What are natural climate solutions? Activities that protect or enhance the ability of natural and working lands to take up and store carbon or reduce greenhouse gas emissions while maintaining or increasing climate resilience, water quality and quantity, human well-being, and biodiversity. Examples include practices such as:

- Streamside reforestation; Protection of drinking watersheds; wetland restoration
- Cover crop planting, no till and reduced tillage
- Rotational grassland grazing
- Lengthened logging rotations for increased carbon storage and timber yield
- Forest, wetland, and grassland protection.

Why should Oregon support natural climate solutions? Oregon’s forest owners, farmers, and ranchers support numerous economies across the state. It’s time we repaid the favor by giving them the tools they need to confront and fight the threat of climate change. These practices offer simple, proven solutions for both reducing the future impacts of climate change and confronting the impacts communities and land managers are already contending with, including drought, heatwaves, flooding, and wildfire.

What will this bill actually do?

- Fund and direct state agencies to provide incentives and technical support to forest owners, farmers, and ranchers to voluntarily implement natural climate solutions
- Position the state to leverage federal funding and private investments in natural climate solutions on natural and working lands
- Create a source of state funding for voluntary actions to remove climate pollution from the atmosphere and store it in natural and working lands
- Invest in an Oregon natural and working lands inventory and study opportunities to maximize economic co-benefits and workforce development and training.

Benefits of supporting natural climate solutions

Leverage Significant Federal Resources for Oregon’s Communities. Federal legislation including the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA-$17B), the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA-$8.7B), upcoming 2023 Farm Bill, and potential passage of Recovering America’s Wildlife Act will provide significant federal funding opportunities for natural climate solutions. To fully access these resources, Oregon will need to be ready ahead of funding deadlines with coordinated partnerships funds. * (see below for details)

Achieve Oregon’s Climate Goals. This bill will support the 2035 and 2050 carbon sequestration goals recommended by the Oregon Global Warming Commission.

Support Oregon’s Forest, Farming, and Ranching Economies. This legislation will:

- Support voluntary incentives and technical support for landowners and land managers to reduce water and fertilizer needs, protect water sources & pollinators, and replant trees.
- Support rural and urban jobs in natural resource management to reduce threats of landslides, erosion, and flooding and enhance water quality/quantity.
- Sustain and increase future tree fiber by growing trees longer and tap into financial incentives, carbon payments and easements.

**Ensure Equitable Environmental Outcomes in the Face of Climate Change.** This legislation will provide additional resources for communities already experiencing the impacts of climate change firsthand. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the effects of climate change disproportionately fall on underserved communities including rural areas who are least able to prepare for, and recover from drought, heat waves, poor air quality, flooding, and wildfire.

*Details of potential federal funding for Natural Climate Solutions.*
- The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) sets aside an additional $8 billion for voluntary conservation efforts through the Conservation Stewardship Program and Conservation Partnership Program.
- The IRA grants $2.2 billion for state and private forestry conservation programs, in competitive grants including $700 million for the Forest Legacy Program and $1.5 billion for the Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program. Typical non-federal cost-sharing requirements apply but may be waived by the Secretary of Agriculture.
- The IRA provides $550 million in competitive grants to state foresters or equivalent state officials to support nonfederal forest landowners and climate mitigation, carbon sequestration, and forest resilience. No cost sharing is required in disadvantaged or underserved communities, and in all other neighborhoods, the federal share of costs cannot exceed 80 percent.
- The IRA provides $2.6 billion through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for states that border oceans, the Gulf of Mexico, or the Great Lakes; tribal governments; and nonprofits to invest in coastal communities and climate resilience.
- The IRA sets aside $4 billion in Department of the Interior grants, contracts, or financial assistance for drought mitigation in reclamation states, with priority to the Colorado River Basin and other distressed basins.
- The IRA allocates $220 million for tribal climate resilience funding for tribes and tribal organizations. This funding will be distributed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- In Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act the PROTECT program supports states’ efforts to improve the resiliency of transportation infrastructure. Funds from the program are split into $7.3 billion of formula funding and $1.4 billion of competitive set-aside grants over five years for resilience improvements at the state and municipal levels. Funding under this program can be used to improve the resiliency of natural infrastructure such as wetlands, flood plains, and aquatic ecosystems.