INR-IWW
2018+ Strategic Plan

The Intersections of Land & Water

1 June 2018
Introduction

The Institute for Natural Resources and Institute for Water and Watersheds’ 2018+ Strategic Plan incorporates input from its board, staff, and community to chart a path of action. It also takes into account the INR-IWW external review recommendations, and the strategic planning efforts of Oregon State University, Portland State University, the Governor’s Natural Resources Office, and several state natural resource agencies. It is designed to enable INR-IWW to adapt to changing circumstances and new information, and will be reviewed regularly by the INR-IWW staff and board. This plan is a living document, and has an estimated duration of three to five years.
“A **strategic initiative** is a plan in which a change in one carefully chosen issue area has automatic effects over many, many other issue areas.” — GEORGE LAKOFF, 2004
Knowing how, when, and where to make investments that will restore healthy watersheds, conserve Oregon’s natural heritage, adapt to changing conditions, and facilitate sustained community and economic health and development is a challenging endeavor. Part of meeting that challenge depends on having and using relevant information to guide planning and management. Part depends on applying technology and information to improve productivity, efficiency, use, and long-term maintenance of our natural resources. And part depends on having policies that encourage people to make choices that balance the environment, economy, and society.

The Institute for Natural Resources was established in 2001 through the Oregon Legislature to fulfill several legislative purposes that provide ready access to relevant policy-related science, data, tools, and information for natural resource and environmental decision making.

The Institute for Water and Watersheds was created through the federal Water Resources Research Act of 1964 to be part of a network of water resource research centers at land grant universities across the U.S. The water centers were designed to be university-wide to assure participation of all disciplines in water research.
Oregon’s Place

Where natural resource agencies, legislators, and residents can get unbiased, independent expert advice on challenging policy choices.

Where researchers can find, and take part in, a broad range of interdisciplinary research on the natural resources and environment of Oregon.

Where researchers, natural resource managers, policymakers, and residents can access natural resource and environmental information through a unique network.

Where anyone can get science-based answers to natural resource questions.
Our vision

To be “Oregon's place” – a neutral venue where anyone can ask questions, propose studies, and learn about natural resources and environmental conditions throughout Oregon and Oregon’s place in the world.

Our mission

Our mission is to provide reliable, objective, relevant, and science-based integrated natural resource knowledge to facilitate long-term stewardship of Oregon’s environments and natural resources.

By knowledge we mean the synthesis of expertise, research findings, data, tools & information.
We believe

• in collaborative efforts.
• in transparent interactions and open discussions.
• that a commitment to evidence should be encouraged and that evidence-based understandings of issues that matter should be fostered.
• that while science-based evidence plays a critical role in natural resource decisions, it is not the sole factor.
• in the integrity of process, the delivery of high-quality products, and broader impacts.

What we do

• Data and Information Integration & Access
• Research Coordination
• Science Review and Advisory Services
• Technical Assistance and Analysis
• Training and Capacity Building
Inform decisions by linking the science-based knowledge of Oregon’s universities with natural resource and environmental decision making.

Facilitate the flow of science-based knowledge by developing and providing access to integrated information, data, tools and expertise.

Focus on complex, multi-agency, or interdisciplinary science issues that are of importance to the State of Oregon and Oregon’s place in the world.

Help strengthen the actual and perceived usefulness of science-based knowledge by upholding clear standards governing neutrality and conflict of interest.

Increase capacity through training and outreach opportunities with our community.

Our Role

Our focus
- Biodiversity & Conservation
- Land & Water Stewardship

Our community
Oregon’s natural resource agencies, policy makers, natural resource stewards, scientists, educators, students, and residents.
INR-IWW has four outcomes that describe the changes we hope to see because of our work. Our work to achieve those outcomes is moved forward through supporting goals and actions as highlighted in the following pages. Specific action plans will be developed on an annual basis.
OUTCOME 1
Inform Decision Making
As a result of our actions our community will have access to & use relevant science-based knowledge that can help inform natural resource & environmental decision making.

OUTCOME 2
Opportunities & Innovations
As a result of our actions INR-IWW will stay relevant to & influential in shaping strategic conversations around natural resource & environmental issues that are important to Oregon.

OUTCOME 3
Outreach & Engagement
As a result of our actions our community will be built, connected & leveraged to strengthen the use of science-based knowledge in natural resource & environmental decision making.

OUTCOME 4
Sustainability & Capacity
As a result of our actions INR-IWW will be programmatically & financially stable, supporting our core work, while maintaining the flexibility to allocate staff time & financial resources as needed.
OUTCOME 1
Inform Decision Making
Goals & Actions

SUPPORT
high priority, multi-agency natural resource efforts

• Repackage technical findings (translate)
• Filter & synthesize findings (broker)
• Facilitate science reviews
• Create, provide & use technical tools

STRENGTHEN
the impact of science-based knowledge on key issues

• Provide access to science-based knowledge
• Decrease time for incorporating products & results into programs

FOSTER
strategic interactions between researchers & decision makers

• Identify issues & bring people together
• Develop opportunities for researcher-decision maker interactions
• Coordinate & conduct research in close proximity to practice

INCREASE
access to science-based knowledge

• Maintain & update the Oregon Explorer & Spatial Data Library
• Identify & link to relevant data, tools & models from researchers & agencies
• Create & sustain provisions for consistent & efficient data services

TRACK
and understand distribution of vertebrates and vegetation

• Improve, use & promote the use of models, imagery & other spatial data
• Integrate inventory data from all sources to use for training models
• Use citizen science tools to expand information
Invest in one risk area per year where we are willing to put our own time into an initiative to kick start it

Identify issues
Engage influencers
Focus on solutions & the benefits of action
Develop platforms for information sharing and action

Identify emerging issues
Build inclusive platforms for engagement to identify common ground & gaps in science knowledge
Develop a collection of science knowledge about the most salient concerns
Leverage the digital storytelling capacities of other institutions, organizations & programs
Search for unique connections of science & community & tell the story

Develop training & capacity building opportunities for undergraduate & graduate students
Develop training & capacity building opportunities for new professionals
**OUTCOME 3**
**Outreach & Engagement**

**Goals & Actions**

**DEEPEN**
connections with OSU, PSU & other higher ed. institutions

- Integrate staff into OSU & PSU & Extension
- Consider faculty affiliates with INR-IWW
- Present in classes, PACE, & e-campus classes
- Build connections with OSU Cascades
- Produce situation maps of relationships with other institutes on & off campus

**NURTURE**
and enhance our existing relationships

- Identify & produce situation maps of relationship with public agencies, NGOs, industry groups, tribes, & other partners in Oregon
- Leverage shared efforts & pursue shared goals

**FORGE**
new organizational & programmatic relationships

- Identify & connect with partner organizations throughout the Pacific Northwest & elsewhere

**ENHANCE**
external & internal communications

- Communicate successes rapidly & strategically
- Promote our work at a variety of forums
- Create, distribute & archive print pieces & electronic newsletters
- Strengthen the connections among INR-IWW Corvallis & INR Portland
OUTCOME 4
Sustainability & Capacity
Goals & Actions

USE
our resources effectively

• Assess financial resources to advance existing programs & initiate new ones
• Operate our offices with adequate organizational support, staffing & infrastructure to advance our mission

PLAN
for, pursue, & diversify mission-related funding

• Increase financial (grant-making, business development) capacity
• Identify potential areas of growth
• Develop & use a protocol to filter new ideas & existing programs to ensure that they are focused on advancing INR-IWW’s mission, capacity & work

EXPAND
and capitalize on the potential of INR-IWW leadership

• Executive director & program leads engage in strategic & program building activities
• Clearly articulate how the roles of the Board, Executive Board & technical committees contribute to INR-IWW

MAXIMIZE
staff performance

• Conduct annual evaluations
• Develop annual action plans
• Identify staff training & development opportunities
• Create & implement an internal data management plan

TRACK
achievements & document impact

• Develop & use metrics & an evaluation protocol
Measuring Our Success

Evaluating INR-IWW will involve both an internal and an external process, overseen by the INR-IWW directors and a sub-committee of the advisory board. The evaluation plan will emphasize a continuous review process during the life of the strategic plan. Some of the initial performance measures might include, but are not limited to:
Performance Measures

Quality

Timeliness: Our ability to provide support to clients and users within a timeframe consistent with the expectations of the groups engaging with us.

Client and user satisfaction: The extent to which clients and users are satisfied with our processes, services, products, and outcomes.

Collaborations: The usefulness of our processes for engaging partners, collaborators, and other stakeholders, and incorporating input.

Outputs

Quantity of products: The quantity of relevant, credible, and useful products produced.

Use of products: The number of groups are using our data products, the number of downloads of our reports and datasets, the number of projects/management plans/strategic plans we have been consulted about, or the number of unique hits for our online tools.

Usability of products: An assessment of the usability of our processes, services, and products, including but not limited to the extent to which our available products are believed to be relevant to and credible for natural resources planning, management, and/or policy.

Outcomes/Impact

Information support: The extent to which our work assists in natural resource-related decision making.

Decision quality: The extent to which our clients and users believe that the process leading to a decision and an expected outcome(s) of the decision were the best that could be made with the available science-based information.
The federal Water Resources Research Act of 1964 created a network of water resource research institutes at land grant universities across the U.S. The water centers were designed to be university-wide to assure participation of all disciplines available in water research. The Institute for Water and Watersheds (IWW), then known as the Oregon Water Resources Research Institute (OWRRI), was one of the 54 water institutes located at land grant universities across the nation that received a small federal grant to provide base support for water resources research needs in each state.

**INR**

- Serve as a clearinghouse for scientifically based natural resources information.
- Provide scientifically based natural resources information to the public in integrated and accessible formats.
- Coordinate efforts with other state agencies and bodies to provide natural resources information to the public in a comprehensive manner.
- Facilitate and conduct research.
- Provide information and technical tools to assist decision making on natural resources issues.
- Assist the State Parks and Recreation Commission in carrying out the Natural Areas Program.
- Assist state agencies to fulfill agency needs regarding natural resources information, research, and training.
Strategic Initiative Areas

- Alternative/Renewable Energy Siting
- Business & the Environment
- Center for Ocean Aquifer Studies (COAST)
- Data Sharing
- Green Infrastructure Innovations
- Independent Science Review
- K-12 & Citizen Science
- Oregon Talking Landscapes
- Pacific Northwest Atlas
- Permit Streamlining
- State of the Environment Report
- State of Oregon Natural Resources Research Atlas/Tool
- Watershed-level Planning
- Wildlife-Human Conflict/Interactions
- Wildfire
- Year of Water
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