



CLIMATE ACTION ALERT

Comment on the Oregon Global Warming Commission's Climate Plan for Oregon's Forests, Farmlands, and Wetlands

Governor Brown's [Executive Order 20-04](#) on climate action tasked the Oregon Global Warming Commission (OGWC or Commission) with developing a proposal to establish state goals for carbon sequestration and storage by Oregon's natural and working lands including forests, wetlands, and agricultural lands (called the "NWL Proposal"). OGWC recently released a [draft of the NWL proposal](#) outlining its carbon sequestration goals plus the strategies needed to achieve them.

→Check out this [one-pager](#) for background information on OGWC and the NWL Proposal.

While OGWC's draft proposal is strong and represents an important step forward for Oregon's natural and working lands, there are still numerous ways in which the proposal could be strengthened. We want to lift up the positives so that they are maintained in the final proposal while encouraging OGWC to recommend even bolder actions toward a natural climate solution that works. **Now, the public has one final opportunity to weigh in on this key climate plan for Oregon!**

We recommend submitting concise comments to the OGWC expressing support or a desire for a few of the bulleted takeaways below. Feel free to select points that most align with your background and priorities--and to personalize your comments! While the OGWC is accepting public comments on the final draft until **August 2nd at 12:00 pm**, the Commission meets to approve the final NWL Proposal on August 4th (only 48 hours later). Hence, straightforward, easy-to-digest comments that reinforce top priorities will be most supportive of the effort to develop a strong carbon sequestration proposal for Oregon's natural and working lands (including forests, agricultural lands, and wetlands).

Submit comments by August 2nd at 12:00 pm in an email to oregon.GWC@oregon.gov (with the subject line "Comments on the OGWC Draft Natural and Working Lands Proposal") or through the OGWC's [contact form online](#).

To: oregon.GWC@oregon.gov

Subject: Comments on the OGWC Draft Natural and Working Lands Proposal

Dear Chair Macdonald and members of the Oregon Global Warming Commission,

[Share your name, organization, where you live, and why you are interested in promoting Oregon's natural and working lands as climate solutions.]

FOR ALL NATURAL AND WORKING LANDS

Thank you for...

- Centering the proposal around climate-impacted communities, environmental justice, and tribal priorities and urging the state to consider community impacts.
 - The development and implementation of recommended programs and practices should focus on public health improvements and economic opportunities, prioritize disadvantaged communities, and reduce risks to disadvantaged and vulnerable communities from climate impacts.
- Recognizing the numerous co-benefits associated with increasing carbon sequestration on Oregon's natural and working lands.
 - Implementing and scaling up sequestration projects will improve soil health, increase water quality and quantity, and support fish and wildlife habitat, as well as improve the health and wellbeing of local communities and workers.
- Stressing the importance of providing climate-smart NWL management education and training to support an equitable and just transition.
- Acknowledging the need for both legislative and administrative action to leverage our natural and working lands as natural climate solutions.
 - Agencies will need clear direction from the Legislature and sufficient capacity and resources to carry out the natural and working lands strategies and report back on progress toward the new sequestration goal.
 - It will be important to leverage federal funding for sequestration projects in Oregon. However, don't delay implementation. Ensure agencies are taking advantage of existing programs while the state determines a sustainable funding source for sequestration on natural and working lands.
- Recommending that a diverse Natural and Working Lands Council be established and that the Council set a baseline for the outcome-based goal and the activity and community impact metrics.
 - *The Council should also advise state agencies on implementation of the strategies included in this proposal.*

Please also...

- Recommend that state agencies provide a plan and schedule for new rules, budget requests, and legislative concepts to implement each of OGWC's recommendations by November 2021.
- Recommend continued opportunities for stakeholder engagement as the NWL Council develops metrics, state agencies begin to implement programs needed to meet the new carbon sequestration goal, and OGWC tracks progress toward meeting the goal.

FOR FORESTS

Thank you for...

- Recommending the formation of a blue-ribbon panel to develop a strategic plan for how to adopt climate-smart forest management strategies in Oregon.
- Recognizing the need for new funding and new capacity within Oregon's state agencies and recommending that state agencies work with federal land management agencies to ensure federal lands are part of Oregon's NWL goal.
- Promoting longer logging rotations on state and private forest lands.
- Promoting additional protections for mature and old growth forests on state and federal lands as well as areas with high carbon storage potential and co-benefits for threatened and endangered species and improved water quality.
- Recommending that improvements be made to Oregon's natural and working lands inventory data and the Forest Practices Act to continue to advance climate and carbon sequestration outcomes in Oregon's forests.
- Calling for support for ODF's Urban and Community Forestry program to increase urban tree cover and improve living conditions in low-income neighborhoods.

Please also...

- Promote greater tree biodiversity, which increases carbon sequestration and resilience to pests and pathogens.
- Recommend that the forestry sector emissions be included in Oregon Greenhouse Gas Sector-Based Inventory Data.
- Recognize the need to avoid incentives for woody biomass production. Biomass is a significant source of carbon emissions and can lead to local air pollution impacts in communities already struggling from the impacts of climate change. This form of energy generation should not be incentivized or scaled up in Oregon.

FOR AGRICULTURAL LANDS

- **Thank you for** focusing on building soil health. Please also emphasize the importance of organics and regenerative farming practices in the establishment of climate-smart and soil health programs and practices.
 - The Commission should support a holistic approach to increasing soil health by incentivizing transitions to systems that reduce the need for additional inputs, build resilience to climate impacts, and result in more fertile soil.
- **Please also** recommend that a “comprehensive climate smart agricultural program” should include incentives for farmers and ranchers for climate-smart agricultural practices via grants.
 - Funding for research, technical assistance, demonstration and education must be provided to ensure the success of these practices. Please ensure that agencies prioritize distribution of funding to historically disadvantaged producers.
- **Thank you for** recommending the expansion of urban forest canopy. In addition, **please also** recommend support for community-based gardens and urban farms.
 - This will further aid in reducing heat island effects while providing sources of education, community connections, and nutrition.

FOR WETLANDS & WATERSHEDS

Thank you for focusing on the significant potential to sequester “blue carbon” in tidal wetlands. **Please also** encourage broad-scale, climate-focused watershed management by considering other carbon sinks (i.e., floodplains, riparian buffers, inland wetlands, lakes, and reservoirs).

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,
[Name]