



2024-2025

# EXECUTIVE SEMINAR IN NATURAL RESOURCES LEADERSHIP

*Risk Taking & Experimentation in Natural Resources Leadership*

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

Each year, the program visits communities throughout the west to connect with local leaders wrestling with their own natural resource challenges. Through presentation, conversation and guided study—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.

## **Managing fire risk on Oregon's Mt. Hood: New Science, Old Ways, and Engaged Communities**

October 21-25, 2024, Mt. Hood, OR

The Labor Day fires of 2020 devastated communities in the Oregon Cascades, resulting in multiple fatalities and causing hundreds of millions of dollars of damage. Even though Highway 26 over Oregon's Mt. Hood was one of the few Cascade passes that did not experience the same loss of life and property, community leaders were motivated to reexamine how they prepare for and think about fire. When the 2,055-acre Camp Creek Fire on the Mt. Hood National Forest ignited in August 2023, those three years of intense collaboration and communication helped shape the response and the result. On the drier eastern side of the mountain, in more traditionally fire-prone areas, communities have been gathering for more than a decade to pursue fire-resilient ecosystems and adapted communities. This collective work earned the Mt. Hood National Forest recent designation as one of 21 Wildfire Crisis Strategy landscapes nationally. In October, ESP will travel to Mt. Hood to hear from landowners, land managers, tribes, homeowners, the fire services, utilities and communities about how they are experimenting with fuels management approaches and other tools—using established and emerging science about fire history and ecology—to be as ready as possible for the next big one.

## **Restructuring the Power of Decision Making: Implementing Metro's Parks and Nature Bond**

February 24-28, 2025, Portland, Oregon

In 2019, Portland metropolitan area voters approved a \$475 million parks and nature bond measure to protect clean water, restore habitat and connect people to nature while centering racial equity and climate resilience. A portion of the funding is targeted at protecting and restoring land, and a significant portion will be passed through to local jurisdictions. Metro—the area's regional government—is tasked with implementation, working closely with tribes, neighborhoods, underserved communities and governments throughout the three-county area. Our focus for this week will be to explore what it means to center racial equity and climate resilience when prioritizing and implementing conservation work in the region. We'll hear from policy leaders who shaped the bond measure, regional and local officials, community groups and neighborhood leaders about how they are restructuring the power of decision making to utilize this important funding source, their hoped-for outcomes and the challenges and opportunities of implementation.

## **Mexican Wolf Recovery: Innovation, Partnership and Acceptance in the Southwest**

May 19-23, 2025, Rural Eastern Arizona

By 1973, the once wide-ranging Mexican wolf had become functionally extinct in the Southwest with less than 10 individuals believed remaining in remote parts of Arizona, New Mexico and south of the Mexican border. In 1976 the Mexican wolf was listed as endangered and a binational captive breeding program began. By 1998, the first captive wolves were released into their former home range. Today, more than 60 packs have been documented including 26 breeding pairs. This recovery has been marked by uncertainty and turbulence as well as by partnership, and experimentation in a context of significant social and environmental challenges. In late May, we'll travel to rural eastern Arizona and western New Mexico to hear from policy leaders, biologists, land managers, affected communities and the interagency field team responsible for the recovery to hear their insights about leadership, partnership, tolerance and innovation across state and international boundaries.



Portland State  
Center for Public Service





2023-2024 ESP Cohort in Montana's Mission Valley

### Capstone Session

PSU Campus, June 17, 2025

The capstone session integrates the leadership lessons learned over the course of the program with the practical challenges participants face in their agencies. Participants come prepared to discuss issues from their own work experience and apply principles from the year's cases to these issues. This summative learning experience also allows the cohort to connect and network, and transition into their role as ESP alums.

### Registration & Cost

The 2024-2025 program fee is \$10,750, or \$4,300 per individual case. Participants may register for the full program or any one of the individual cases. All participants are encouraged to join the final Capstone session in June at no additional cost

### More About ESP

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

A total of four seminars are held during the program year. Three seminars of approximately one week each are held on site to explore each case. A fourth one-day session is held on the Portland State campus to conclude the program with a review of leadership principles, techniques for policy resolution, and a summarization of insights gained by the participants.

**REGISTER BY AUGUST 30TH:**

**[WWW.PDX.EDU/CPS/ESP](http://WWW.PDX.EDU/CPS/ESP)**

### Executive Seminar Program Team



#### DOUG DECKER | PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Doug served as Oregon State Forester from 2011 to October 2016. During his 29-year career with the Oregon Department of Forestry, he led development of the Tillamook Forest Center, and acquisition of the 70,000-acre Gilchrist State Forest in Central Oregon. Doug's three decades of experience in all aspects of natural resource policy, and his credentials as a collaborative leader of a complex state agency, as well as being an alum of the Executive Seminar Program himself, allow him to bring insight, practical experience and a passion for communication and learning to program participants.

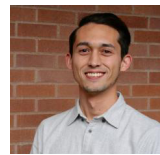
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#### PAUL MANSON | ACADEMIC LEAD

Paul is a Research Professor with the PSU Center for Public Service. For the past decade he has combined research interests in environmental policy with educational and pedagogical skills to provide training for natural resource professionals across the US. Paul's research focuses on public opinion and governance challenges around critical issues facing the West, including wildfire, disaster resilience, and coastal and marine management. Paul is committed to a co-production model of training - a model that recognizes the power of academic research and practitioner experience to create opportunities for innovation. Paul holds a PhD in public policy and affairs and a Master of Public Administration from PSU.

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#### JOSH METZLER | PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Josh is a Programs Administrator at PSU Center for Public Service. He supports various programs such as the US Army Corps of Engineers Leadership Development Program, Executive Seminar Program, and NOAA Fisheries Emerging Leaders Development Program. He earned his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering at PSU in 2013.

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