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Contact: Steve Adams – 541.525.1604

Portland and the Willamette Valley Prepare to Face Climate Change

A New Report Identifies 40 Measures to Build Regional Resilience

EUGENE, Oregon (January 27, 2010) – The Resource Innovation Group’s Climate Leadership Initiative today released “*Building Climate Resiliency in the Lower Willamette Region of Western Oregon*,” capping an 18-month project to engage local experts and stakeholders in how to prepare the Portland area for a changing climate. Modeling provided by the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute projects that Portland’s average summer temperature will increase 10 to 15°F this century, along with more extreme weather events and a loss in snowpack approaching 80% below current levels.

While these climate impacts will have significant regional effects on the local economy, social welfare, environment and quality-of-life, more than 200 local stakeholders found ample opportunity for government, private businesses, and individuals to reduce harm by preparing now. Stakeholders provided 40 recommendations including hardening infrastructure, reducing energy use, encouraging preventative health, diversifying the local businesses and restoring floodplains and wetlands. These measures will enhance existing sustainability initiatives, create the basis for a resilient regional economy, and assure continued prosperity for the region.

“Metro is committed to helping our region address climate change,” said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder. “Small changes in key community investments can simultaneously reduce the impact of climate change and keep this a great place. People living and working in walkable neighborhoods use less energy, natural areas absorb carbon, and safe and reliable transportation options minimize contributions to global warming. Plus, we are rich in pioneering new businesses working on a new energy economy that can sell their products and practices worldwide.”

The report describes how taking action now to prepare for the impacts of climate change complements local sustainability and economic development initiatives by increasing access to clean and safe air, land and water, reducing our contribution to greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles and energy use, promoting local food production and consumption, attracting sustainable business development, and assisting people in meeting their basic needs fairly and efficiently.