Institute for Natural Resources

Informing natural resource decision making through integrated knowledge and information

Strategic Goals

Goal 1
Increase the ability of others to efficiently and effectively deliver environmental and resource outcomes.

Goal 2
Extend the reach of integrated knowledge and information to inform natural resource decision making.

Goal 3
Enhance the relevance and delivery of INR's distinctive suite of services and products.

INR Strategic Plan 2013-2017

About us

Created by the Oregon Legislature through the 2001 Oregon Sustainability Act, the Institute for Natural Resources (INR) is a cooperative enterprise bringing the scientific knowledge and expertise of the Oregon University System and other higher education institutions to bear on natural resource decision making. Designated as the lead university to administer INR, Oregon State University (OSU) established INR as a research institute within OSU to help decision makers identify and use relevant science in making policy. At INR's foundation is the land grant mission – building synergy and connections between research and practice, and effectively communicating knowledge and uncertainty to decision makers.

Our mission is to provide access to integrated knowledge and information to inform natural resource decision making and develop solutions in the context of sustainability.

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Services and Products

Information and Data
Development, Management, and Access

We develop, integrate, and improve access to comprehensive data, information and tools, methods, and expertise to support natural resource decision making, research, and education in Oregon and the West. Our core functions include:

- Natural resource dataset compilation and integration
- Access to comprehensive information related to natural resources
- Resource mapping
- Digital library enhancements
- Vegetation and landscape modeling
- Creating collaborative workspaces

Research-Practice
(Science-Policy) Integration

We work to anticipate and clarify natural resource issues of concern, and identify potential data and knowledge gaps in the process of answering highly targeted questions. We develop, test, and implement new methods and tools; improve on existing alternatives by looking at issues from different angles; and translate and synthesize research-based knowledge into practical and useful information. Our core capacity includes:

- Applied policy research and synthesis
- Evidence-based and systematic reviews
- Convening issue-based science-policy (research-practice) dialogues, forums, meetings, symposia, and conferences
- Resource assessments and analyses
- Institutional analysis
- Program evaluation

Research Coordination
and Project Management

We help facilitate and/or develop opportunities for research by supporting teams of investigators to communicate and coordinate their research, training and educational activities across disciplinary, organizational, and geographic boundaries. INR seeks to find opportunities to cultivate new collaborations and address topics that are of interest to multiple agencies. We work to advance novel networking opportunities, online collaborative workspaces, and consistent avenues for data sharing and management. Our core capabilities also include:

INR PRODUCTS

- ✓ **Oregon Biodiversity Information Center data, databases, maps, resource assessments**
- ✓ **Oregon Explorer suite of portals, tools, and interactive maps**
- ✓ **Collaborative workspaces: Ecosystem Commons and iMapInvasives**
- ✓ **Reports, syntheses, and assessments**
- ✓ **Integrated Ecological Framework**
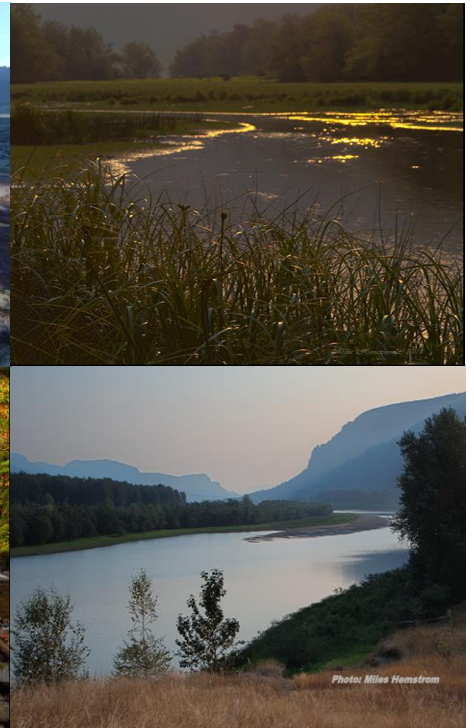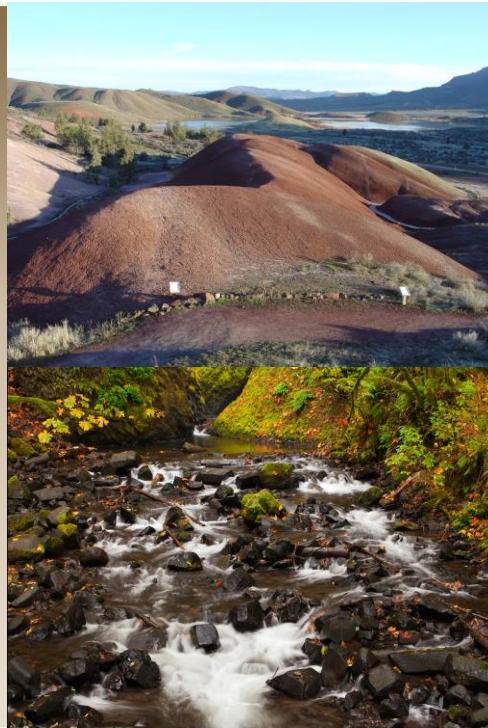- ✓ **Integrated Landscape Assessment Program**

- Facilitation of large grant proposal development
- Interdisciplinary research and project management
- Data management
- Evaluation

Experiential Learning
and Leadership Development

We build the capacity of students enrolled in a graduate program to become an integral part of fulfilling INR's mission through research, science delivery, and writing projects focusing on natural resource management, policy, and data issues. We help students take the knowledge and skills developed at INR and apply them by working with a partnering agency or organization.

Noteworthy Achievements

Highlights of our achievements from the last five years, the period of INR's last strategic plan, demonstrate our ability to put critical information in the hands of natural resource decision makers, managers, and citizens. The majority of our work – including the development and continual refinement of our services and products – is funded by grants and contracts.

- Housing and managing *Oregon's most comprehensive database of rare, threatened, and endangered species*.

- Publishing Oregon's first *Natural Areas Plan* in conjunction with the State Land Board and the Natural Heritage Advisory Council.

- Creating and maintaining the *Oregon Explorer* in partnership with the OSU Libraries to provide access to integrated place-based, up-to-date information, maps, data, images, publications, and user-driven tools. New Explorer Portals: Rural; Farm; Hazards; Wetlands. In addition to the new Spatial Data Library.

- Developing numerous *web-based mapping and reporting tools* such as the Oregon Communities Reporter, the Hazards Reporter, the Watershed Restoration Tool, and the Oregon Wetlands Assessment Protocol.

- Assisting in developing priorities and producing high resolution vegetation maps for *the Portland –Vancouver (INTERWINE) Conservation Strategy*.

- Serving as the Oregon lead for the international network of *iMapInvasives* – an online data management system to assist citizens, scientists and natural resource managers.

- Working with local, state, and regional groups to *develop natural resource indicators.*

- Developing *landscape-level assessment methodologies* and *maps* for state and federal land managers.

- Conducting *systematic program and science reviews*, and *joint fact finding* for land use, forest management, river dredging, and wood placement and salmonids.

- Providing access to more than 100 *INR publications and reports* to clients, decision makers, and the general public.

- Working with approximately 55 *student interns*, assistants, and volunteers – resulting in eight master's projects or theses. Providing opportunities for six AmeriCorps volunteers and 48 citizen volunteers.

- Having our *Integrated Ecological Framework* (IEF), which integrates transportation and conservation planning, selected for national implementation by the Federal Highway Administration.

- Cooperating with federal and state partners to coordinate *Snowy Plover monitoring* along Oregon's central and south coast, resulting in recent increases in estimates of snowy plover populations.

- Creating and managing the *Ecosystem Commons* – an online platform to engage a community of over 1,000 registered members from around the world who are ecosystem services professionals.

- Working with multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional research teams on proposal development, data management, evaluation, and outreach.

- Conducting *applied research* on ecosystem services, environmental streamlining, forest ecosystem dynamics, and the National Environmental Protection Act.

- *Convening* and participating in statewide dialogues, producing reports and participating on working groups about ecosystem services, conservation and climate change, and biobased products.

- Through the *Integrated Landscape Assessment Project* (ILAP), producing consistent, integrated vegetation data sets and models for millions of acres across Oregon, Washington, Arizona and New Mexico.

- Facilitating the establishment of the *Oregon Coastal and Marine Data Network*.

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