPAC needs to work with the Joint Ways & Means Committee of Oregon's Legislative Assembly to track and report on progress toward seismic resilience at the beginning of each legislative session, to keep the 50-year goal in view.

Local Oregon communities can use the framework and gap-analysis methodology developed by the *Oregon Resilience Plan* to conduct more refined assessments that consider local seismic and tsunami hazards, and develop community-specific recommendations to meet their response and recovery needs.

A Cascadia earthquake and tsunami will affect both Oregon and Washington. Both states share common challenges, among them the interstate bridges and the Columbia River navigation channel as well as the regional power grid and liquid fuel supply. In particular, Oregon gets almost one hundred percent of its liquid fuel from suppliers in Washington, delivered via pipeline and river. We believe that it would be beneficial for both states to work together at a regional level to address the common challenge of resilience to a region-wide seismic event.

OSSPAC recommends expanding future resilience planning efforts to include:

1. Community-level planning
2. Human resilience
3. Civic infrastructure
4. Joint regional planning with Washington State

With resilient physical infrastructure, a healthy population, and functioning government and civic infrastructure to provide services to those in need, Oregon will be ready to withstand a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami, and to expedite response and recovery efforts quickly.

NOTE: This Executive Summary selects from the large number of detailed recommendations in the chapters of the *Oregon Resilience Plan*. The full report will be available online at the Oregon Office of Emergency Management website: <http://www.oregon.gov/OMD/OEM/Pages/index.aspx>