



WILLAMETTE VALLEY  
**OAK & PRAIRIE**  
COOPERATIVE  
**PARTNERS MEETING**

**February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

**WVOPC Coordinator, Laura Estrada ([wvoakprairiecoop@gmail.com](mailto:wvoakprairiecoop@gmail.com))**



# MEETING AGENDA




- 1:10 - 1:25pm **Decade of the Oak Presentation**  
*Kelly Missett, Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture*
- 1:25 - 1:35pm **Revised Strategic Action Plan updates**  
*Carolyn Menke, Greenbelt Land Trust*
- 1:35 - 1:50pm **OWEB FIP grant overview**  
*Andrew Esterson, Institute for Applied Ecology*
- 1:50 - 2:15pm **FIP project application and selection process overview**  
*Andrew Esterson, Institute for Applied Ecology*
- 2:15 - 2:30pm **Bio-break/Social time**
- 2:30 - 3:00pm **Facilitated discussion**
- 3:00 - 3:45pm **Guest speakers**
- 3:45 - 4:00pm **Wrap-up**



# MEETING GOALS


For the Steering Committee to provide WVOPC updates to all partners. This meeting will primarily focus on the following:

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-  The recent revisions to the Strategic Action Plan
-  The OWEB Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) grant application
-  For all of us to meet and have meaningful discussions



# ABOUT THE WVOPC

 The mission of the Willamette Valley Oak and Prairie Cooperative is to protect, restore, and maintain a functional, resilient network of oak and prairie landscapes in the Willamette Valley through a coordinated and strategic approach that leverages resources, focuses on priority geographies and species, and produces substantial ecological returns.

## Oak woodland

*Bald Hill, J. Krueger*



## Oak savanna

*Finley NWR, E. Alverson*



## Upland prairie

*Kingston Prairie, M. Benotsch*






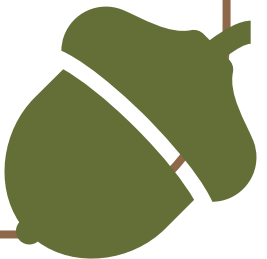
## Wetland prairie

*Coyote Prairie, J. Krueger*



# ABOUT THE WVOPC

-  **The Cooperative** is a loosely affiliated network of individuals and organizations. Bringing together diverse expertise to protect and restore oak and prairie habitats for future generations
-  **The partners are all of you,** the experts who are willing to engage in/support oak and prairie landscapes and who can help advance the mission of the Cooperative.
-  **The Steering Committee,** with support of the Coordinator, is the official governing body which serves to leverage expertise and resources to complete the mission of the WVOPC.



# STEERING COMMITTEE



Sara Evans-Peters



Tim Lawes



Eugene Parks & Open Space

Shelly Miller &  
Emily Steele



Kelly Warren



Institute for  
Applied Ecology

Tom Kaye &  
Keith Norris



Lawrence Schwabe



Jarrod Jebousek



BENTON  
SOIL AND WATER  
CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT

Michael Ahr



Carolyn Menke

UPPER WILLAMETTE STEWARDSHIP NETWORK


Ian Appow &  
Sydney Nilan



Kelly Reis &  
Jennifer Ringo



## CALL TO ACTION

 **The success of the Willamette Valley Oak and Prairie Cooperative** depends on the support of individuals, communities, and policymakers. By working together, we can preserve Oregon's oak and prairie legacy, ensuring a thriving environment for wildlife and people alike.



Any organization or individual with an interest in conserving and maintaining oak habitats in the WV is welcome to participate in the Cooperative's activities.



# 2026: Launching Decade of the Oak





# Decade of the Oak

**Grassroots outreach initiative building awareness and support for oak conservation via local partner connections.**

**A Celebration and Call to Action:**

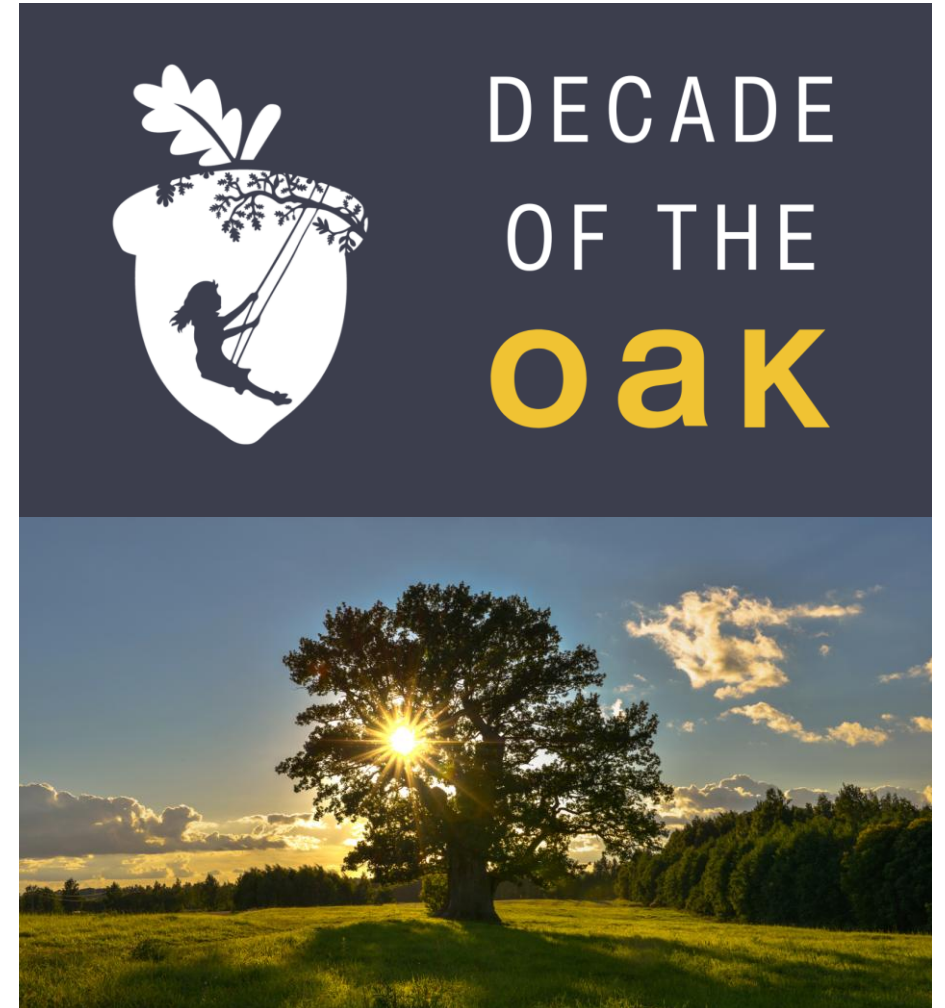
- Local community events
- Boots-on-the-ground conservation
- How the community can support oak conservation

**Theme for Year 1:**

The Acorn has Sprouted!

**Goals for Year 1:**

- Gain traction and reach new people while building our “why”
- Highlighting our partners’ conservation work





# Decade of the Oak

**Webpage:** [oakalliance.org/about-pnoa/decade-of-the-oak](https://oakalliance.org/about-pnoa/decade-of-the-oak)

## Social Media:

- Instagram: [instagram.com/decadeoftheoak](https://www.instagram.com/decadeoftheoak)
- Facebook: [facebook.com/decadeoftheoak](https://www.facebook.com/decadeoftheoak)

## Taglines:

- #DecadeOfTheOak
- Oaks on Common Ground
- Growing the next generation of oaks and oak stewards

**\* A full toolkit of communications resources is coming soon! Infographics, flyers, talking points, social media content, etc. All will be in PNOA Google Drive space.**

The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with the Pacific Northwest Oak Alliance logo and menu items: About Us, Why Oak Matters, Oak Stewardship, Investment Strategy, News, Events, Resources, and a search icon. Below the navigation is a breadcrumb trail: Oak Alliance Home » About Oak Alliance » Decade of the Oak. The main content area features a large photograph of a sunlit oak grove. A dark blue overlay box on the left of the photo contains the text: "Decade of the Oak", "Growing the next generation of oaks and oak stewards", and "Oaks at Bald Hill Farm, Credit: Abby Colehour Andrus". Below the photo is a section titled "What is the Decade of the Oak?" which includes a paragraph about the initiative's goals and a mission statement: "Our mission is to educate, engage, and build awareness around oak and oak habitats across the Northwest." At the bottom, there is a section titled "Why Decade of the Oak?" with a small green leaf icon and a circular image of acorns.



# Decade of the Oak

## Next Steps for Partners

- Follow @decadeoftheoak on Facebook/Instagram!
- Think of your “why” and how you want to share it!
- Identify your **resource needs** and share with Kelly

## What Stories Will You Share in 2026?

- Ex. Partners host 2 local events per year
- Ex. Partners create 1 social media post per month

**\* Can leverage existing events/content for DECO**

**\* Remember to cobrand photos and graphics with logo, use #DecadeOfTheOak hashtag, and share events and stories with Kelly to cross-promote!**



# DECADE OF THE OAK

## What is Decade of the Oak?

The Decade of the Oak celebrates oak trees and the myriad of species that depend on them.

This decade-long grassroots outreach initiative will connect individuals with their communities, building awareness and support for oak conservation.

We're working to engage with YOU through local partners, organizations, and communities!

**Our mission is to educate, engage, and build awareness around oak and oak habitats across the Northwest.**

## Core Activities:



**Amplify**  
Amplifying partner efforts to protect and restore oak habitats.



**Share**  
Sharing inspiring success stories from landowners and communities.



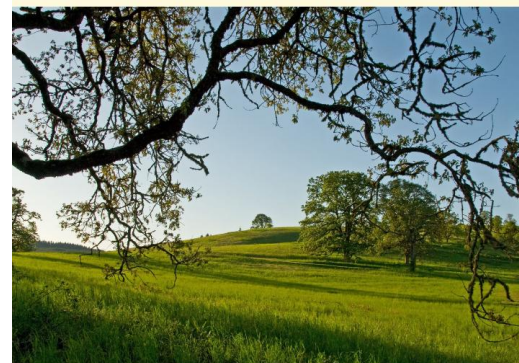
**Host**  
Hosting engaging events that reach a variety of audiences.



**Provide**  
Providing accessible educational resources about oak ecosystems and conservation programs.



**Connect**  
Connecting with decision-makers to share the benefits of oak conservation for communities and landscapes.



## Why Decade of the Oak?

In addition to a celebration, Decade of the Oak is also a call to action to help save and restore these critically important habitats.

From the lone oak in a backyard to sweeping oak savannas, these gentle giants have stood their ground throughout the Pacific Northwest for hundreds of years.

**But they need our help – these meadows, tree-dotted savannas, and dense woodlands are disappearing at an alarming rate.**

These are also the landscapes where the majority of people in the Pacific Northwest live, farm, and recreate, making them a top regional priority for conservation.

## How You Can Participate:

- Read [10 Ways You Can Help Oaks](#)
- Attend oak-related events in your community
- Help spread awareness about oaks and oak ecosystems
- Take a look at how the [Prairie, Oaks, and People](#) plan can contribute to your work
- Follow the campaign on Facebook and Instagram and tag #DecadeOfTheOak on your oak posts!

Learn more at:

[OAKALLIANCE.ORG](https://oakalliance.org)



Pacific Northwest  
**Oak Alliance**





# Decade of the Oak

## Next Steps for Kelly:

- Updating existing resources and pulling together into a Communications Toolkit to share!
- Identifying additional resource needs (ex. swag)

## Social Media To-Dos:

- Continuing to develop social media scripts and graphics for partner use
- Starting to post regularly on Decade of the Oak Facebook and Instagram

## Web Content To-Dos:

- Building out PNOA website (ex. Oak Accord page)
- Creating plug-and-play web content for partner use

## 10 Ways That You Can Help Oaks



1. Appreciate and Enjoy Oak Habitats



2. Plant and Care for Acorns and Young Oaks



3. Protect Legacy Oaks



4. Adopt Oak-Friendly Land Management Practices



5. Plant Native Shrubs and Flowers and Support Oak Habitat Restoration



6. Reduce Wildfire Risk in Your Community



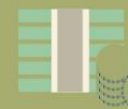
7. Learn, Educate, and Advocate



8. Support Wildlife That Depends on Oaks



9. Participate in Community Science



10. Donate to Conservation Organizations



Pacific Northwest  
**Oak Alliance**

Learn more and connect:

[OAKALLIANCE.ORG](https://oakalliance.org)

# Updates to Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

2020-2025



WILLAMETTE VALLEY  
**OAK & PRAIRIE**  
COOPERATIVE

# Record of Revisions

## Added Executive Summary

## Purpose

- Moved Guiding Principles here

## Geographic Scope and Timeline

- Moved Anchor Sites subsection here (from Profile of Oak/Prairie in WV).
- Clarified SAP is 2020–2050.
- Described 2025 Anchor Sites update.

# Record of Revisions

## Conservation Context

- Consolidated: Profile of Oak/Prairie in WV + Conservation Needs.
- Added subsection on climate impacts.
- Added two OCS limiting factors.

## Sustainability

- Added strategies for partnership capacity/funding.

## Governance

- Now aligns with 2025 Declaration of Cooperation.
- Replaced references to the Memorandum of Understanding with Declaration of Cooperation.

# Record of Revisions

## Appendices

- Added the finalized Declaration of Cooperation.
- Updated Planning Area Map with Anchor Site additions.

## Formatting and Overall Updates

- Updated section titles per OWEB guidance.
- Replaced “stakeholders” with “partners”.
- Updated section/figure numbering.
- Added a 2025 Record of Revision and Acknowledgements page.

# CALL FOR COMMENT



Please provide your  
comments to the  
Strategic Action Plan  
revisions by **March 3<sup>rd</sup>**

# Willamette Valley Oak and Prairie Cooperative

## February 17, 2026 Update

Laura Estrada & Andrew Esterson, WVOPC Coordinators ([wvoakprairiecoop@gmail.com](mailto:wvoakprairiecoop@gmail.com))

Institute for Applied Ecology

### WVOPC Steering Committee:



WILLAMETTE VALLEY  
**OAK & PRAIRIE**  
COOPERATIVE



BENTON SOIL AND WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



Eugene  
Parks &  
Open Space



Institute  
for  
Applied  
Ecology



**UPPER WILLAMETTE  
STEWARDSHIP  
NETWORK**



WILLAMETTE VALLEY  
**OAK & PRAIRIE**  
COOPERATIVE

[oakalliance.org/partnerships/wvopc](http://oakalliance.org/partnerships/wvopc)

## Who we are

The WVOPC is a loosely affiliated network of participants who work together to conserve and maintain prairie and oak landscapes in the Willamette Valley ecoregion.

Each party carries out its activities independently in a coordinated and mutually beneficial manner. The Cooperative has a Steering Committee and a Coordinator who provide guidance, administration, and coordination of the Cooperative's activities. Projects and initiatives are planned or emerge organically as various partners strive to fulfill the vision and mission. Any organization or individual with an interest in conserving and maintaining oak habitats in the WV is welcome to participate in the Cooperative's activities.

## Our Vision

To conserve and maintain prairie and oak landscapes within the Willamette Valley ecoregion through a regionally-focused, collaborative network.

## Our Mission

To protect, restore, and maintain a functional, resilient network of oak and prairie landscapes in the Willamette Valley through a coordinated and strategic approach that leverages resources, focuses on priority geographies and species, and produces substantial ecological returns.

# OWEB Focused Investment Partnership (FIP)

- FIP is an OWEB grant opportunity available to **collaborative partnerships** with a Strategic Action Plan to invest in a board-identified ***Ecological Priority of Significance***.
- FIPs are a six-year investment with a large-scale impact (up to \$15 million available per partnership).
- Once awarded a FIP, funding is provided to the partnership across **three bienniums**. The partnership selects projects to include in each biennium **workplan**. At the start of each biennium, a workplan gets submitted to and reviewed by OWEB.
- FIP initiatives should be centered around **restoration and/or acquisition**, but funding can be used for projects that fit into any of OWEB's grant programs (i.e., Monitoring, Engagement, Technical Assistance, Partnership Technical Assistance, etc.).
- Following workplan approval, project sponsors submit grant applications to OWEB which are then evaluated by a **Technical Review Team** developed by OWEB and the partnership. These applications are the exact same as those for open solicitation cycles, but the period to submit them is after workplan approval (not during open solicitation) and they are **not in competition** with other proposals.

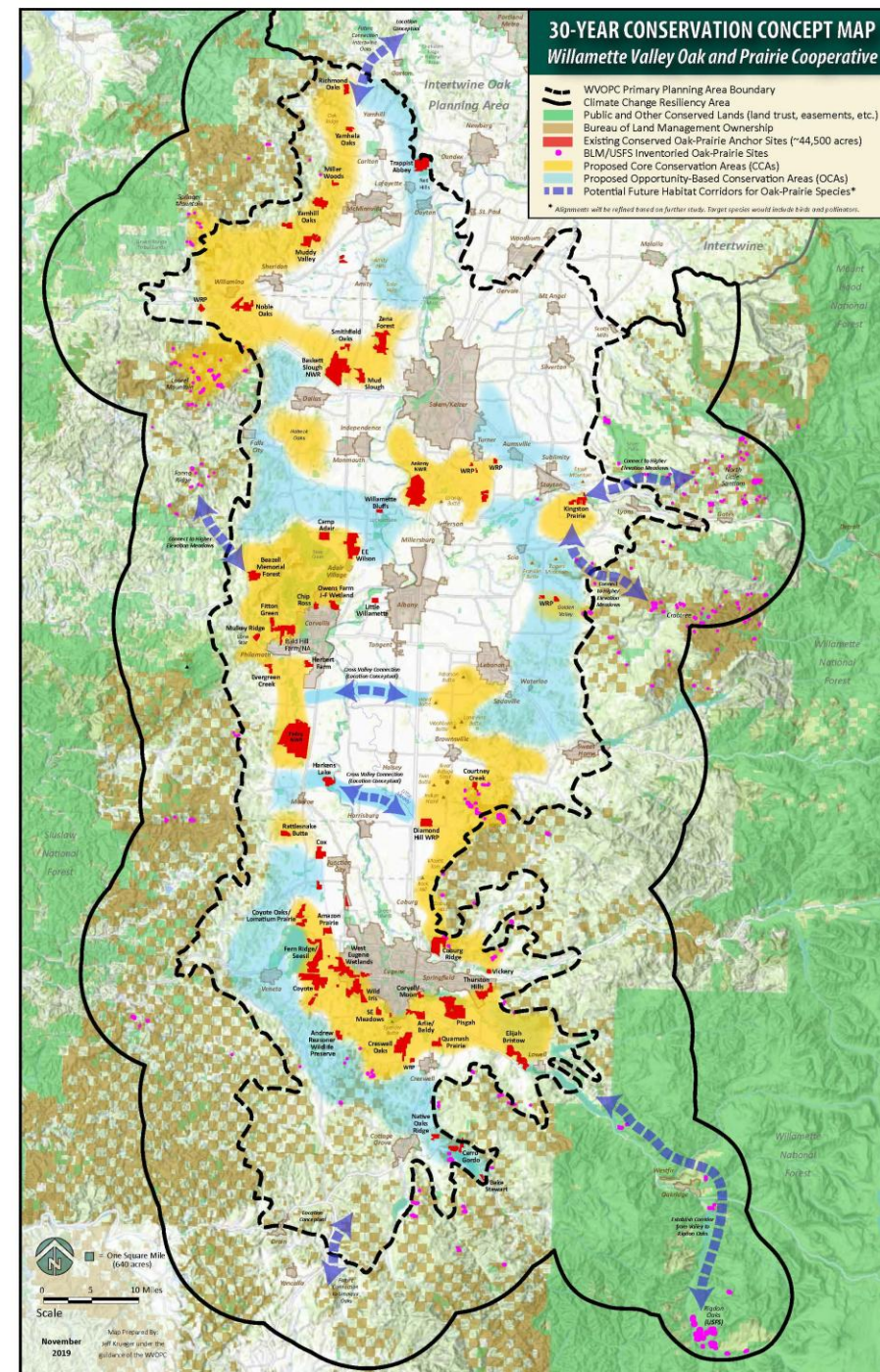
# OWEB Focused Investment Partnership (FIP)

- FIP solicitation expected in February, with proposals due in July. Funds will be available July 2027.
- Projects included in **Workplan 1** should be largely shovel-ready.
- **Workplans 2 and 3** can be more of a work-in-progress for FIP proposal. These workplans will be refined by the partnership during the first and second bienniums, respectively.



# WVOPC's FIP Initiative

- IAE is the proposed applicant (*currently under a vote*)
- Full WVOPC planning area will be eligible for FIP inclusion.
  - Project selection will likely try to prioritize funding around core conservation areas but leave some portion of funding available to other high-priority opportunities.
- Proposed scope-of-work will include any relevant prairie-oak projects, with the following conditions expected:
  - On-the-ground restoration projects will make up the bulk of the budget (maybe >60%).
  - Effectiveness monitoring will be an important component (with standardized pre- and post-implementation metrics collected for each restoration project).
  - Projects aimed at increasing capacity for prescribed burning will be prioritized.
  - Acquisition projects are unlikely to be prioritized due to their (typically) large expenses.



# SAP Goals (Section 6.2)

- 1. Increase Conservation and Connectivity**  
Establish large, high-quality Anchor Sites and connect them with habitat corridors.
- 2. Increase Habitat Management**  
Improve and maintain habitat quality through active, science-based restoration and management.
- 3. Limit Impacts of Urban and Rural Development**  
Reduce development impacts through better policy, regulation, and landowner support.
- 4. Decrease Woody Encroachment**  
Control woody vegetation, release oaks, and enhance native understory.
- 5. Reduce Agricultural Conversion & Increase Compatible Management**  
Work with landowners to prevent conversion and promote habitat-friendly practices.
- 6. Limit Non-Native Invasive Species**  
Prevent, detect, and control invasive species and increase native plant supply.
- 7. Decrease Fire Exclusion**  
Expand prescribed fire through training, funding, and Tribal partnerships.
- 8. Increase Knowledge and Understanding**  
Improve research, guidance, spatial data, and tracking of conservation actions.
- 9. Increase Partnership and Collaboration**  
Strengthen WVOPC's role as a coordinating body for funding, planning, and implementation.
- 10. Increase Community Capacity & Environmental Justice**  
Build public awareness, engage underrepresented communities, and promote inclusive conservation.

# FIP proposal -- general timeline

Month(s)	Action	Who
February	Meeting to discuss FIP proposal	Full membership
February	FIP solicitation announced	OWEB
February - July	Write FIP proposal	FIP writing committee/Steering committee
March – April	Meet with OWEB staff to discuss FIP	Steering Committee
February 27 – May 1	Develop and submit project applications for FIP workplans	WVOPC members
May	Rank and select projects to include in workplan 1	Steering Committee / project selection committee
June	Write detailed workplan section for proposal	Steering committee / FIP writing group
July	Submit FIP application	IAE

# FIP proposal development

- Writing the FIP
  - Andrew Esterson (IAE)
  - Carolyn Manke (GLT)
  - Michael Ahr (Benton SWCD)
  - Sara Evans-Peters (Pacific Birds)
  - WVOPC Steering Committee
  - Maybe you?
- If you are interested in participating in drafting the FIP please email [wvoakprairiecoop@gmail.com](mailto:wvoakprairiecoop@gmail.com)



# FIP proposal development

- Project submission and review
  - Partner project submission will be over a two-month period, most likely from February 27 – May 1
  - Projects for the first workplan(biennium 1) will be reviewed by the Steering Committee



# Application Overview

The application is intended to provide reviewers with clear, concise information that can easily evaluate whether:

1. the project aligns with the WVOPC Strategic Action Plan,
2. the project supports the FIP initiative in a strategic way, and
3. sufficient information is provided for reviewers to systematically rank projects.



# Application Overview

1. **Project type:** Restoration, Technical Assistance, Engagement, Monitoring, Acquisition, Partnership Capacity
2. **Alignment with WVOPC SAP:** Identify goals advanced by actions.
3. **Ecological value:** Are there legacy oaks, does project build upon previous conservation investments, are there T&E species, are invasive species limiting ecological function?
4. **Long-term stewardship and Longevity:** Land ownership protections, how will restorations gains during the project be protected and/or enhanced overtime?
5. **Collaboration and capacity:** How does this project contribute to the WVOPC's goals of supporting collaboration and building our collective capacity to restore and steward oak habitats over time?
6. **Indigenous leadership, priorities, knowledge:** Describe how your project advances Tribal or Indigenous priorities, includes partnership with Tribes or Indigenous practitioners, supports Indigenous Leadership, and/or is informed by Indigenous or Traditional Ecological Knowledge.
7. **Permitting, readiness, and timeline:** Describe how your project advances Tribal or Indigenous priorities, includes partnership with Tribes or Indigenous practitioners, supports Indigenous Leadership, and/or is informed by Indigenous or Traditional Ecological Knowledge.
8. **Budget:** Provide context and justification for how your budget was developed. Explain how project cost and/or rates were determined.



# Questions?

## WVOPC Coordinator:

- Laura Estrada ([wvoakprairiecoop@gmail.com](mailto:wvoakprairiecoop@gmail.com))

## FIP proposal lead:

- Andrew Esterson ([andrew@appliedeco.org](mailto:andrew@appliedeco.org))

## WVOPC Steering Committee:



WILLAMETTE VALLEY  
**OAK & PRAIRIE**  
COOPERATIVE

[oakalliance.org/partnerships/wvopc](http://oakalliance.org/partnerships/wvopc)



BENTON SOIL AND WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT







Eugene  
Parks &  
Open Space



**UPPER WILLAMETTE  
STEWARDSHIP  
NETWORK**

# FACILITATED DISCUSSION

The goal of this facilitated discussion is to give individuals opportunity to (1) discuss possible projects under the FIP, (2) to see where cross-collaboration can occur, and (3) to give people the opportunity to ask more pointed questions regarding the FIP and WVOPC

-  Visit each poster with a WVOPC goal on it.
-  If you are interested in submitting a project that provides an action to that goal **sign the poster**
-  Remember to network with one another and discuss your ideas that follow under that goal
-  Steering Committee members and the coordinator will be available for questions regarding FIP or the WVOPC



Please scan the following QR code and fill out the survey regarding your potential FIP project

