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OREGON WHEAT  
GROWERS LEAGUE

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The voice of Oregon's wheat  
producers since 1926.

# Annual

REPORT



OREGON  
WHEAT

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# Leadership

## OREGON WHEAT

### Vice President

Ben Maney



### President

Clint Carlson



### Secretary/ Treasurer

Collin Crocker



### Past President

Alan von Borstel



## County Presidents

Baker/Union Counties - Wade Bingaman

Gilliam County - Deacon Heideman

Klamath County - Rodney Cheyne

Malheur County - Kevin Corn

Morrow County - Erin Heideman

Sherman County - Thad Eakin

Umatilla County - Emery Gentry

Wallowa County - Kurt Melville

Wasco County - Josh Duling

N. Willamette Valley - Tom Duyck

S. Willamette Valley - Collin Crocker



# Year in Review

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## Chief Executive Officer

Amanda Hoey

As the 'The Voice of Oregon's Wheat Producers since 1926' the League was effective in bringing our voice forward loud and strong on issues impacting producers' profitability and sustainability. League advocacy paid off in legislative wins (see the Dalton Advocacy overview), improvements in market opportunities, advancements on agency issues, protection of navigation capacity and direct funding to producers. Significant highlights from the fiscal year included:

### Expansion of Coronavirus Food Assistance Program to All Wheat Classes.

In September 2020 we welcomed USDA's decision to expand CFAP 2 to include all classes of wheat, recognizing the impacts of market disruptions to all wheat producers. The partnership between the League, National Association of Wheat Growers, Pacific Northwest coalition, and the support of our congressional members was critical to achieving this support. It was a clear demonstration of our effectiveness in working to identify and discuss the losses experienced by our producers to assure federal funding availability. Expanded eligibility translated to a return of over **\$15.75 million** for Oregon wheat producers secured in CFAP2. In addition to the direct payment resolution, we:

- Worked with RMA to resolve a discrepancy in Umatilla County t-yields for 2021. Corrections were posted in October 2020.
- Worked with NAWG to resolve payment concerns. In January 2021, USDA announced an adjustment to payment calculations for wheat.
- Addressed technical issues encountered by our members throughout the program sign-up period.
- Worked on program issues to address the impacts from drought, including quality loss concerns. That work continues into next year and into the next Farm Bill considerations.

### Investing to Research.

With support through our federal congressional delegates, we saw ongoing success in securing **\$2 million** in continued funding for resilient dryland wheat research again for 2021. Further, we gained an additional **\$1.5 million** this year for the establishment of the Soil Carbon Research Center in Pendleton. We continued to work on resources for long-term facility enhancements, hosting a tour of the CBARC facility in June 2021 to discuss needs for OSU and USDA-ARS. In the state legislative session, Senator Hansell delivered **\$100,000** in funds for the OSU Research Bakery/Cereal Quality lab. Combined with funding through the University, Oregon Wheat Commission and other funds, the project will allow Oregon Wheat to enhance its markets and competitiveness by expanding and upgrading the lab.

We advocated for stable and expanded resources for the Agricultural Research Service and helped preserve Oregon State University programs critical to wheat growers. We engaged in hiring committees for USDA-ARS staff in the PNW and for the new Columbia Basin Ag Research Center Director to ensure personnel and staffing at levels that can continue to best serve our interests.

# Over \$15.75M Direct to Producers





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# Year in Review

final

## **Preserving Navigation Capacities.**

Despite the publication of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Columbia Snake River System Operations which avoids breaching the four lower Snake River dams, we saw ongoing threats to the river system. The League partnered in efforts through both NW River Partners and Pacific Northwest Waterways Association to share information on the essential role of the river systems in getting our wheat to market in the most environmentally friendly mode of transportation available. The PNWA RiverValues campaign generated over **6.4 million** impressions.

## **Protecting the Farmer's Toolbox.**

OWGL supported the Farmer's Toolbox with advocacy on proposed pesticide regulations on both state and federal levels. Guidance from NAWG and Oregonians for Food and Shelter helped shape our responses to protect most of the products used in weed and pest control by Oregon Wheat producers and ensure their ongoing appropriate use. It is infrequent to see new resources, but in February, we received confirmation of Oregon approval on the label for the registration of a new mode of action to address wireworm control.

## **Improvements in Market Opportunities.**

Given the critical importance of the U.S. weighing and inspection system to our competitiveness in the world market, the League actively advocated with NAWG on the need for passage of Grain Standards Reauthorization Act. The five-year reauthorization passed in December, ensuring we retain a key advantage for Oregon wheat in export markets. That same month, we engaged with our delegation on issues related to food aid to assure consistency of PNW soft white wheat delivery to Yemen. Finally, while not the result of League advocacy but a critical renewal with long-term implications for our markets was the work by our partners at US Wheat Associates to assure the extension of the Philippine's duties against Turkish flour.

## **Installation of New Programs to Serve our Producers.**

With the requirement to postpone the annual tri-state convention, we launched new programs to serve our producers. In August, we executed an agreement for production of the #originalstewards project. Thanks to the generous contributions of our sponsors, the project will help to share our farming practices and stewardship stories. In November, we launched the Oregon Wheat Talks series to provide our members with access to agency staff and resources. We expanded those talks in 2021 with access to researchers and partner entities on market issues.

Undoubtedly this was a challenging year for Oregon Wheat producers, but the consistency throughout the year: OWGL working for you. Without our members investments in annual dues, we would not have the ability to continue that advocacy work on your behalf. We have renewed our agreement with Dalton Advocacy and renewed as a full state member with NAWG. I thank you for your renewal in us.



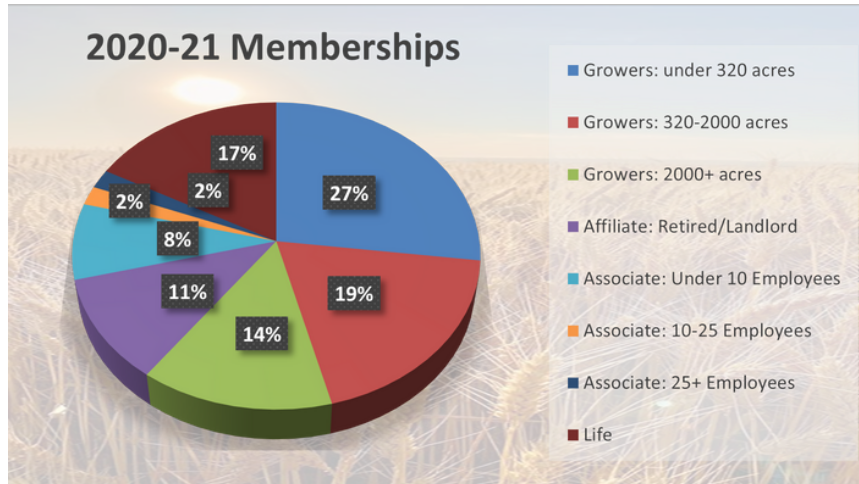
# original Stewards



# Membership


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Membership continues to be a critical part of our organization to ensure we have a strong advocacy voice in Salem and Washington, DC. Dues are directly allocated to advocacy and lobbying contracts for state and federal issues.



Membership is concentrated on active growers with distribution as follows:

- 60% are active growers
- 11% are retired/landlord
- 17% are life members
- 12% are associate (business) members

The League had twenty new members join in the fiscal year. 

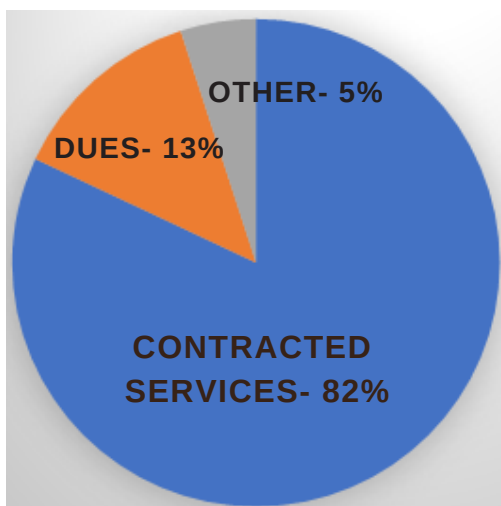
**VIEW POLICIES & PRIORITIES AT [WWW.OWGL.ORG/OWGL](http://WWW.OWGL.ORG/OWGL)**

## Financial

*Overall, OWGL ended the year in a better position than expected with net income that allowed for improvements in the long-term stability of the League. The board established a new investment account, seeded with \$100,000. The Board also designated a new Building Maintenance fund, with \$25,000 allocated from this fiscal year to address future issues given the age of our facility.*

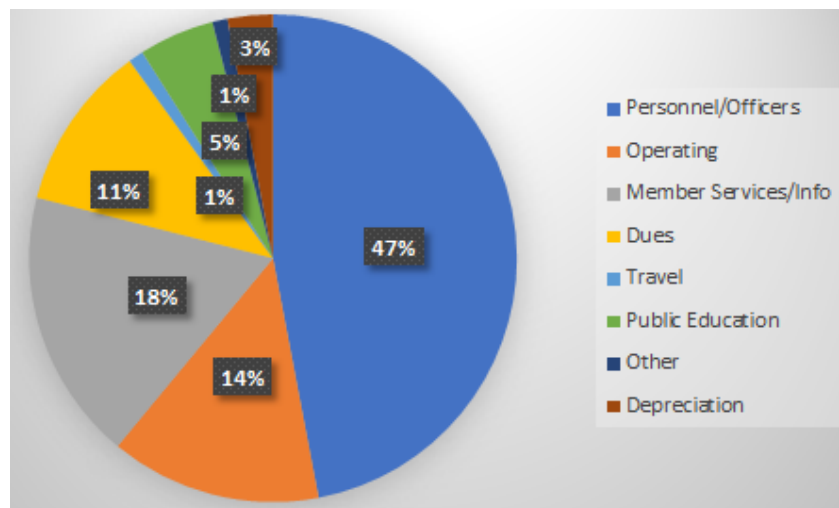
### Income

Revenue was 101.7% of budget, totaling \$596,904.



### Expense

Expenses were 86.9% of budget, totaling \$477,963 before board-designated investments.



# Legislative

## Lobby Team

Dalton Advocacy, Inc.

OWGL members met with a handful of legislators during our virtual Wheat Day at the Capitol and the OWGL team all gave excellent testimony during the public hearing! With the passage of Senate Bill 590, the state expanded the areas that can be covered through a Rangeland Protection Associations (RPA) to include lands that are used primarily for cultivating crops. The legislature further extended resources to the Oregon Department of Forestry for additional positions to support the modernization of RPA's and new RPA formation. The statutory change provided in the bill enhances coordination of limited fire resources for rural communities and ensures tools are available to conduct effective fire suppression as safely and efficiently as possible. It is a big win for rural producers, especially Oregon Wheat Growers!

OWGL was also able to work with Senator Hansell to secure \$100,000 from Oregon's share of the federal American Rescue Plan Act funds for Wheat research to expand and upgrade the OSU Research Bakery.

### Pesticides

This Session, we did not see the same level of threats on pesticides as we have in previous years. After a long Rulemaking Advisory Committee with ODA on the use of Chlorpyrifos during the interim, Legislators appeared to shift their focus away from pesticide use on farm and forest land. The broader ag coalition stopped efforts to redirect registration applications for pesticides to a new Interagency Science Review Panel housed in OHA and supported efforts to align ODA application licensing and training with the new EPA rules. While we unsuccessfully sought funding to establish a grant program to fund research on alternatives to chlorpyrifos, Legislators were open to the discussion and understood the challenges of phasing out a product with no viable alternative.



### 2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

While the 6-month 2021 Session avoided some of the tension filled walkouts of previous Sessions, major issues and controversial policy was not tabled in favor of a focused bi-partisan effort on COVID and wildfire as many had requested. Nevertheless, Oregon agriculture escaped fairly unscathed and OWGL saw wins with new funding investments and responsive fire public policy.

### OWGL Wins

OWGL worked with Senator Bill Hansell-R to advance SB 590, a wildfire bill that expands protection options for cropland areas, was passed with bipartisan support. The bill was a priority bill for the Oregon Wheat Growers League. Senator Hansell was a great champion for the bill and worked tirelessly to ensure access to wildfire protection resources for all of Oregon's wheat producing areas.

## Wildfire

After the devastating 2020 wildfire season in Oregon, we saw over 100 different pieces of Legislation introduced in an effort to assist with rebuilding efforts in our most impacted Counties and to enhance future wildfire prevention efforts in the state. The omnibus wildfire bill will be implementing over the coming year and is robust and comprehensive focused on promoting wildfire prevention, response and recovery. Included in the legislation is: new requirements for electricity system plans; the creation of a statewide wildfire risk map; defensible space, land use and building code requirements; the establishment of health systems for smoke; establishes the Wildfire Risk Reduction Program; establishes the Oregon Wildfire Workforce Corps; establishes a Small Woodland Grant Program; establishes a Certified Burn Manager Program via ODF; establishes a Wildfire Programs Advisory Council; and requires the Board of Forestry to establish criteria by which the Wildland Urban Interface shall be identified and classified. There will also be a new study conducted by the Department of Consumer and Business Services to review the liability of prescribed fire burns in Oregon. Legislators also advance policy to change the property taxes for those homes destroyed by a natural disaster/wildfire.

## Climate Change

We saw several legislative efforts this session focused on mitigating climate change, environmental justice, and modernizing Oregon's recycling system – specifically by shifting the cost to producers of including agricultural producers. Most significantly, the Legislators passed a bill to move Oregon to 100% clean electricity by 2040. The bill reflects a negotiated product between the largest utilities (PGE & PAC), environmental justice groups and renewable energy advocates. The bill would set a timetable for PGE and PAC to eliminate emissions associated with the electricity they provide, specifically to reduce emissions by 80% from the baseline amount by 2030, 90% by 2035 and to completely eliminate emissions by 2040. Efforts to require employers to provide outdoor employees with certified respirators died (though being addressed in OSHA smoke and heat rules) as did attempts to create a new indirect sources review program at DEQ and a product stewardship program for household hazardous waste.

HB 2674, which did not pass, saw significant grassroots engagement from OWGL members. Proposed amendments would have imposed new taxes – largely falling on rural farmers – including taxes on the sale of tires, sale/lease of off-road equipment, heavy duty trucks and dyed diesel to pay for diesel engine replacement and retrofits.

In the environmental justice realm, advocates were able to pass a Senate Concurrent Resolution declaring that it is the intent of the Legislative Assembly to provide greater public participation and to ensure that all persons affected by decisions of the natural resource agencies have a voice in those decisions.



## Labor

Labor bills did take a backseat to other policy bills, though many new worker protections were adopted in the regulatory realm during the preceding interim at OR-OSHA, BOLI and OHA. There were a couple of proactive bills able to survive including an opportunity for employers to offer hiring bonuses without violating pay equity laws as well as vaccine incentives. Labor was able to advance a switch in the employer-employee burden to enforce non-competes as well as a new rebuttal presumption for retaliation claims when an employer takes any action against an employee within the 60-days following a complaint. Employers were able to ward off, both in the interim and the legislative session, efforts that proposed sweeping changes to Oregon's workers compensation system including effectively a ban on self-insuring and a COVID presumption. Efforts to change Oregon's independent contractor law also failed.

Largely in response to a growing caseload at the OR Employment Department, the Legislature did have to delay the implementation of Paid Family & Medical Leave. The program was scheduled to begin collecting employer and employee premiums January 1, 2022 – that will be pushed to January 1, 2023. Employees will begin to access benefits September 1, 2023.

One of the outstanding labor asks from the 2021 Session is a change in the Agriculture Overtime Law. Proponents have made it clear they will work to advance this bill, requiring overtime in the ag setting, in 2022.

## 2021 INTERIM

We anticipate another busy interim due to COVID. Already since the adjournment of the 2021 Session we have seen OR-OSHA adopted Temporary Heat Rules, Temporary Smoke Rules and new Ag Housing Heat Rules. All of those discussions have permanent rules attached to them and the Rulemaking Advisory Committees will meet throughout the Summer and Fall.

BOLI has also adopted several temporary rules implementing new bills, including an expansion of Paid Sick Leave to allow for leave related to the Temporary Heat and Smoke Rules.

The OR Department of Forestry has also convened a workgroup to discuss the definition of "wildland-urban interface" as used in SB 762, the omnibus wildfire bill mentioned above. Concerns were raised during Session around the broad and ambiguous 'wildland-urban interface' definition which led ag and forestry stakeholders to ask for: (1) a reasonable definition of wildland-urban interface to narrow the costs/implications of the rest of the bill; (2) protections for agricultural commodities, timber, and ornamental landscaping when the state requires vegetation removal due to defensible space; (3) protections for those who lost their homes during the Labor Day Fires; and (4) a clear and localized appeals process for landowners whose properties are wrongfully classified. A compromise amendment was adopted in the final days directing ODF to initiate rulemaking to define the WUI.

The Oregon Legislature will also return in September for a Special Session to hopefully adopt negotiated redistricting maps – required every 10-years to redraw Oregon's Legislative and Congressional boundaries. If the Legislature is unable to reach an agreement or adopt maps by September 24th then the responsibility shifts to the Secretary of State. There will be three rounds of interim committee days leading up to the 2022 February Session.



# Other Oregon Wheat Highlights


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## Oregon Wheat Foundation

Dale Case, Chair

**Funding:** Despite the inability to hold one of its primary fundraising events (convention auction), the Foundation continued to expand educational investments through sound financial investments and contributions from wheat industry leaders. We received the final Tax Exemption for the parcel leased to OSU, which allows more of those resources to go into programs. Finally, the golf scramble fundraiser returned for its 24th year after a hiatus last year due to pandemic restrictions.

**Scholarships:** This year, the Foundation increased individual student scholarship amounts for the 2021 cycle, awarding five scholarships to qualifying high school seniors. Scholarship recipients include Aubrina Melville, Colten Wright, Eva Martin, Nathan Stout and Tyler Spratling.

**Other Foundation Programs:** In addition to increasing scholarships, the Foundation extended a hand to our broader community expanding the allocation of funds to Farmers Ending Hunger through the Bushels for Betsy program. Other program funding including sponsoring the Century Farms program and supporting Ag in the Classroom. We thank the industry for its ongoing support that allows the Foundation to invest in the future of our ag leaders. 




## Oregon Wheat PAC

Craig Reeder, Chair

OREGON  
WHEAT  
PAC

By making it easier to contribute to the Oregon WheatPAC, we have expanded the resources available to support candidates who work with us to protect and support our industry. OWGL grower members will recognize the \$25 pre-set voluntary contribution amount included with their dues assessment. This voluntary contribution is a suggested amount and can be increased or decreased at the member's discretion.

With funds donated to the PAC, we contributed to a range of candidates in state elections this year, focusing resources to ensure our voice and interests are communicated across the political spectrum. While we may not agree with candidates on every policy and position, we support those who work with us to advance key issues impacting the wheat industry. Ultimately, funds through the PAC help get those elected who will support our industry and make a difference in the future and ensure we have a voice in the process. 



# OREGON WHEAT

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*Photo by James Reeder*