

## HB5024

### OR APEX Accelerator (Formerly GCAP) Testimony, 3/18/2025

Co-Chairs Woods and Gomberg, members of the committee,

My name is Dee Edwards Program Manager, of the Oregon's Apex Accelerator, previously known as GCAP. I have been the OR APEX Accelerator Program Manager for almost 20 years. Since our inception in 1986, we have been continuously funded by the US Department of Defense. The federal funds comprise 65% of our budget, requiring a 35% non-federal match, which, since 1989, has been provided by the State of Oregon. Our federal appropriation has received strong support from Oregon's congressional delegation.

We assist Oregon companies either entering the public contracting market, or, already contracting with local, State or Federal agencies. This includes helping businesses find opportunities and helping them with registrations and certifications, like Women-Owned, Minority-owned, or Emerging Small Business. We also help prepare Oregon businesses in bidding, understanding Request for Proposals, creating winning proposals, invoicing, getting their products and services on the GSA schedule, and elevating their businesses in the eyes of the public agencies.

We have nine highly experienced procurement counselors located throughout the State. We also train counselors within the Hispanic Metro Chamber, and the Professional Business Development Group, serving primarily minority-owned or disadvantaged construction firms.

Since July 01, 2023, we have counseled 2,027 different businesses, resulting in \$362,525,002 in contract awards.

This winter our counseling team has played a vital role in wildfire preparation by helping over 500 businesses successfully navigate the difficult Virtual Incident Procurement process, or VIPR, used by the Forest Service, the BLM and Oregon Department of Forestry to procure firefighting resources: timber fallers, Engines, Tenders, Chippers, Water Trucks, Excavators, Dozers, and more.

OR APEX has guided Oregon businesses through these processes for almost 40 years, helping Oregon businesses to earn billions in government contract awards.

# OREGON APEX ACCELERATOR

A Small Business Assistance Program, funded by the State of Oregon and the US  
Department of Defense

## Oregon APEX Accelerator (formerly PTAC)

OREGON APEX ACCELERATOR, assisting Oregon businesses for over 40 years

From July 01, 2023 – March 15, 2025

### OREGON APEX ACCELERATOR Statewide Counseling:

- OREGON APEX ACCELERATOR **Counseled** 2,031 businesses
- Veteran Owned: 204
- Service-Disabled Veteran Owned: 28
- Oregon Rural Area Businesses: 925

### OREGON APEX ACCELERATOR clients reported:

- 5,504 **contract awards**  
valued at **\$362,535,002**
- Includes 64 MBE Contracts  
valued at \$14,191,586

### OREGON APEX ACCELERATOR sponsored or participated:

- 69 Workshops with topics including:
  - Basics of Government Contracting
  - GSA schedule & marketing
  - Marketing to Government
  - Proposal Development
- With 6,402 attendees



OR APEX ACCELERATOR has counselors across Oregon to assist

*"Best service I have experienced..." Bill Boyk, AmeriStar Solar LLC – Mr. Boyk attended various classes and received assistance with SBIR and HUBZone certification.*

*"I wouldn't have a contract with the government if it wasn't for...OREGON APEX ACCELERATOR" Marty Hertler, Marty's Tree Service*

*"OREGON APEX ACCELERATOR is fabulous" Katheryn Meadows, Wildfire Temporary Employment Agency*

*"Region 6 Fire and Aviation Contracting Team would like to commend you and your staff on the incredible support you have provided us, and more importantly, our vendors." Ben McGrane, Supervisory Contract Specialist*

## Blue Moon Designs



OR APEX client, Blue Moon Designs, inventor of the HeliLadder, has received seven contracts for 54 HeliLadders. Blue Moon recently delivered six HeliLadders to the Oregon National Guard. The HELILADDER™ brand maintenance stand is a new concept in helicopter maintenance work stands, providing (for the first time) a portable, stable, and safe multi-level maintenance Ladder-Stand. OR APEX counselors provided extensive assistance throughout the contracting process with Blue Moon Designs, including most recently assistance with the invoicing process.



*Heliladder donated to the B-17 program for their touring and restoration work, April, 2017*



*Pictured are company owner, Dale Neubauer (center), and Oregon Guard members with a Blackhawk helicopter that the ladders will be used on.*

# VIPR (Virtual Incident Procurement)



***Oregon APEX Accelerator assisted 535 businesses specializing in wildland fire fighting with VIPR Agreements in the last year***



*Bootleg Fire*

VIPR is a USDA Forest Service incident procurement system. VIPR is the Virtual Incident Procurement (VIPR) system that allows the Contracting Officers (COs) to create, award, and manage solicitations and agreements through an electronic procurement process. VIPR provides numerous tools for COs to use for incident blanket purchase agreements (I-BPAs), including creation of solicitations and amendments, collection and evaluation of offers, electronic award and modification of agreements, electronic management of contract files, and creation of Dispatch Priority Lists (DPLs).

## **Forest Fire Fighting equipment/personnel**

- Faller
- Emergency Medical Responder
- Faller Module
- Fuel Tender
- GIS Unit
- Heavy Equipment
- Dozer
- Excavator
- Tractor Plow
- Transport
- Pumper Cat
- Heavy Equipment with Water
- Water Tender
- Strip Mulcher/Masticator



*Mr. Bret Mitchell with Fire Sail LLP successfully obtained a contract and worked on it for three years. "We are now in the process of a new contract, and we couldn't do it without assistance from Oregon APEX Accelerator. A huge thank you for making us successful in the realm of Wildland fire support working for the USFS".*