CELEBRATING OUR RURAL PARTNERS

Learn about three of our grant partners, who work across the state to support thriving rural communities. We regularly feature stories from our partners on our website.

NORTHWEST DENTAL HEALTH AIDE PROGRAM

The Northwest Dental Health Aide Program (NWDHAP) works to address oral health disparities among American Indian and Alaska Native communities by removing barriers and connecting tribes to dental health aide training. The goal: To create a pathway for American Indian and Alaska Native people to become high-quality oral health care providers serving their own communities; to increase access to reliable, culturally relevant oral health care among tribal communities and, ultimately, to improve oral health outcomes.

EASTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY’S OREGON RURAL TEACHER CORPS

Oregon Rural Teacher Corps (ORTC) seeks to address the concerning shortage of teachers across the state of Oregon – especially in rural schools and schools with a high proportion of minority students – by providing grant funding, peer support and professional development to Eastern Oregon University Master of Arts candidates teaching in rural and underserved communities. Through this work, ORTC helps offset the rising costs (and unpaid internships) often encountered on the road to becoming a teacher.

OREGON DESERT LAND TRUST

Since its founding in 2017, the Oregon Desert Land Trust (ODLT) – with offices in Bend and Burns – has helped preserve Oregon’s vast, diverse and vitally important High Desert region by conserving more than 20,000 acres of private lands from development. These efforts have preserved wild and “working” lands that are home to farming, ranching and forestry, and they have created a pathway to habitat connectivity, restoration projects, wildlife research, community-led fire protection and more.
NEW PROGRAMS SUPPORT OREGON PRODUCERS

SUCCESSION PLANNING WITH OREGON AGRICULTURAL TRUST

Over half of Oregon’s farm and ranch lands are likely to change hands in the next decade according to a 2017 study. To support producers who are retiring and planning for the future of their working lands, the Oregon Agricultural Trust has created “Stories from the Field,” a seven-part video series providing resources for producers who are curious about succession planning. Supported in part by a Roundhouse grant, “Stories from the Field” shares real-life stories and perspectives from farmers and ranchers as well as insights from service providers including an accountant, an attorney, an appraiser, a land trust, a 1031 facilitator, and a lender.

AGRISTRESS HELPLINE NOW IN OREGON

One of Oregon’s most urgent health challenges has to do with poor mental health, and Oregon’s farming, ranching, fishing, and forestry communities have long experienced exacerbated effects. In 2023, the OSU Extension worked with local and governmental partners to bring the AgriStress Helpline to Oregon. The AgriStress Helpline is a 24/7 confidential call-or-text crisis and referral line that was developed by the national non-profit, AgriSafe Network. Confidential telephone helplines are used to support people at risk as part of a comprehensive public health approach to prevent suicide. The AgriStress Helpline is unique because it is completely dedicated to serving the agriculture community.

2023 GRANTS BY THE NUMBERS

Roundhouse awarded over $15 million in grants across our four focus areas to more than 500 partners supporting rural and Tribal communities across the Oregon region.

We focus our work in and across four areas that are fundamental to thriving rural communities: Arts & Culture, Education, Environmental Stewardship, and Social Services.

To remain flexible to needs across the state, Roundhouse reserves special-use funds that can be designated outside of our primary focus areas. In 2023, 1% of the Foundation’s grantmaking fell outside of our focus areas.
ARTS & AGRICULTURE AT PINE MEADOW RANCH

A painter and a composer from Philadelphia. Three writers from New York City, a Denver-based visual storyteller and a dozen renowned creatives from all corners of Oregon. These are just a few of the 31 artists, researchers and culture bearers who took part in the 2023 residency at Pine Meadow Ranch Center for Arts & Agriculture, a project of the Roundhouse Foundation.

In their works, participants partnered with individuals and groups across the state to explore the residency’s theme: Food and Agriculture. And in Sisters, residents helped deepen Pine Meadow Ranch’s connection with the community by building relationships with locals, businesses and organizations. Highlights include:

- A four-lecture series presenting information on Indigenous First Foods; challenges related to water, labor and the environment in a warming world; and the importance of pollinators and employing regenerative agricultural practices.
- Four open studios and five workshops on topics such as writing, traditional weaving, encaustic painting and botanical drawing.
- Inspiring visits to Pine Meadow Ranch by more than a dozen agricultural, arts, educational and cultural organizations looking to learn and create.
- Collaborative projects in sustainable agriculture and environmental stewardship with classes from Oregon State University–Cascades and Central Oregon Community College.
- Public workshops with experts on biochar, pasture management and pollinators.
- Continued transitioning to regenerative ranching in partnership with the Grazewell Program and Sustainable Northwest.
- Expansion of garden projects using native plants, no-dig garden beds and a focus on creating wildlife habitat and food for pollinators.

Looking ahead, we are excited to explore our 2024 theme – Transitions and Migration – with residents, partners and our neighbors as we aim to more deeply understand the processes of movement, change and adaptation experienced by all living beings.