



Northwest Climate Hub
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

October 2023 Newsletter

Featured Article



Food Security and Climate Change in Alaska

Parts of Alaska have the highest food insecurity rates in the nation. This is because very little food is grown in Alaska, most purchased food is imported, and communities must rely on long, vulnerable supply chains to receive food. Climate change is likely to have mixed effects on food security in Alaska. Increasing instances of extreme events could negatively affect food production, distribution, and harvest. In some cases, however, the effects of climate change could strengthen food security by lengthening the growing season and increasing frost-free days.

Opportunities



USFS Fellowship for Carbon Management on Working Lands.

This ORISE fellow will engage with USDA Northwest Climate Hub staff to develop information on carbon management in forests, rangelands, and farms. The fellow will collaborate with USDA Climate Hub staff to develop resources to guide carbon management planning and practices on National Forest System and other public and private lands in the Northwest.

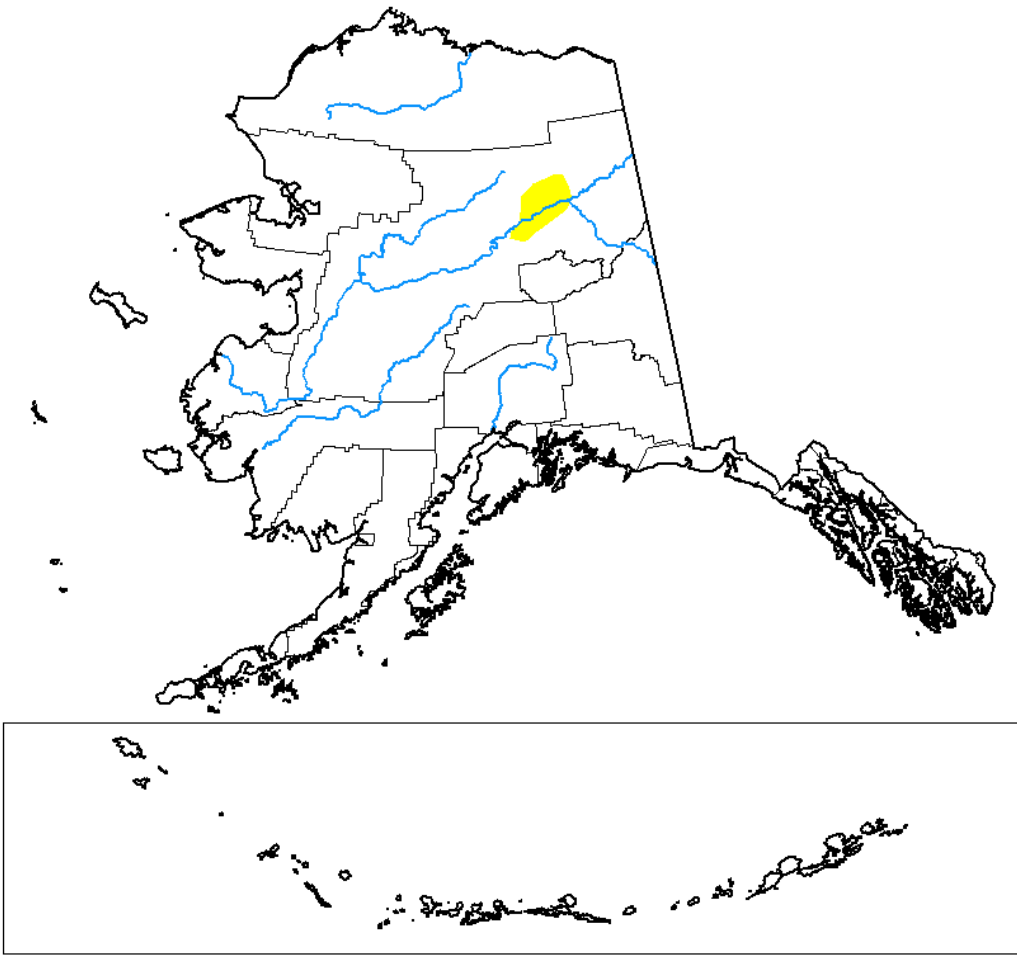
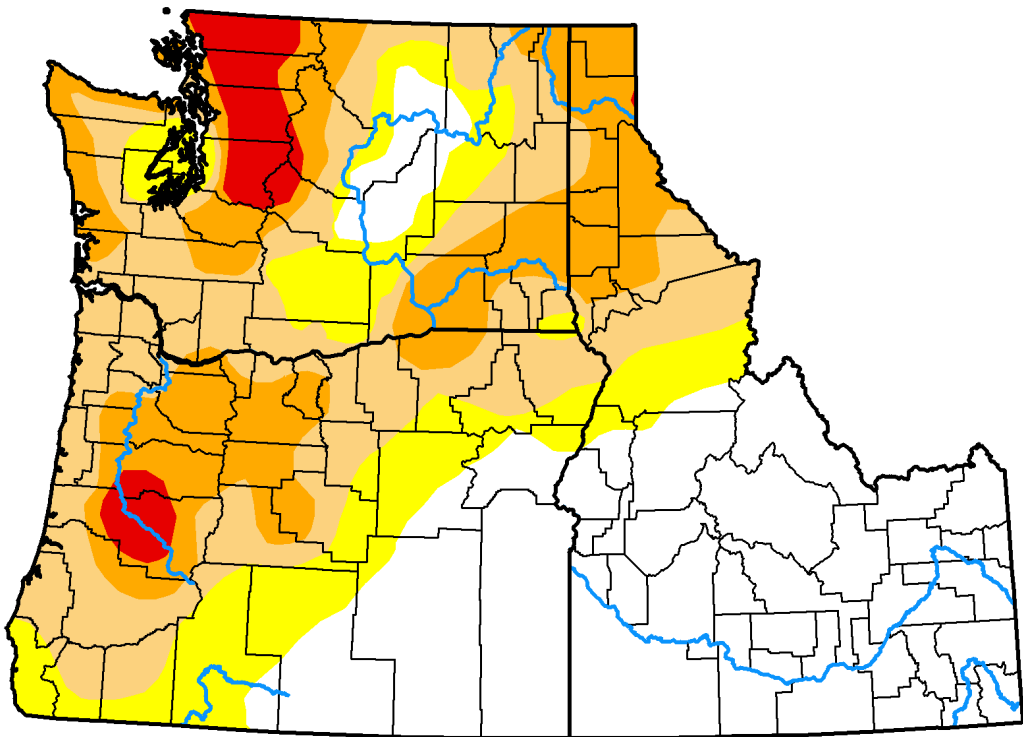
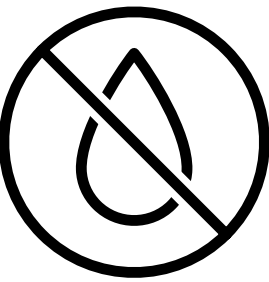
Apply by 27 October.

Drought conditions in Idaho have remained the same over the past month. Recent rain on the west coast of Oregon has led to improvements of drought conditions. Areas of extreme drought (D3 – red) and severe drought (D2 - orange) in northwest Oregon were reduced to moderate drought (D1 – tan). A finger of extreme drought east of the Willamette River was also reduced to severe drought. In southern and central Oregon, conditions have also improved, with some areas decreasing one drought classification level (i.e., D2 to D1 or D0 to None). In Washington, recent rain has improved drought conditions around Puget Sound, reducing moderate drought to abnormally dry (D0 - yellow) conditions. There have also been small decreases in southwestern and central Washington, with severe drought decreasing to moderate drought or abnormally dry conditions. Otherwise, drought conditions in Washington have remained mostly steady. A small area of abnormally dry conditions remains in the eastern Interior of Alaska.



U.S. Drought Monitor
USDA Northwest Climate Hub

October 17, 2023
(Released Thursday, Oct. 19, 2023)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	81.05	18.95	13.63	6.27	1.09	0.00
Last Week 10-10-2023	80.36	19.64	14.13	7.25	1.31	0.00
3 Months Ago 07-18-2023	78.49	21.51	12.36	2.71	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-03-2023	75.01	24.99	15.00	7.57	3.06	0.16
Start of Water Year 09-26-2023	80.15	19.85	14.48	7.82	1.55	0.00
One Year Ago 10-18-2022	70.19	29.81	23.56	10.31	3.90	0.16

Intensity:

None

D0 Abnormally Dry

D1 Moderate Drought

D2 Severe Drought

D3 Extreme Drought

D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

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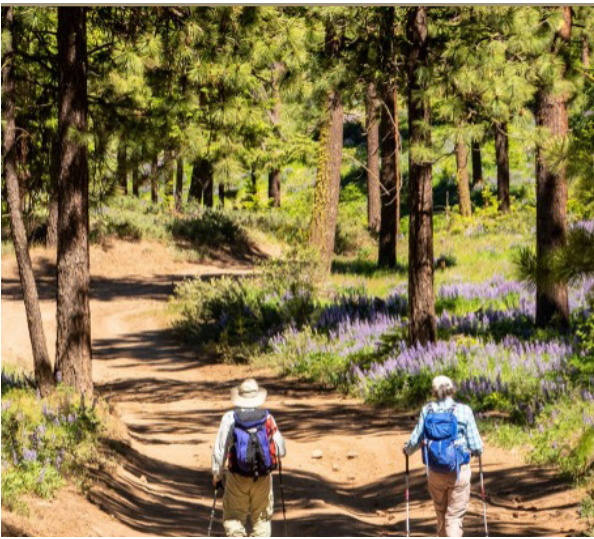
droughtmonitor.unl.edu



Biofuel Production in the Northwest
This Northwest Climate Hub webpage includes descriptions of the various processes used to make biofuel and the type of fuel each process makes.



Water Year Impact Survey
This 15-minute survey from the University of Washington Climate Impacts Group will gather information about impacts and response actions implemented during the 2023 water year for Idaho, Oregon, and Washington due to abnormally dry or abnormally wet conditions.



A Climate Resilience Guide for Small Forest Landowners in Eastern Washington
This guide helps landowners in Eastern Washington understand what practices will help them adapt their forests to climate change. This guide accompanies a previously developed guide for Western Washington.



NRCS Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry Mitigation Activities
The Natural Resources Conservation Service has released their 2024 list of mitigation activities for agriculture and forestry.



Does Pacific Northwest-Sourced Biochar Have a Future as a Soil Amendment in Annual Cropping Systems?
This AgClimate.Net article considers the viability of regional biochar as a common soil amendment in annual cropping systems in the Northwest.



Agriculture in the Northwest
This Northwest Hub article provides a summary of agriculture in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington and the effects of climate change on Northwest agriculture.



Data Driven Decision Making: Empowering Farmers in a Changing Climate
This AgClimate.Net article discusses how apple farmers can use data on stem water potential and weather to make decisions about how to best manage water use on their orchards.



The Economic Impact of Climate Change on Northwest Farms
This article by the Northwest Climate Hub discusses how Northwest farms will be economically affected by climate change and how farms can increase resilience.

Workshops and Conferences



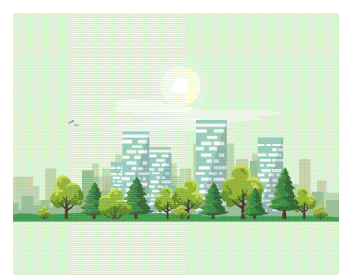
2023 Alaska Interagency Fall Fire Review, 24-26 October, Anchorage, AK. The Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group will convene the Interagency Fall Fire Review the week of October 23. Plenary sessions will be Oct 24-26 with side meetings on Oct 23 and 27. The Alaska Fire Science Consortium will coordinate fire science contributions to the meeting on Wednesday, Oct 25 (fire weather in the morning and fuels management in the afternoon).



Society of American Foresters 2023 National Convention – Forestry: It's in Our DNA, 25-29 October, Sacramento, California. Forestry is multi-faceted, with many backgrounds, disciplines, and experiences shaping the profession's past, present, and future. This convention will bring together novel science and on-the-ground management techniques, while focusing on how to better communicate passion for forestry to the public and build a community that can tackle impacts from a changing climate.



Oregon and Washington Water Year 2023 Recap & 2024 Outlook Meeting, 1-2 November, 9am-12:15pm PDT, Virtual. This meeting will share and gather information regarding climate impacts of the 2023 water year. This meeting will also offer the opportunity to learn from others about mitigation actions that were taken through group discussion. Forecast experts will provide expectations for 2024, including discussion of what El Niño means for the region.



2023 Urban Forest Symposium – Interweaving Indigenous Eco-Ethics & Healing into Urban Forestry, 2 November, University of Washington campus and virtual. This symposium will focus on Indigenous environmental stewardship, decolonizing climate justice narratives, food sovereignty and access, and the role of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative's standards in building solutions in urban forestry.



Washington Conservation Action 2023 Carbon Friendly Forestry Conference, 1, 8, and 15 November, virtual. This year, the conference will be held as a series of virtual events over a 3-week period in November, commencing with an in-person evening happy hour. Practitioners, policymakers, decision-makers, landowners, civil society, wood supply chain companies, academics, and community members whose work connects to forest management or carbon sequestration are welcome.



Sixth National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy Workshop, 6-10 November, Santa Fe, New Mexico. This event will utilize the collective voice and brain trust of workshop attendees to identify solutions and actions for current barriers to fire management, as well as for the critical emphasis areas and challenges outlined in the Cohesive Strategy Addendum. The workshop aims to address issues that are keeping managers from implementing the Cohesive Strategy at scale.



Tribal Climate and Health Summit, 8-9 November, Pala Casino and Spa Resort, California. This 2-day training features interactive instruction and peer-to-peer learning activities that will build knowledge about developing, implementing, and evaluating adaptation strategies that safeguard Tribal health and are rooted in traditional knowledge and values. Organizers, guest speakers, and attendees will share successful practices that are increasing Tribal resilience to a variety of climate exposures throughout the US.



Alaska Food and Farm Festival, 10-12 November, virtual and Anchorage, Alaska. The goals for the festival are to (1) increase awareness of Alaska food issues among the general population; (2) provide training, resources, and networking opportunities to increase involvement in local food issues by community members and decision-makers; and 3) increase connections and build community between the public, Alaska food businesses, NGOs, governmental entities, tribal entities, and others to support local economic development and innovative solutions.



October Alaska Climate Outlook Briefing, 20 October, 12 pm AKDT. This webinar will review recent and current climate conditions around Alaska, discuss some forecasting tools, and finish with the Climate Prediction Center’s forecast for November 2023 and the winter season. Join the gathering online to learn what has happened and what may be in store with Alaska’s seasonal climate.



Developing High-Resolution Records of Storminess from the Southern Bering Sea, 23 October, 11am AKDT. In the Bering Sea, rapid climate change may be causing more intense storms, flooding, and erosion. A team of researchers is reconstructing the prehistoric record of extreme events from ancient sediment samples to improve our understanding of how storm intensity and frequency has changed through time. This webinar will discuss preliminary findings.



Outcomes of Spatial Targeting in Sagebrush Country via the Sage Grouse Initiative, 16 November, 9am PDT. This webinar will discuss the strategic implementation of science-based Farm Bill conservation through the Sage Grouse Initiative. Findings may be used to inform on-the-ground efforts to further conservation of sage grouse and other species in the sagebrush biome, as well as other data-driven wildlife conservation efforts nationwide.



Understanding Climate-Smart Forestry in Practice, Mondays from October to November, 9 am PDT. In this webinar series, practitioners and researchers share how they put climate-smart forestry into practice. Other topics will include forest management to enhance carbon storage capabilities and/or increase climate resilience. The series is hosted by The Forest School at the Yale School of the Environment, the USDA Northeast and Southeast Climate Hubs.
23 Oct: Climate-smart forestry: research on programs and incentives by Stephanie Chizmar



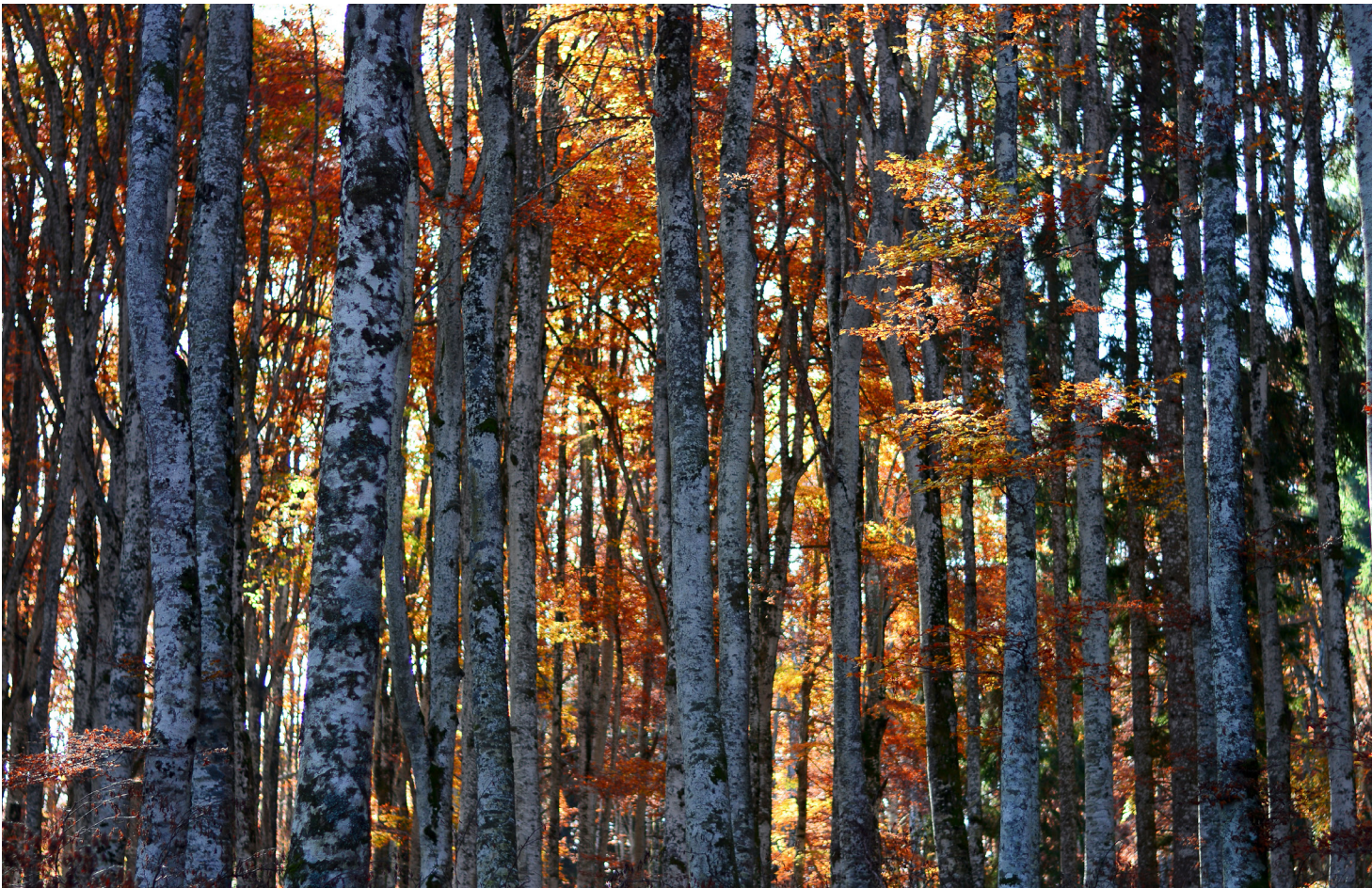
SMOKE: State of the Science, 1 November, 9am PDT. Join a live virtual session hosted by U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station scientists focused on the state of the science about wildfire smoke. This facilitated panel discussion will be guided by audience questions. Pre-registration is required.



Pacific Northwest Drought Early Warning System October Webinar, 23 October, 11 am PDT. This webinar will provide timely information on current and developing drought conditions in the region, and climatic events like El Niño. Speakers will also discuss the impacts of these conditions on issues such as wildfires, floods, disruption to water supply and ecosystems, as well as impacts to affected industries like agriculture, tourism, and public health.



Prioritizing Landscape Treatments, 9 November, 1:30pm PDT. Join the Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station for a virtual session focused on prioritizing landscape treatments for wildfire prevention. Presenters will share an overall framework, analysis considerations, and a case study from the Southwest Idaho Wildfire Crisis Landscape.



Funding

October

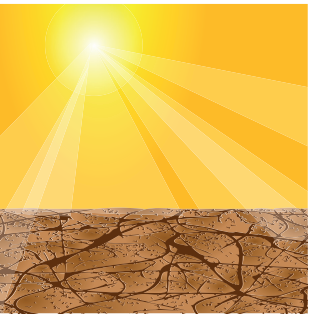


Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) Classic Program.
The classic CIG grants are intended to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies in conjunction with agricultural production. Applications are being accepted for projects addressing the following priorities: forestry; habitat conservation and restoration for wildlife and invertebrates; managing agricultural lands to improve local water quality; energy conservation; economics; and strengthening conservation through Indigenous knowledge.
Applications due 30 October.

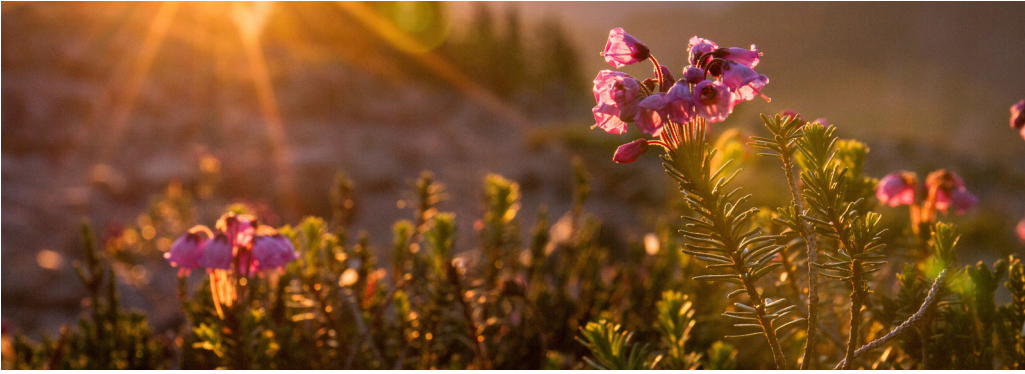
Conservation Innovation Grant On-Farm Trials.
CIG grants are intended to stimulate the adoption and evaluation of innovative conservation approaches in partnership with agricultural producers. Applications will be accepted for projects addressing at least one of the following priorities: irrigation management technologies; feed management and enteric methane reduction; grazing lands; nutrient management; and soil health demonstration trials. Applications due 30 October.
Applications due 30 October.

Cost Share for Organic Certification.
Under the Organic Certification Cost Share Program, the USDA will cover 75% of the cost associated with organic certification (up to \$750) for funds spent between October 1, 2022, and September 30, 2023. Transitioning to organic farming may be one way for farmers to combat the climate crisis. Organic farming can help with carbon storage and improve soil health.
Applications due 31 October.

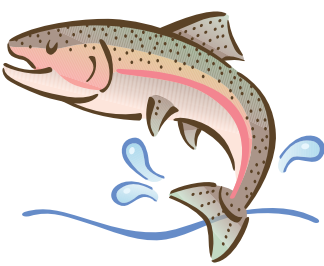
November



NIDIS Coping with Drought: Building Tribal Drought Resilience with Support from the Inflation Reduction Act.
This funding opportunity will be focused on addressing current and future drought risk on tribal lands across the West to support decision making and build tribal drought resilience in a changing climate. Applications should be developed by or in full partnership with tribal nations.
Letter of intent due 2 November.



November continued



Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grants.
This funding will support U.S. federally recognized tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and tribal organizations. In collaboration with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, selected partners will use these funds to build tribal organizational capacity and implement projects that reopen migratory pathways and restore access to healthy habitat for tribally important species. Projects may also provide community and economic benefits, such as enhancing climate resilience by removing or improving aging infrastructure.
Proposals due 8 November.



NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants.
This funding opportunity is meant to support projects that have a transformative impact for coastal communities and tribes across the country. Projects will help sustain our nation's fisheries, make significant strides in the recovery of threatened and endangered species, and help protect coastal communities and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change. They will support efforts such as reconnecting rivers to their historical floodplains, building living shorelines that protect coasts from erosion and sea-level rise, and more.
Applications due 17 November.

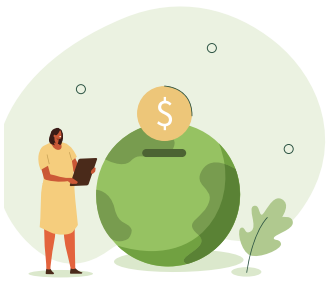


Sabbatical Research and Education Call for Proposals.
This Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) sabbatical grants provide an opportunity for faculty around the world to partner with farmers, ranchers, agricultural professionals, and researchers of the Western U.S. region for conducting research, education, and Extension activities. Projects focused on unexplored topics in underserved communities and understudied geographic locations are of special interest. \$75,000 limit/one year in scope.
Proposals due 21 November.



NOAA Climate Ready Workforce for Coastal and Great Lakes States. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) seeks to establish programs that can place people into jobs that advance climate resilience and assist employers in developing a workforce that is climate literate, informed by climate resilience, and skilled at addressing challenges. This opportunity is open to state, tribal, territorial and local governments, institutions of higher education, and non-profit organizations.
Letters of Intent due 30 November.

Ongoing



Clean Energy Investment and Production Tax Credit.
The Investment Tax Credit and the Production Tax Credit work together to lower the costs of installing and operating new clean- energy power sources. These tax credits are intended to encourage more investments in clean- energy systems over the next few years. Tax credits can be claimed until January 2025, after which tax credits will be focused only on zero carbon sources of power, and the size of the credits will decrease.



Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy Systems & Energy Efficiency Improvement Guaranteed Loans & Grants.
This program provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems or to make energy-efficiency improvements. Agricultural producers may also apply for new energy-efficient equipment and new system loans for agricultural production and processing. Applications reviewed every three months between 30 June 2023 and 30 September 2024.

