

# Executive Seminar Program

## ABOUT

The Executive Seminar Program in Natural Resources Leadership (ESP) is a Portland State University Hatfield School of Government case study-based professional program. ESP helps mid-career natural resource leaders explore and expand leadership competencies and pathways for career-long leadership learning.

Each year, the program visits communities throughout the West to connect with local leaders wrestling with their own natural resource challenges. Through presentation, conversation, guided study, field trips, and peer-to-peer sharing and teamwork, cohort members deepen their sense of leadership, build networks of support, and witness many different styles and approaches to solving complex leadership challenges.

Recurring themes include understanding the role of civic capacity, collaborative governance, empathy, engaging the full spectrum of affected communities, diversity, leadership self-awareness and situational awareness, operating in uncertainty and ambiguity, and coping with risk.

ESP consists of four components: three seminars, or cases, of one week each held on site at various locations and a one-day capstone session held on campus at PSU to conclude the program with a review of leadership principles, techniques for policy resolution, and a summarization of insights gained by participants.

## CONTACTS

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## THE 2025-2026 PROGRAM YEAR

The 2025-2026 program theme is “Leading Through Dramatic Change and Uncertainty - the Importance of Partners and Public Engagement.” We will explore topics in Tribal culture and ecosystem management, flood risk and floodplain management, and water rights, irrigation, and water quantity. Throughout these topics we will explore how people’s interests and values can evolve from being in conflict to collaborative. Each session will include time in the field, including such locales as the Deschutes River Basin, Tribal lands, NE Oregon, and the lower Columbia River floodplains, plus sessions in the classroom.

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Mid-career natural resources professionals from agencies, Tribes, local governments, utilities, and consulting firms.

## DATES AND CASES

The First Foods Management Approach of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (*Pendleton, Oregon*)

Collaborative Governance in a Complex Situation - The Levee-Ready Columbia (*Portland*)

Enough To Go Around - The Deschutes Basin Water Collaborative (*Central Oregon*)

Capstone (*on campus at PSU*)

**Dates:** October 20-24, 2025; February 23-27, 2026; May 18-22, 2026; June 16, 2026

**Learn more and register by 8/31:**  
**[www.pdx.edu/cps/esp](http://www.pdx.edu/cps/esp)**

