

Mid-Columbia Economic Resiliency Team Meeting June 5, 2020

Jessica Metta (MCEDD) started the meeting with introductions for guest speakers on the call.

Reopening updates

Jessica introduced Dr. Tom Jeanne (Oregon Health Authority) to provide an overview of the updated Phase 2 guidelines that were recently released by Governor Kate Brown ([slides](#)). All reopening guidelines and county-specific reopening status can be found [here](#). Tom clarified that certain venues may have up to 250 people maximum only if physical distancing measures can still be maintained.

It was noted that COVID-19 is disproportionately affecting communities of color. Dr. Jeanne said that the state is aware of the inequities and is trying to address the issues, starting with clear communication. Oregon releases a [weekly report](#) reflecting COVID-19 case statistics for various demographics in Oregon, including race and ethnicity.

Dr. Jeanne was asked if we would be receiving more details on what “increased travel” guidance means in Phase 2. He noted that we should still be limiting non-essential travel and that Oregon will likely remain in Phase 2 until a vaccine or effective treatment is developed, and as such anticipates that more specific guidance around travel will be released at a later time.

More information can be found in the governor’s new [executive order](#). If the group has additional questions around Phase 2 guidance, contact Nate (Nate.STICE@oregon.gov).

Jessica provided a brief update around Washington’s reopening status. Several counties, including Skamania, have been in Phase 2 for at least 21 days so are eligible to apply for Phase 3. Washington has a [risk-assessment dashboard](#) providing COVID-19 data by county. Reopening guidance can be found on the state’s [Safe Start](#) page.

Outdoor Recreation: Lynn Burditt (U.S. Forest Service) noted that many counties in Oregon and Washington are in different phases, leading to challenges in trying to align openings of county and state parks throughout the region. Last week a number of day-use sites were reopened and some campground sites will begin to reopen next week. Forest Service and land management agencies will hold another bi-state meeting next week and will continue conversations around plans for reopening the waterfall corridor in the Gorge. Visit readysetgorge.com for updates on what is open. Lizzie Keenan (Mt. Hood & Columbia Gorge RDMO) mentioned that the Trail Ambassadors program will kick off again this weekend at a few trails in Hood River County.

Ports: Peter Mitchell (Port of Arlington) reported that the Port has opened its RV Park to overnight visitors. He noted there are a lot of out-of-state visitors starting to arrive in Oregon and are facing challenges in finding places to stay.

Chambers: Lizzie reported that the small business relief grant program that The Dalles Chamber is developing with Google should open up next week.

Business Oregon: Business Oregon recently announced the recipients in the first round of their matching small business relief program. Earlier this week MCEDD applied for the program’s second round of funding, open only to EDDs and CDFIs, to develop a grant program to support businesses that were unable to access PPP or EIDL funds. Recipients should be announced next week. Ryan DeGrofft

(Business Oregon) noted that the invitation to apply for the third round of funding for this program will likely be delayed as the agency works to disperse funds to the current grantees.

Economic development agencies: Dave McClure (Klickitat County Economic Development) reported that Klickitat County just released a competitive grant program to support small businesses in the County with up to \$5,000. However, since the program is using CARES Act funding, it comes with a number of regulations, and businesses should read eligibility guidelines. Find more information and apply to this program [here](#).

Washington Department of Commerce: Susan Nielson (Washington Department of Commerce) noted that seven counties in Washington have now moved to Phase 3. Starting June 8th, all employers will require employees to wear face masks at work. Refer to [Coronavirus Facial Covering and Mask Requirements](#) for additional detail.

SBDC: Greg Price (SBDC CGCC) reported that the PPP Flexibility Act has been signed into law. This bill extends the loan forgiveness time period from eight weeks to 24 weeks and extends the hire-back date for employees from June 30th until the end of the year. Additionally, eligible costs that can be submitted beyond payroll have been raised from 25% to 40% and the bill includes additional flexibility for rehiring employees. Greg also mentioned that the SBDC is hosting a webinar on Monday at 5:30p.m. with the Small Business Legal Clinic focused on legal questions for reopening in Phase 1 and 2 in Oregon. Find details and register for this webinar [here](#).

Workforce agencies: Heather Ficht (East Cascades Works) noted that bi-state conversations that were occurring pre-COVID-19 have restarted. Discussions are focused on how to better serve all residents and businesses on both sides of the river. Amy Martinez (South Central Workforce Council) stated that these efforts started over a year ago and workforce agencies in Oregon and Washington are communicating regularly as counties begin to reopen and workers and businesses need support. Amy noted that both states have disaster recovery funding to support these efforts. Mike Scroggs (Oregon Rapid Response Program, CGCC) mentioned that they are continuing to focus on worker reemployment training and that they have funds to support worker needs.

Regional Economists: Kale Donnelly (Oregon Employment Department) provided a report on Oregon's unemployment claims ([link](#)). Demographics of unemployment claims can be found [here](#). Economic indicators for the Columbia Gorge using April data can be found [here](#). Progress around unemployment claims in Oregon can be found [here](#). For more information regarding unemployment data and updates, contact Kale (Kale.donnelly@oregon.gov, 541-206-1645). Scott Bailey (Washington Employment Security Department) noted that national data around employment in the U.S. was just released ([link](#)). Scott provided a report on Washington's unemployment claims ([weekly report](#)). Details for weekly claims for Skamania and Klickitat counties can be found on the Department's [dashboard](#) and a report on demographics can be found [here](#). Scott noted that additional resources have been put towards preventing fraudulent unemployment insurance claims, and Washington has recouped over \$300 million in claims benefits as a result. So far Washington has data for initial PUA claims by county, along with regular initial and initial PEUC claims but due to capacity restraints does not yet have data for continuing PUA or PEUC claims.

Jessica thanked the group for their work. If there are items you'd like communicated during next week's meeting, please send details to jacque@mcedd.org. This group will meet next Friday (June 12) at 11:00 a.m.

MID-COLUMBIA ECONOMIC RESILIENCY TEAM**June 5**

Aaryn Rassmussen	Columbia Gorge Regional Airport	
Abe Friedman	Office of Senator Maria Cantwell	
Alberto Isiordia	Washington Employment Security Department	
Amy Gibbs	Oregon Employment Department	
Amy Martinez	South Central Workforce Council (WA)	x
Andrea Klaas	Port of The Dalles	x
Angie Weiss	Skamania County Chamber of Commerce	
Anna Osborn	The Next Door, Inc.	
Anne Medenbach	Port of Hood River	x
Arlene Burns	City of Mosier	
Ashley Huckaby May	Visit Hood River Council	
BJ Westlund	Office of Senator Jeff Merkley	
Bryan Stebbins	Office of Senator Patty Murray	
Buck Jones	Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC)	
Captain Tony Gilmer	Klickitat County	
Carrie Pipinich	Mid-Columbia Economic Development District, Wasco/Sherman EDO	x
Charlotte Bentley	USDA Rural Development - Oregon	
Chuck Thompson	Oregon State Senate	
Dallas Fridley	Oregon Employment Department	x
Dan Mahr	Office of Senator Jeff Merkley	
Dan Spatz	Columbia Gorge Community College	
Dana Peck	Goldendale Chamber of Commerce	
Dave McClure	Klickitat County Economic Development	x
David Kavanagh	Klickitat County Public Health	
Emily Reed	Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance	x
Eric Nerdin	USDA Rural Development - Oregon	
Eric Proffitt	Worksource Oregon	
Erick Garman	Oregon Department of Agriculture (exports)	
Evan Bryan	Office of State Senator Bill Hansell	
Gabriel Muro	The Next Door, Inc.	
Gladys Rivera	One Community Health	
Gordon Zimmerman	City of Cascade Locks	x
Greg Price	Columbia Gorge Community College/Small Business Development Center	x
Greg Svelund	Oregon Department of Environmental Quality	x
Hannah Brause	WSU Extension, Klickitat and Skamania	x
Hannah Ladwig	Gorge Grown Food Network	
Heather Ficht	East Cascades Works (OR)	
Jacob Egler	Office of Senator Ron Wyden	
Jacque Schei	Mid-Columbia Economic Development District	x
Jarett Glibert	Columbia Gorge Community College	

Jennifer Toepke	Port of The Dalles	x
Jessica Metta	Mid-Columbia Economic Development District	x
John Huffman	USDA Rural Development - Oregon	
John Swanson	Office of State Senator Chuck Thompsen	
Jonathan Hale	Office of Senator Maria Cantwell	
Josh Bruce	UO/IPRE	
Justin Withem	Office of State Representative Anna Williams	
K'Lynn Lane	Condon Chamber of Commerce	x
Kale Donnelly	Oregon Employment Department	x
Kallie Kurtz	Washington Employment Security Department	x
Kate Schroeder	Hood River County Chamber of Commerce	x
Kathleen Cathey	Office of Senator Ron Wyden	x
Kevin Waters	Skamania Economic Development Council	
Kristy Beachamp	Oregon Health Authority	x
Krystyna Wolniakowski	Columbia River Gorge Commission	x
Leticia Valle	Washington Employment Security Department	
Liliana Justo-Bello	The Next Door, Inc.	x
Lisa Atkin	Gilliam County	
Lisa Farquharson	The Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce	
Lizzie Keenan	Mt. Hood & Columbia Gorge Regional Destination Management Organization	x
Lynn Burditt	U.S. Forest Service	x
Lynn Longan	WA Department of Commerce	
Marc Thornsby	Port of Klickitat County	x
Marla Keethler	City of White Salmon	
Matt Craigie	ECONorthwest	
Matt King	Wallowa Resources	
Michael Held	Business Oregon	
Michael McElwee	Port of Hood River	
Michelle Mulrony	Klickitat County	
Mike Scroggs	Oregon Rapid Response Program, Columbia Gorge Community College	x
Nate Stice	North Central Regional Solutions	x
Neita Cecil	North Central Public Health District	
Olga Kaganova	Port of Cascade Locks	
Pat Albaugh	Port of Skamania County	
Peter Mitchell	Port of Arlington	x
Rachael Fuller	City of Hood River	x
Rep. Anna Williams	Oregon House of Representatives	
Rep. Daniel Bonham	Oregon House of Representatives	
Richard Evans	Office of Senator Maria Cantwell	
Richard Foster	Klickitat County Economic Development	x
Ryan DeGrofft	Business Oregon	x
Sarah Kohout	Office of Senator Maria Cantwell	

Sarah Means	South Valley/Mid-Coast Regional Solutions	
Sarah Sullivan	Gorge Grown Food Network	
Scott Bailey	Washington Employment Security Department	x
Sean McCormick	Oregon Office of Emergency Management	
Sondra Pieti	Washington Employment Security Department	
Stephanie Anderson	Maupin Chamber of Commerce	
Stephanie Krell	Wasco County	
Stephanie Siebold	East Cascades Workforce Investment Board (OR)	
Steve Scardina	Oregon Restaurant & Lodging Association	
Susan Nielsen	Washington Department of Commerce	x
Tami Stockton	Wheeler County Economic Development	
Tammara Toppel	Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce	
Tatiana Eckhart	Mid-Columbia Economic Development District	x
Teresa Cummings	Oregon Rapid Response Program, Columbia Gorge Community College	x
Teri Thalhofer	North Central Public Health District	
Tom Schnell	Business Oregon	
Wendy Popkin	Oregon Restaurant & Lodging Association	
Will Norris	City of Hood River	
Guest		
Dr. Tom Jeanne	Oregon Health Authority	x