

The Atlas of Collaboration

Oregon Volume, Version 1.0

Portland State University
Hatfield School of Government
National Policy Consensus Center

Syracuse University
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs
Program for the Advancement of Research on
Conflict and Collaboration

THIS DOCUMENT WAS PREPARED BY

Bobby Cochran, Willamette Partnership and Portland State University's National Policy Consensus Center (NPCC)

Katie Fields, University of Oregon

Bryce Barthuly, Portland State University

Tina Nabatchi, Syracuse University's Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration (PARCC)

Rebecca McLain, NPCC

Mohammed Qasim Mehdi, PARCC

Copyright by National Policy Consensus Center and Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration

SUGGESTED CITATION

Cochran, B., Fields, K.R., Barthuly, B.E., Nabatchi, T., McLain, R.J., and Mehdi, M.Q. (2019). The Atlas of Collaboration: Oregon Volume: Version 1.0. www.atlasofcollaboration.com.

SUPPORTED BY

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Chalkboard Project, NPCC, and PARCC

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document would not have been possible without the dedication of every leader participating in Oregon's collaboratives. Thank you! Thank you also to the volunteers and students who helped compile the data for this first version of the Oregon Volume of the Atlas: Shaun Payne, Logan Channer, Jamaal Green, and Kailey Kornhauser. Ch'aska Huayhuaca, a Colorado State PhD candidate at the time, also generously shared the name "Collaborative Atlas" with us and coordinated with us on selecting variables.

WEBSITE AVAILABILITY

All information contained in the document is available at www.atlasofcollaboration.com.

POINT OF CONTACT

Laurel Singer, NPCC

Tina Nabatchi, PARCC

COVER PHOTO

Henry Be, Unsplash

BACK COVER PHOTO

Nick Fisher, Unsplash

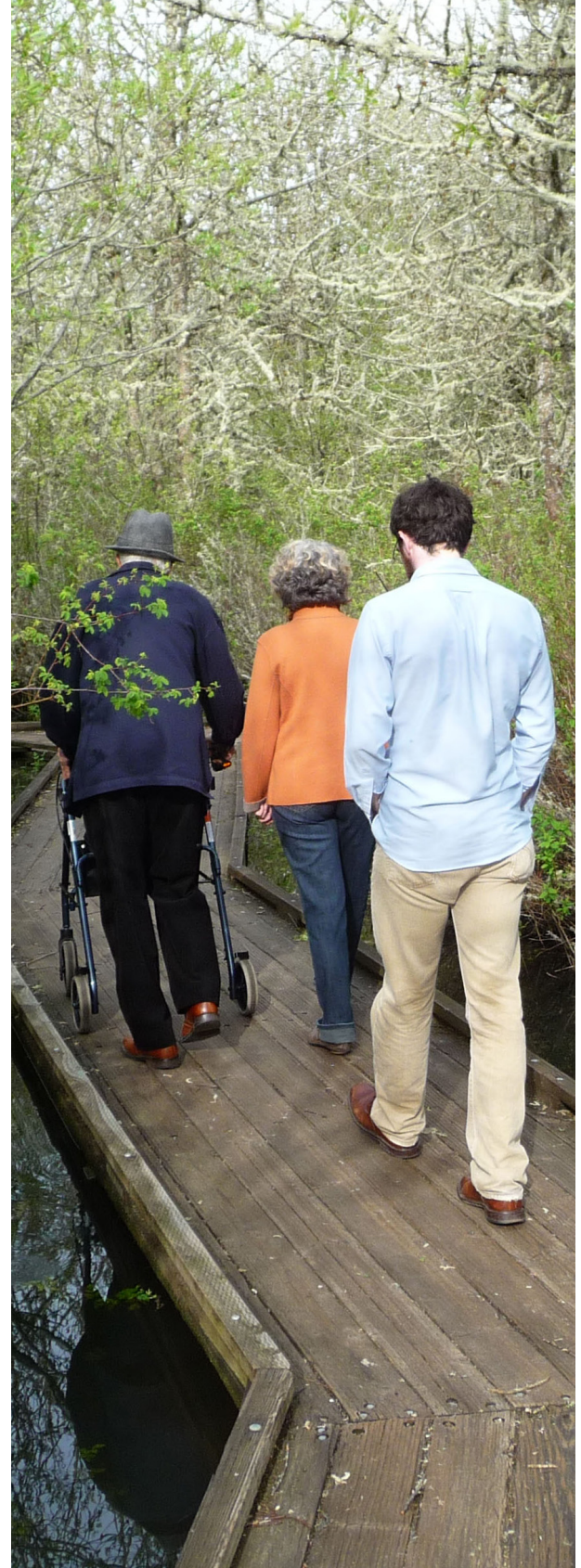
OREGON ATLAS INTRODUCTION

In the last 30 years, the State of Oregon has used collaboration to inform public policy, deliver public services, and coordinate within and across regions. The National Policy Consensus Center (NPCC) at Portland State University and the Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration (PARCC) at Syracuse University have joined forces to document these efforts. The Atlas of Collaboration: Oregon Volume (“Oregon Atlas”) is a beginning, capturing a small slice of collaboration in Oregon. This is Version 1.0. The Atlas of Collaboration project is designed to catalog information on different types of collaboratives in different places.

There is very little comprehensive information about the extent of collaboration in Oregon, who participates, which processes are used, and what value collaboration provides in Oregon. The Atlas project overall is designed to A) simply illuminate where collaboration is occurring, in a way where B) collaborative leaders, state agencies and legislatures, and scholars can better understand how to support successful collaboration.

The Oregon Atlas of Collaboration, Version 1.0, is an inventory of ongoing, state-connected collaboratives that are associated with a collaborative platform in one of five policy areas. (See the box below for definitions of key terms.) Version 1.0 does not describe the entire breadth of collaboration active in Oregon. Specifically, a number of collaboratives have launched with the support of the Oregon Solutions and Oregon Consensus programs at NPCC and from community self-organizing efforts. These collaboratives do critical work and should be included in a Version 2.0 of the Atlas.

To be included in the Oregon Atlas, a collaborative must be state-connected and involve three or more actors who are interdependent but operationally autonomous and who work via a collective, institutionalized decision-making process within a collaborative platform over time. While comprehensive of the state-connected collaboratives, the current version of the Oregon Atlas does



Jackson Frazier Wetlands / Bruce Taylor

not represent the universe of collaboratives and collaborative activities taking place in Oregon. Rather, it presently focuses only on collaboratives that meet these definitional and inclusion criteria.

DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Collaborative governance is the processes and structures of public policy decision making and management that engage people across the boundaries of public agencies, levels of government, and/or the public, private, and civic spheres to carry out a public purpose that could not otherwise be accomplished (Emerson & Nabatchi 2015).

A **state-connected collaborative** is a collaborative governance initiative that a) has a formal connection with state government, and b) is involved in the joint creation of public value over time.

A **collaborative platform** is an organization or program with dedicated competences and resources for facilitating the creation, adaptation and success of multiple or ongoing collaborative projects or networks (Ansell and Gash 2018: 20). It is also a structured framework for promoting collaborative governance (Ansell & Gash 2018) that often is sponsored by a central entity (e.g., a state agency) and supported by a number of other entities (e.g., technical assistance providers, funders, and policy makers). In the context of Oregon, the thirteen collaborative platforms help create a network of state-connected collaboratives that operate in the same policy field and work toward the same (or similar) ends. Through the platform, the collaboratives are able to share information and resources to improve and advance their individual and collective efforts.

References:

Emerson, Kirk & Tina Nabatchi. 2015. Collaborative Governance Regimes. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Ansell, Chris & Allison Gash. 2018. Collaborative Platforms as a Governance Strategy. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 28(1): 16-32.

OVERVIEW OF THE OREGON ATLAS

As of June 2019, the Oregon Atlas includes information on 236 state-connected collaboratives across thirteen collaborative platforms in five policy areas, including human health, natural resources, education, economic development, and public safety (see Table 1). More than 4,500 people and 1,900 organizations participate in these collaboratives. The Oregon Atlas project seeks to illuminate and support the work being done across these platforms through data-driven research oriented toward improving practice and scholarship.

At present, the Oregon Atlas has three datasets:

1. **Web-based data** on all 236 state-connected collaboratives, including physical geography (a spatial map of the places each collaborative works), social geography (who participates), and collaborative characteristics (structural information about the collaboratives). This information was collected via a review of websites and other online information.
2. **Focus group data** about when collaboratives succeed and struggle, and how the State of Oregon helps and hinders its collaboratives. This information was collected via five regional focus groups conducted with leaders and participants in state-connected collaboratives and one state-level focus group conducted with state agency staff and technical service providers associated with the collaborative platforms.

3. **Historical data** about the origins and evolution of the thirteen collaborative platforms in the state.

The team has plans for more data collection activities in the near future.

These data have been used to create one-page summaries of each of the state-connected collaboratives for which we found online data, and each of the five policy areas currently in the Oregon Atlas. The team is working on more in-depth analyses, academic articles, and practitioner-oriented reports, which will be posted soon at www.atlasofcollaboration.com.

In the following sections, we provide a summary of all the data gathered and analyses conducted to date, including analyses of the web-based data and analyses of the focus group data.

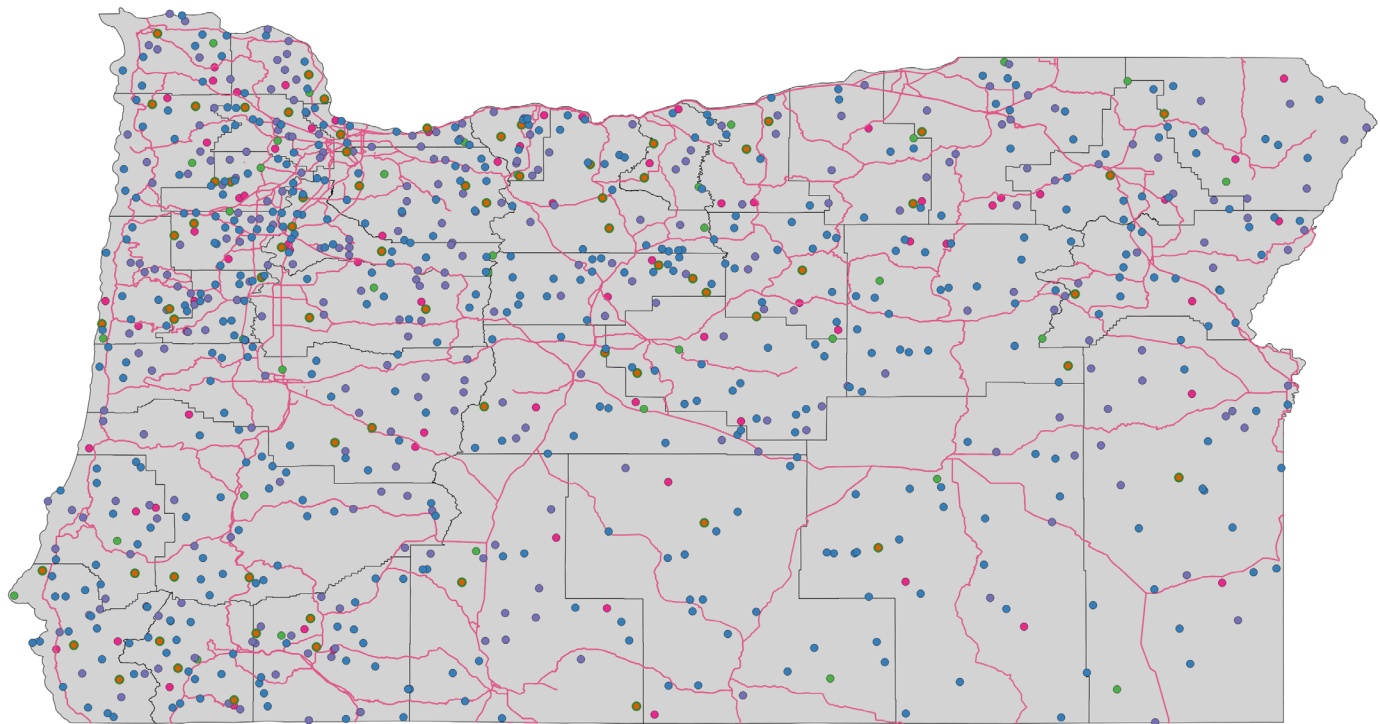
POLICY AREA Collaborative Platform	Number of Collaboratives	Supporting Agency (ies)
Health		
Coordinated Care Organizations	15	OR Health Authority
Regional Health Equity Coalitions	4	OR Health Authority
Natural Resources		
Watershed Councils	66	OR Watershed Enhancement Board
Forest Collaboratives	25	OR Department of Forestry & OR Watershed Enhancement Board
Focused Investment Partnerships	18	OR Watershed Enhancement Board
Resource Advisory Councils	6	US Bureau of Land Management
Place-based Water Planning	4	OR Water Resources Department
Education		
Regional Achievement Collaboratives	13	OR Chief Education Office
Early Learning Hubs	16	OR Department of Education
STEM Hubs	13	OR Chief Education Office
Economic Development		
Regional Solutions Committees	11	OR Governor's Office
Local Workforce Development Boards	9	OR Workforce and Talent Development Board
Public Safety		
Local Public Safety Coordinating Councils	36	OR Criminal Justice Commission
TOTAL	236	

ANALYSES OF WEB-BASED DATA

The analyses of web-based data provide information about the physical geography and social geography of the state-connected collaboratives, as well as the collaborative characteristics.

Physical Geography of the State-Connected Collaboratives

State-connected collaboratives are working all over Oregon. For all five policy areas, the geographic locus of the 236 collaboratives is spread across the state in rural and urban areas (see Figure 1). Moreover, every county in Oregon has at least ten to fifteen state-connected collaboratives, with a couple having more than thirty collaboratives (see Figure 2).

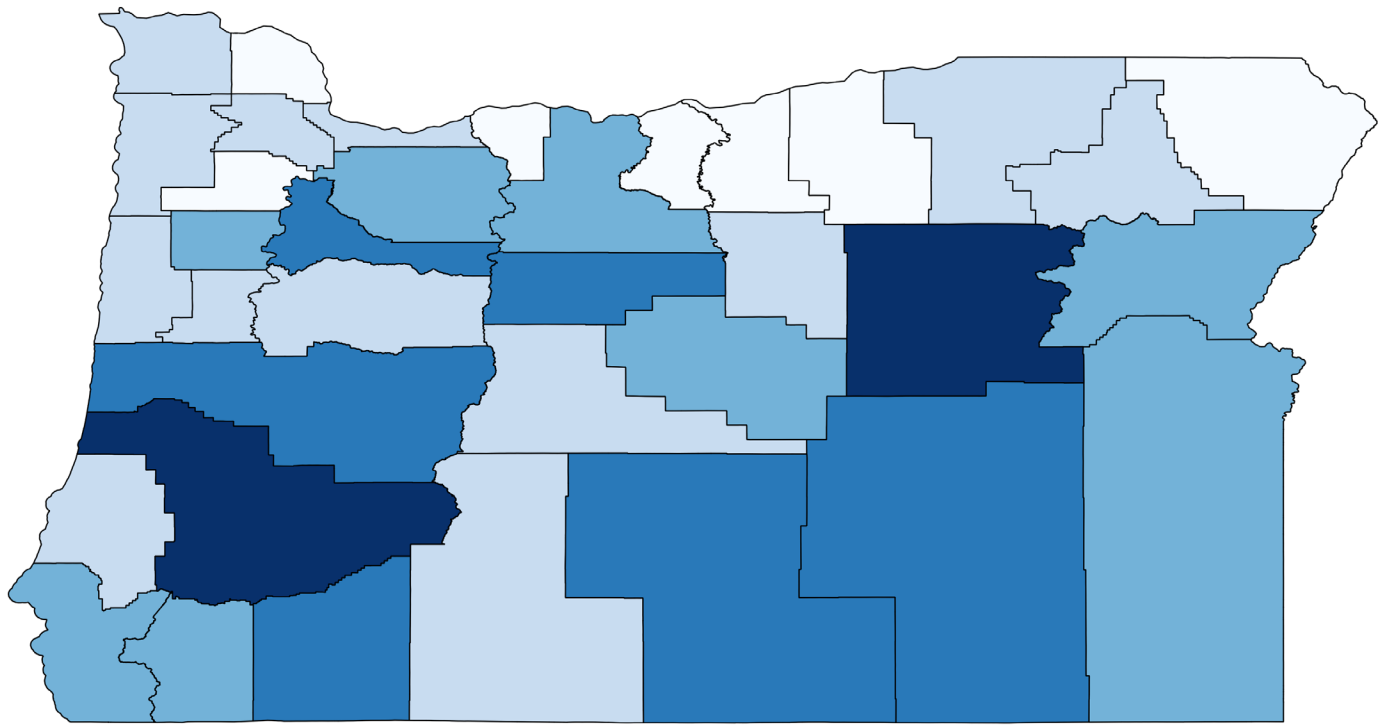


Legend

- Natural Resources
- Education
- Primary Roads
- Health Care
- Public Safety
- Economic Development

December 10, 2018

Figure 1. Geography of Oregon's State-Connected Collaboratives by Policy Area



Legend



December 19, 2018

Figure 2. Geography of Oregon’s Collaboratives by County

Social Geography of Collaboration

Over 4,500 people* participate in the 236 collaboratives in the Oregon Atlas, including 250 people who serve on more than two collaboratives in two policy areas. The 132 natural resources collaboratives engage the most people (1,482), while the thirty-six public safety collaboratives engage the least (543) (see Figure 3). The health policy area has the highest average number of participants per collaborative (about 46), while the natural resources policy area has the lowest (about 14) (see Figure 4).



*The team only had individual participant attribute data for 4,250 of the 4,500 participants (i.e., the website listed a name, but no organizational affiliation or other identifying information).

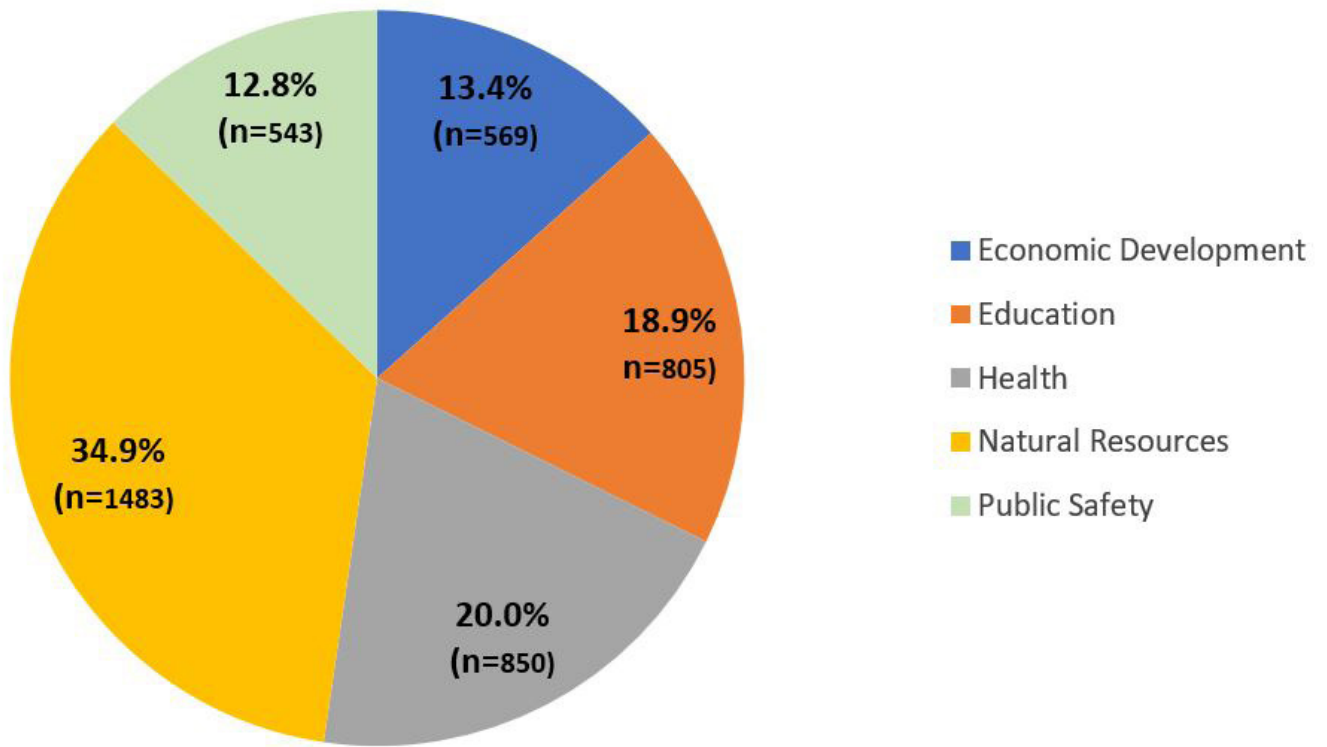


Figure 3. Total Number and Percent of Participants by Policy Area (n=4,250)

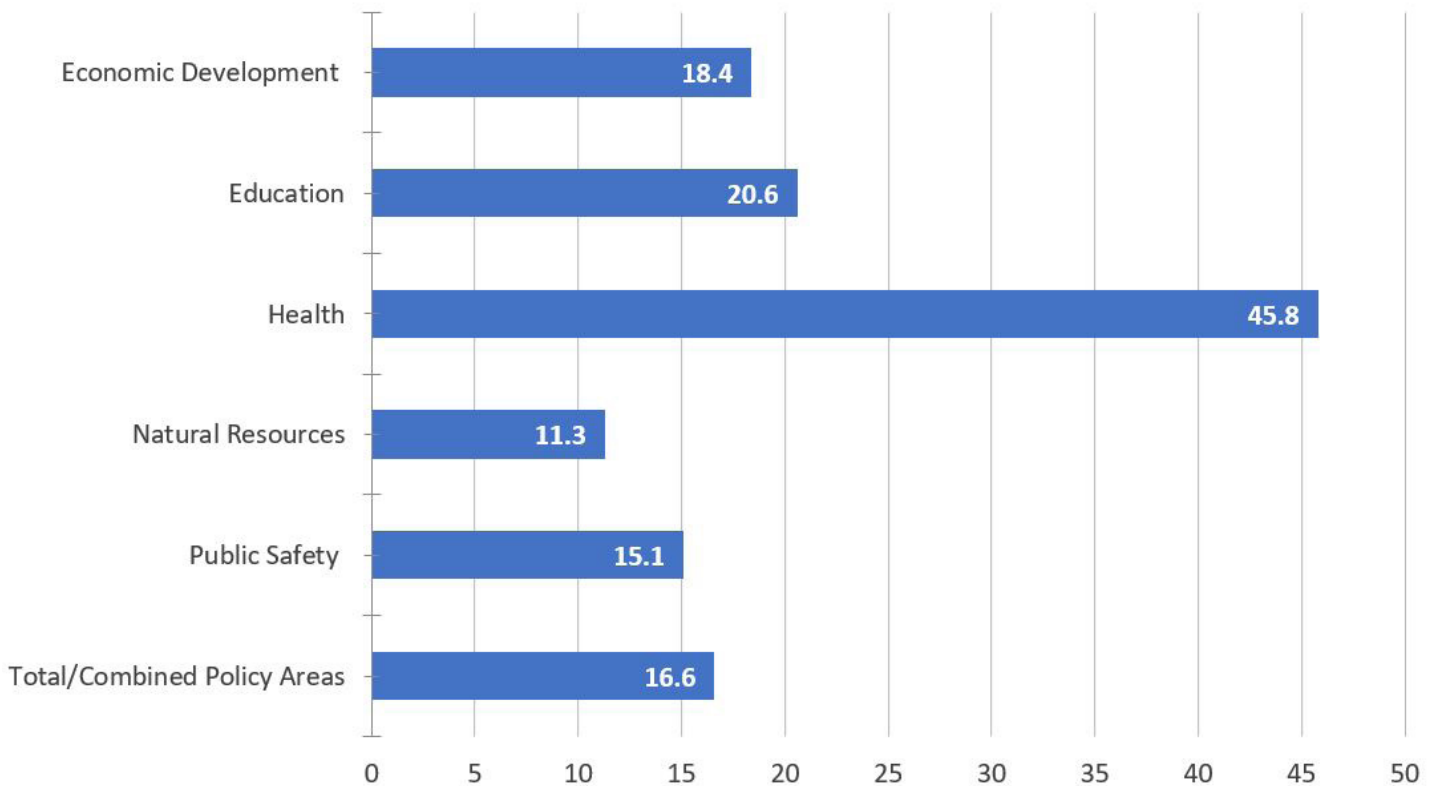


Figure 4. Average Number of Participants per Collaborative in Each Policy Area

Although launched within a particular policy area, the collaboratives are connecting across policy areas. For example, county commissioners inform the place-based water planning collaboratives and the local public safety coordinating councils, and the US Forest Service supports not only the forest collaboratives, but also the economic development collaborative. Similarly Coordinated Care Organizations are linking into Early Learning Hubs.

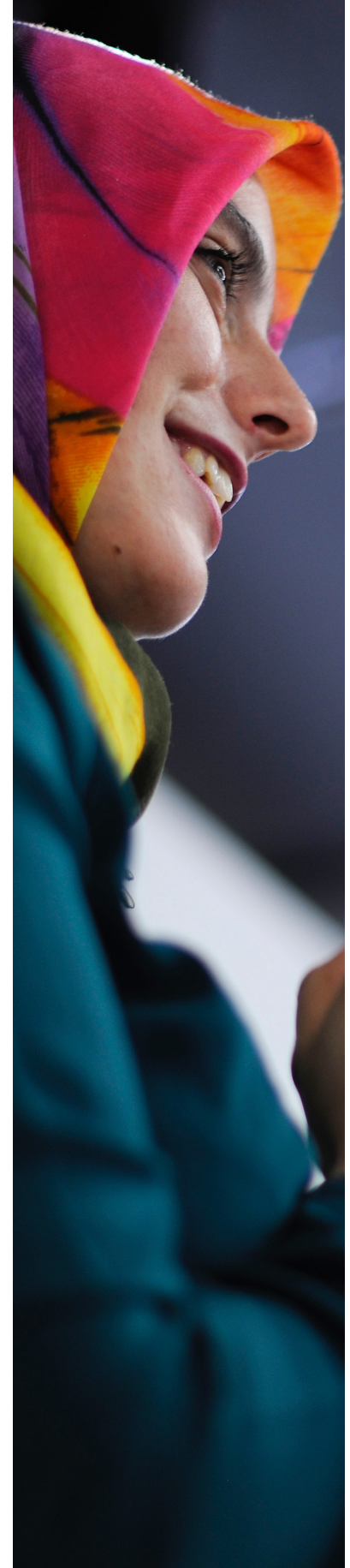
Network analysis of Oregon Atlas data reveal where individuals and organizations are connecting across regions, policy areas, and other boundaries. For example, the Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization coordinates healthcare services and shares participants with a number of Local Public Safety Coordinating Councils in the Columbia Gorge, who in turn share participants with Early Learning Hubs. There are also clusters of connected collaboratives in the natural resources space (e.g., the Forest Collaboratives and Watershed Councils working around the Siuslaw National Forest). Social network analysis can identify the people and organizations that are positioned (socially) to help connect communities and policy areas.

Collaborative Characteristics

Of the 236 state-connected collaboratives in the Oregon Atlas, about 55 percent are self-initiated (i.e., formed through the voluntary association of stakeholders), about 43 percent are externally directed (i.e., formed in response to either a mandate by or strong incentives from the state), and 2 percent are independently convened (i.e., formed by an impartial leader or institution).

Beyond their formative type, the collaboratives also vary by primary initiator or sponsor. Specifically, about 34 percent of the collaboratives were started by public agencies, about 32 percent by nonprofit organizations, about 24 percent by elected bodies, and about 10 percent by private for-profit companies (see Figure 5). The initiator of the collaboratives varies by policy area. For example, 65 percent of health collaboratives were started by private for-profits, but 62 percent of natural resource collaboratives were started by nonprofit organizations.

About half of the collaboratives receive funding from the State of Oregon. Other funding sources include federal agencies or federal programs, nonprofits, individual donations, local governments, private foundations, businesses, soil and water conservation districts, and membership dues. The 236 collaboratives directly support several hundred paid jobs. There are about 530 full-time equivalent, paid staff across all the collaboratives, averaging from as many as 3.6 full-time equivalent positions per collaborative (health-related collaboratives) to as few as 2.4 full-time equivalent positions (natural resources related collaboratives). About 75 percent of the coordinators for collaboratives are employees, 10 percent are contracted, and 14 percent are provided in-kind by partner organizations. Forty percent of the collaboratives are structured as 501c3 nonprofits, 32 percent are local public bodies, and 27 percent are not formally incorporated.



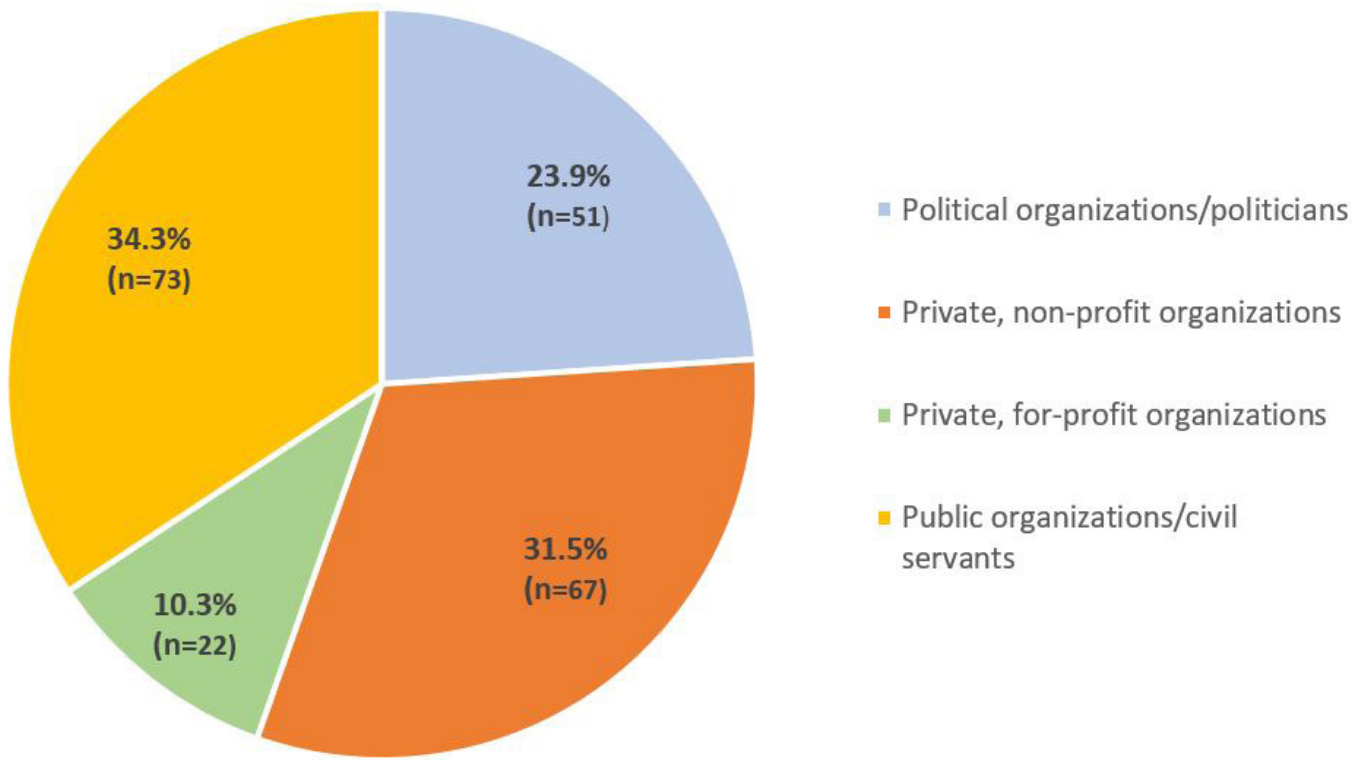


Figure 5. Initiator or Sponsor of the State-connected Collaboratives (n=213)

About 66 percent of the collaboratives formed to coordinate delivery of public services, and about 34 percent formed to resolve some level of policy conflict or provide policy advice. Many collaboratives meet frequently face-to-face, including seventy-three that meet monthly and fifty-three that meet quarterly. Today, most of the collaboratives are in the implementation phase, acting on shared agreements that were developed in the last two to thirty years.

ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUP DATA

In 2019, the Oregon Atlas team held four regional focus group conversations in the cities of Central Point, The Dalles, Baker, and Florence, and a two-part statewide focus group in Salem. The twenty-five regional focus group participants were recruited from the 250 leaders and participants in two or more state-connected collaboratives, and represented a cross section of elected leaders, government staff, non-government organizations, businesses, and community members. The twenty statewide focus group participants were recruited from the state agency staff and technical service providers associated with the thirteen collaborative platforms currently in the Oregon Atlas. The forty-five people in both the regional and statewide focus groups discussed when collaboratives succeed and struggle, what the State of Oregon does that helps and hinders the groups' efforts and collaboration, and how the Oregon Atlas work might support their work going forward.

When Do State-Connected Collaboratives Succeed and Struggle?

The focus group participants had a lot to say about when state-connected collaboratives succeed and struggle (see Table 2). For example, collaboratives succeed when they have clear objectives and have the ability to self-

determine whom they work with and how they run their collaborative process. The nature of the problem also needs to be suitable for collaboration (i.e., it cannot be solved by one or two individuals or organizations). That successful process dynamics of collaboration is difficult to replicate in other communities that might not have the same enabling conditions, leadership support, and systems context.

Collaboratives struggle when there are mandates to collaborate, but no real local clarity on objectives. Sustaining participation and funding for collaboration can also be a challenge, which can be especially problematic with two-year legislative cycles being shorter than the time it takes to solve the complex problems collaboratives are asked to address. For state-connected collaboratives especially, there is a regular negotiation over who holds final authority over which decisions—the state or the collaborative. It can be hard to communicate that it is normal for collaboratives to form, fade, re-form, and carry on in a cycle. It can also be hard to communicate the value of collaboration over time to local and state elected officials.

Table 2. Focus Group Perceptions of When Collaboratives Succeed and Struggle

Collaboratives succeed when...	Collaboratives struggle when...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a diversity of people who self-initiate and come together (dealmakers and deal breakers) who all have some skin in the game and want to be part of a solution. • They effectively navigate cultural differences and diversity. • The participants humbly recognize that the problem cannot be solved by one or two individuals or organizations. • They have some power to choose who participates, how decisions are made, and to adapt as conditions change. • There are clear and shared objectives with commitments to implement joint actions. • There is skilled facilitation. • When collaboratives help attract outside resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals have bought in, but their organizations have not. • There are people at the table who don't want to be there. • Collaboratives are so professional-heavy that it becomes difficult to engage community interests. • They are unable to effectively navigate cultural differences and diversity. • When the resources (e.g., funding and staff) to support collaboration don't match the expectation for solving a complex problem. • The time constraints don't match the reality of what it takes to build trust and undertake joint action. • There are mandates from the state that dictate who must participate and how decisions are made, and the mandates make it difficult to adapt to changing conditions. • Collaboratives do not have authority or control over decisions about the actions needed to implement their solution. • There is little recognition that collaboration is cyclical—it will start up, succeed, fade, then re-start—and that leaders come and go.

What Does the State of Oregon Do that Helps or Hinders Collaborative Efforts?

The forty-five regional and statewide focus group participants had a lot to say about how the State of Oregon helps or hinders collaborative success—ranging from there is nothing the state does that is helpful, to the state is essential for providing information and navigating or accessing funding. Most of the help or hindrance centered on how the state and the state-connected collaboratives managed their own power dynamics and the tensions

stemming from a collaborative’s expectation of self-determination and the state’s desire for some level of control. Many of these tensions might be inherent in any form of governance where collaboratives and the state are operating under different rules, and are being held accountable to different people for different outcomes. How those tensions are managed is part of what will help collaboratives succeed or struggle—individually, and as a system.

Table 3. Management Tensions between the State and Collaboratives in a Collaborative Platform

Management Tension	Description
Forming a Collaborative	
Participation and Process Mandates	Both the state and the collaborative want to ensure a diversity of participants and inclusiveness of process. The collaborative wants the authority to select participants and define how decisions are made, items that are critical to collaborative success and durability.
Agency Staff Participation	As state agency staff participate in collaboratives, they need to read the situation. Collaboratives want to hear “let’s see what we can do” not “we can’t do that.” Collaboratives like when agency staff provide information and help them navigate state bureaucracy. Few focus group participants wanted the state completely absent from collaboration, but collaboratives don’t want agency staff to control the process.
Operating a Collaborative	
Attention Spans and Timelines	The state and local participants have a lot of energy when collaboratives start up, but that energy, particularly on the part of the state, often wanes just as collaboratives are moving into implementation. There needs to be some documentation of the value of the collaboration, and some recognition that building trust and taking joint action around complex problems takes time.
High Expectations and Limited Resources	Collaboratives, by definition, are asked to tackle complex problems where no two organizations have control of a solution. It is a high expectation for a collaborative to improve health and restore forests. Collaboratives are asking for start-up, implementation, and flexible money and other resources so that they can meet the high expectations they have of themselves, as well as the expectations of the legislature and the state.
Who Has Power to Make Decisions	
When the Locus of Decision making Power Moves or is Unclear	Collaboratives dislike when they craft a joint decision and the response from the state is “oops, we can’t do that” or “actually, we are going in a different direction,” without prior meaningful involvement of collaborative leadership. Collaboratives want clear identification of who holds decision-making authority as soon as possible. Collaboratives want their hard work to influence decisions. They recognize that things change, and want to be at whatever table where those final decisions are made.

What Are the Elements Likely to Lead to Successful Collaborative Platforms?

There are currently thirteen collaborative platforms included in the Oregon Atlas—a set of rules, funding, technical assistance, facilitation support, and other structures that support multiple collaboratives doing similar work across the state. The Oregon Atlas is currently identifying a set of management practices for collaboratives that are more likely to support successful collaboration and outcomes. From the forty-five focus group participants, some of these initial elements include the following:

- Make sure the conditions are in place for collaborations to succeed (e.g., a diversity of key people willing to participate, and a problem that lends itself to collaboration).
- Provide access to ongoing resources for collaborative organizing and implementation (e.g., both capacity and implementation grants).
- Provide a clear purpose with a flexible process (e.g., definitions of key concepts, chartered goals, and transparency about interests and who can make which decisions).
- Balance power sharing between collaboratives and the state.
- Create shared supports for learning, generating information, and skill building.
- Be intentional about design of a collaborative platform, ensuring key platform functions such as funding, information, and clear decision authorities are in place and effective leaders are in charge of keeping those functions working smoothly over time.

NEXT STEPS AND FUTURE ANALYSIS

This version 1.0 of the Atlas of Collaboration: Oregon Volume is the first piece of what the team hopes is more information on how the diversity of collaboratives work, and what value they provide. The pages to follow provide an overview of each of the state-connected collaboratives in Oregon. The information is as current as the collaboratives' websites were in winter–spring 2019. We hope to continually update that information, and add additional types of collaboratives. The Oregon Atlas, Version 1.0 does not currently capture the full, broad universe of collaboration in Oregon, but it the team's intent to broaden the depiction of that collaborative universe in future versions.

Version 1.0 of the Oregon Atlas is a first glimpse at the whole of the 236 collaboratives in Oregon's thirteen state-connected collaborative platforms. This overview and other Atlas project information is designed to provide some foundational information to improve management of collaborative platforms, and improve understanding of the diversity and breadth of collaborative governance occurring in Oregon and other places.



Metro Bond Meeting

