CREATING PARTNERSHIPS

OSU builds community capacity for healthy people, healthy planet and economic development through engaged partnerships.

“Paiute Wadatika Ma-Ni-Pu-Neen”
Tribal name of the Burns Paiute

Remote, wild and arid are adjectives often used to describe Oregon’s Harney County, one of the largest counties in the United States in land mass and home to the Burns Paiute Tribe. In the sparsely populated county, fewer than 120 members of the tribe permanently reside on the 770-acre reservation near Burns.

Ancestors lived in the northern Great Basin for thousands of years, yet it was only in 1972 that the Burns Paiute were recognized as an independent Indian Tribe. “The tribe is currently working to gain a greater understanding of their culture, and preserve what knowledge they have of their past, all the while looking toward the future and developing a stronger, healthier community to pass on to the next generation,” says the Burns Paiute Tribe website.

Higher than average unemployment, poverty and obesity are just a few of the challenges facing the tribe. A 30-year collaboration between the Paiutes and Oregon State University Extension in Harney County involves improving the health and well-being of tribal members through Family and Community Health programs, and strengthening the tribal community and its traditions through 4–H Youth Development programs.

Shana Withee, an associate professor in the OSU College of Public Health and Human Sciences and county leader for OSU Extension in Harney County, takes a science-based approach, but the real focus is on building relationships. Healthy food preparation classes are a favorite activity. Jam-making and testing non–sugar recipe alternatives were popular at the Community Cultural Celebration.

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15,000 global learners gain ‘new perspective’ in OSU’s regenerative land design course online

For its first independent, massive open online course (MOOC), Oregon State chose a subject that reflects its unique role as America’s natural resources university. OSU’s free Intro to Permaculture course embodied innovation in both subject matter and format.

In May, more than 15,800 learners worldwide enrolled in the four-week class, which aimed to help participants learn about and design sustainable landscapes and ecosystems.

Andrew Millison from the College of Agricultural Sciences worked with a team of developers, designers and marketers from OSU Professional and Continuing Education (PACE), Open Oregon State, Oregon State Ecampus and OSU Extension and Experiment Station Communications to develop the popular course.

“With OSU’s commitment to advancing environmental stewardship, we’ve been especially gratified to see the extent of our reach.”
— Open Oregon State Director Dianna Fisher

The OSU course development team collaborated with the Permaculture Association, the most widely recognized permaculture organization. Many other partners were involved in publicizing and providing educational and media resources as well, including Permaculture Design International, Regrarians, Oregon State University Small Farms, Unify, Daily Acts, Village Lab, NuMundo, Permaculture Voices, and more.

“Permaculture gives people a new perspective on the world,” said Millison. “This partnership has taken these concepts to another level online—and to a much wider audience.”

OSU’s Intro to Permaculture course will be offered again Oct. 31–Nov. 27, 2016. OSU also offers Millison’s more in-depth Permaculture Design Certificate Online program online, with sessions in September, January and April. Learn more at pace.oregonstate.edu/permaculture.

Selecting, Planting and Caring for a New Tree

OSU Extension offers hundreds of downloadable, research-based publications on everything from agriculture and business management to nutrition and foods and outdoor recreation. One of its newest—and most popular—gardening publications is “Selecting, Planting and Caring For A New Tree,” which has been published as both a pdf and as an interactive app.

catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/ec1438
Hopkins Forest of Arts works for Oregon’s forestry future

The Hopkins Demonstration Forest is a 140-acre, privately-owned forest and operating tree farm where family woodland owners and the public can learn about forest management. The forest is operated by Forests Forever, Inc., a nonprofit organization with the mission “to promote science-based education to enhance understanding of and appreciation for the complexities and benefits of woodland management.”

Although the forest is in Oregon City and part of the Portland metropolitan area, it is still a challenge to attract new audiences and a larger cross-section of society to experience and learn from the forest’s example of sustainable forestry.

In response, Hopkins Forest of Arts was launched in 2013 as a collaboration between Forests Forever, Inc., Three Rivers Artists Guild, and Oregon State University Extension Service. The event, led by OSU Extension faculty with the help of volunteers from both the arts and forestry communities, brings together music, environmental interests and art that is created from, in or about the forest—all while offering educational experiences about forest management.

In 2014, OSU Extension Forester Glenn Ahrens engaged faculty and students from OSU’s College of Liberal Arts to participate in the Forest of Arts event. The collaboration resulted in a “Creative Forest” program in 2015 that inspired five OSU Liberal Arts faculty and 36 OSU art and music students to think creatively about the forest and its meanings to the communities, families and people who live in and are supported by forests. Find out more about the Hopkins Demonstration Forest at demonstrationforest.org.

Apps aim to boost coastal economies

Oregon Sea Grant has developed two apps for smartphones and tablets that aim to bolster the state’s coastal economies and appeal to tourists and seafood lovers.

The first app, Oregon’s Catch, identifies locations along the entire Oregon coast where people can buy fresh and frozen seafood caught by Oregon fishermen.

The second app, Oregon’s Working Waterfronts, offers a self-guided tour of waterfronts in Coos Bay, North Bend and Charleston. Through video clips and photos, users get a behind-the-scenes look at local industries and infrastructure—including a lumber mill, seafood processor, Coast Guard cutter, shipyard and tuna troller—and the people who work in and on them.

“For tourists, I hope they learn something, stay a little longer, and have a greater appreciation for the Coos Bay area,” says Jamie Doyle, an Oregon Sea Grant specialist with the OSU Extension Service who was involved with development of the apps. In addition to the app, Oregon Sea Grant produced a fold-out map of the same “stops.” The map will be available at local businesses and other attractions. The developers plan to add tours of other waterfronts in the future.

Both apps are free and available for Android and Apple devices. Search for Oregon’s Working Waterfronts and Oregon’s Catch.

Hopkins Forest video: outreach.oregonstate.edu/CreativeForest

Family Mental Health Camp, held on tribal land in the beautiful Logan Valley, concentrated on strengthening families, culture and building a healthier community. Withee led activities to improve communication and teamwork between youth and elders. The “minute to win it” competition injected fun into the learning activities. Participants stacked dice on tongue depressors, tried their hand at stacking nuts and completed other dexterity tasks.

4-H sewing classes are keeping the pow wow tradition alive for the youngest generation by helping youth create their own colorful regalia and encouraging them to dance their way to health. Traditional dances last more than three aerobic minutes!

OSU Extension helps the Paiutes preserve their history and improve the health of each tribal member and generation. The Paiutes generously share their wisdom, trust and traditions. More often than not, it does take a village.

“True partnerships are highly valued and nurtured within the Division of University Outreach and Engagement. True partnerships go beyond simple cooperation and collaboration. True partnerships honor the contributions of co–equals. True partnerships create what cannot be done otherwise.”

— Dr. Scott Reed, Vice Provost, University Outreach and Engagement