

**Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. *Oregon's 19 Statewide Planning Goals and Guidelines* . Salem: Oregon DLCD, 1996. (Reviewed by Kate Koehler)**

Oregon's Department of Land Conservation and Development's *19 Statewide Planning Goals and Guidelines* , the 1996 edition, include 19 goals related to how Oregon should govern, protect, and use its land. These goals, enacted on the state level as mandatory administrative rules, are the responsibility of local governments to follow. The goals are accompanied by guidelines, which are suggestions for the best way to implement the goals.

The government document explaining the goals includes an introduction, summary of the goals, and detailed statement of each goal. It explains that the state is responsible for setting planning standards and approving local governments' land use plans, but that it is local governments who actually design and carryout the land-use policies.

The goals cover the importance of citizen involvement and the process for implementing plans. They include topics such as recreational, economical, urban, and agriculture needs. In addition, the document examine forest and coastal land, air and water quality, natural resources, open spaces, historical sites, housing, and energy conservation when defining its goals.

This document is an excellent resource for understanding Oregon's land use policy. However, I was surprised by the lack of environmental concern in the policies. For example, in the introduction the goals state that “unlike other states, Oregon does not require environmental impact statements.” In the summary of the goals, it states that goal 4 involves the “preservation of forest land for forest uses,” which I presumed meant conservation uses. However, when reading the goal in its entirety, I discovered that instead it meant “to preserve forest lands to maintain the forest land base and to protect the state's forest economy by making possible economically efficient forest practices that insure the continuous growing and harvesting of forest tree species as the leading use on forest land....”

In addition to focusing on economical uses for the forest, the goals do not appear to be concerned with environmental issues in other areas. Goal 15, concerning the Willamette River Greenway, encourages the protection of the vegetative fringes of the river, but allows for “the partial harvest of timber...beyond the vegetative fringes.” Even if land is protected right alongside the river, the economically oriented planning further back from the river offsets this protection.

Goal 5 of this document, covering open spaces, scenic and historical areas, and natural resources, further diminishes the importance of environmental concerns. It “establishes a process for each resource [wildlife habitats and wetlands] to be inventoried and evaluated.” However, it then gives the local government three ways to deal with this information. The government can either “preserve the resource, allow proposed uses that conflict with it, or strike some sort of balance...” It seems that allowing such a variety of choices invalidates any reason to inventory resources in the first place.

Overall, I found this document very interesting. It is easy to read, and gives the reader a basic understanding of Oregon's land use policy.

<http://www.lcd.state.or.us/goalhtml/goals.html>

[return to info sources page](#)

[return to home page](#)