

*Driving Positive Change for*

**OREGON**



2024 ANNUAL REPORT





## A proud legacy. A promising future.

Dear Mr. Chambers,

As I round out my first year as President of OBRC, I often find myself reflecting on the significance of your role and commitment to passage of Oregon's Bottle Bill 54 years ago.

While I did not have the opportunity to meet you, your devotion to protecting Oregon's rivers, trails, beaches and roadsides from beverage container litter continues to inspire me and the work of the Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative. I wonder if you could have imagined the multi-generational impacts your efforts would have on all Oregonians.

You helped forge unlikely alliances between environmental and industry groups, Republicans and Democrats, and you laid the groundwork for the unique public-private partnership that Oregon's industry stewardship model for beverage container redemptions represents today. This model delivers nation-leading results, year after year. A proud legacy indeed.

Our Bottle Bill achieved a 90.4% redemption rate this year, with more than 2 billion beverage containers processed back into bottles and cans, many of which were recycled right here in Oregon, and the others domestically in the U.S. We, along with our wonderful customers, supported more than 7,000 nonprofits this year from every part of Oregon, and hundreds of thousands of Oregonians tapped the magic of the Bottle Bill to save for college or disability support and to save on groceries.

We dedicate our 2024 Annual Report in your honor and to our public and private partners that collectively make Oregon's Bottle Bill the top performing deposit return system in the country.

Thanks to strong relationships with our partners and the high level of participation in the system, we're **driving positive change for Oregon**, one container at a time.

Cheers to our great state!

— Jason Jordan, President, OBRC



Mr. Richard Chambers  
(aka Bottle Bill Trailblazer)  
c/o Oregon Historical Society  
1200 SW Park Ave.  
Portland, OR 97205

## 2024 by the Numbers

For the third straight year, Oregonians redeemed and recycled over 2 billion containers through Oregon's Bottle Bill, and for the second time since 2019, OBRC's preliminary redemption rate crested 90%. That's a direct result of convenient access provided through a statewide network of return options. Individuals and nonprofits received over \$206 million in refunds in 2024, and Oregonians everywhere enjoyed the outstanding environmental and recycling outcomes the system helps deliver.

**509** employees

**413** co-op participants

**152.8 million** pounds of materials processed

**96,771** new BottleDrop account sign-ups

**27** full-service BottleDrop Redemption Centers

**100** bag drop locations

**53,957** metric tons of CO2 equivalent emissions reduced – comparable to taking 11,456 passenger cars off the road\*

**90.4%** redemption rate\*\*

\*By recycling containers through OBRC vs. sending beverage containers to landfills, as calculated by US EPA Waste Reduction Model

\*\*Preliminary data. OBRC submits final data to OLCC in June of each year.

**2.07 billion**  
Containers  
Returned

**59%**  
METAL

**34%**  
PLASTIC

**7%**  
GLASS

**1.14 million**  
Total BottleDrop  
Account Holders

A 9.3% increase from 2023

**12.28 million**  
Green and Blue Bags  
processed





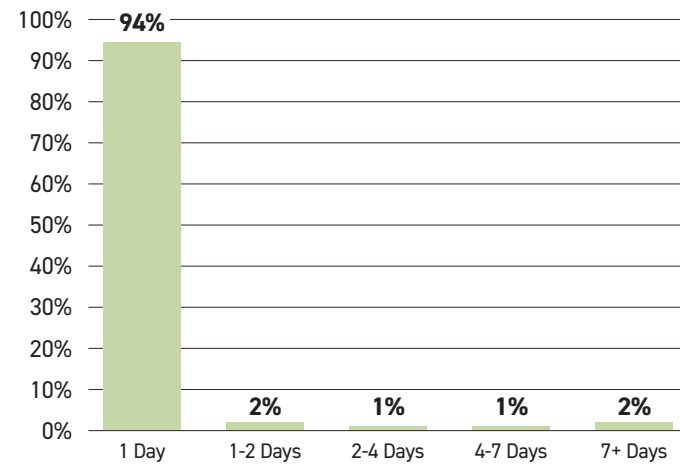


## Revving the Engine on Network Access and Efficiency Gains

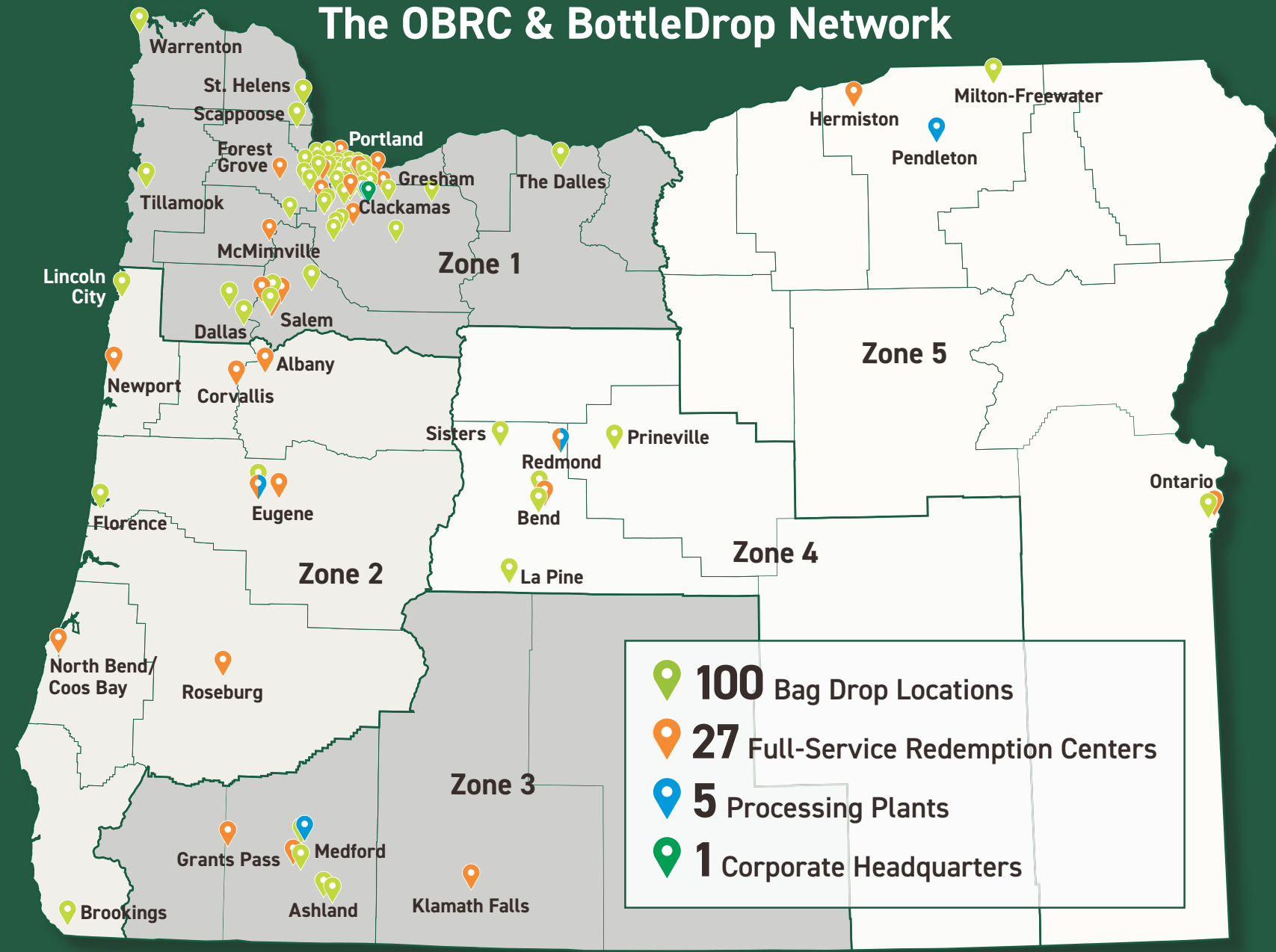
OBRC expanded access to the Green and Blue Bag program in partnership with retailers, including the first bag drop site at a WinCo Foods store, which is located on Southeast Powell in Portland and a Dealer Redemption Center at the Target Tanasbourne in Hillsboro.

In 2024, we also expanded access to our high-efficiency container processing technology, including **Smart Count AI** (back of house at BottleDrop Redemption Centers and in processing plants – processing bags four times faster than alternative tech) in Clackamas, Redmond and Oregon City, and our **Stream Count AI** (front of house at Redemption Centers – counting 350 containers in two minutes vs. 20 minutes with reverse vending machines) in Eugene and Oregon City.

2024 Redemption Center On-Site Bag Drop to Credit Time



## The OBRC & BottleDrop Network





## Giving Back to Oregon Communities

From its inception, Oregon's Bottle Bill has helped protect Oregon's ocean, beaches, roadsides and special places. Over the years, Oregonians have used container refunds to support their communities through local nonprofits and organizations. OBRC is proud to partner with groups across the state to provide additional support through OBRC's Containers for Change program, the OBRC Emergency Fund and the BottleDrop Fund at the Oregon Community Foundation.

**60** nonprofits received funding through Containers for Change.

**12** nonprofits received grants from the BottleDrop Fund.

**12** nonprofits were awarded grants through the BottleDrop Fund at the Oregon Community Foundation.

**Cape Perpetua Collaborative**, supporting their hiring of a first full-time director, a pivotal step in enhancing their organizational capacity and effectiveness.

**Central Oregon Environmental Center**, expanding their Youth Education Program in rural and Spanish-speaking communities in the Central Oregon region.

**Columbia Riverkeeper**, supporting their bilingual education program in Hood River and Wasco Counties, which helps educate and engage local Latino residents on environmental issues throughout the Columbia River Gorge.

**Cracked Pots**, supporting their ReClaim It modernization project to better serve their community in embracing creative reuse by salvaging and reimagining discarded materials, while promoting sustainability and waste reduction.

The BottleDrop Fund awards larger grants to support nonprofits operating in the spirit of Oregon's iconic Bottle Bill through litter and waste reduction, environmental conservation and education, recycling, public-private partnership innovations, and skill-building and job training for low-income residents of Oregon.

**The Crest at Willow-Witt Ranch**, supporting their efforts to cultivate the integral connection between people and nature by engaging their community in hands-on, intimate experiences with nature via outdoor education.

**Eastern Oregon University**, supporting their Teach Rural Oregon project, a partnership that aims to recruit diverse student teachers to complete their student teaching in rural and isolated rural school districts across Oregon.

**Food Roots**, supporting their education programs in schools throughout Tillamook County.

**Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition**, supporting the expansion of their Art and Ecology Workshop project, which helps students explore coastal ecology through creative, hands-on learning along Oregon's North Coast.

**Pollinator Project Rogue Valley**, supporting their outreach, educational programs and professional development to help educate their community about native pollinator species and the diverse native plant communities essential for their survival.

**Public Land Stewards**, supporting their cleanup events and outreach program to help keep public lands accessible and protected for all users.

**South Santiam Watershed Council**, supporting their environmental education programs in rural and semi-rural schools in eastern Linn County.

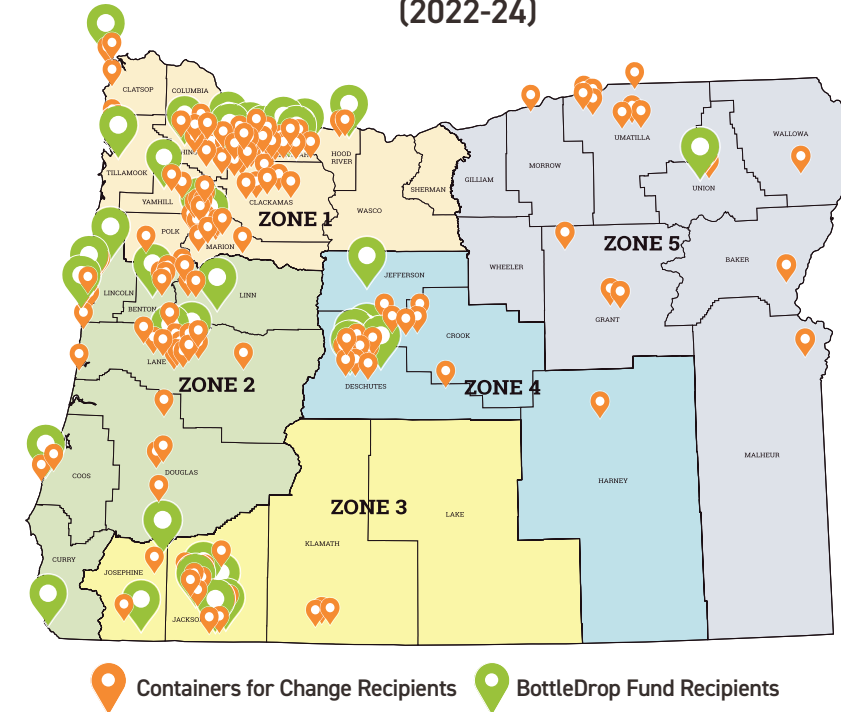
**Yakona Nature Preserve and Learning Center**, supporting their Creating Connections environmental education program, which provides K-12 and post-secondary students with the opportunity to learn in nature through STEAM-based educational activities.



"Being awarded this funding is such an immense boost to the work that we do. It has given us the extra support needed to hire and fund our director position, which will allow us to better facilitate everyday operations and expand our partnerships and funding resources going forward."

– Talaina King of Cape Perpetua Collaborative, BottleDrop Fund recipient

## Containers for Change & BottleDrop Fund Recipients (2022-24)



### ● Cracked Pots (Portland)

*BottleDrop Fund Recipient*

"As a resourceful organization that prioritizes affordability and accessibility to materials for all, we were thrilled to receive this grant to modernize our technology and systems. We look forward to deepening our impact and advancing our commitment to sustainability."

– Jonath Ochs, Communications Coordinator

### ● Lane Senior Support Coalition (Eugene)

*Containers for Change Recipient*

"These funds provided emergency support to low-income seniors in Lane County. This community support is why we can continue to achieve our mission."

– Lorelei Cesario, President

### ● Forest Grove Senior & Community Center (Forest Grove)

*Containers for Change Recipient*

"Oregonians are very fortunate to have a well-run bottle return system, which not only benefits our environment but turns around and supports so many not-for-profit organizations such as ours."

– Sophia Stamatis, Executive Director

### ● The Breadbasket (Milton-Freewater)

*Containers for Change Recipient*

"This donation helped us do what we do best, care for our community."

– Gretchen Brown, Treasurer

### ● South Santiam Watershed Council (Sweet Home)

*BottleDrop Fund Recipient*

"As a small, rural community-serving organization, we are deeply appreciative of this support, which allows us to provide no-cost experiential outdoor education opportunities to K-12 students in eastern Linn County."

– Shannon Richardson, Executive Director

### ● Roseburg Senior Center (Roseburg)

*Containers for Change Recipient*

"BottleDrop provides an easy way for members and the public to donate to our nonprofit."

– Nancy Forrest, Secretary & Office Manager

### ● The Crest at Willow-Witt Ranch (Ashland)

*Containers for Change and BottleDrop Fund recipient*

"With support from Containers for Change, we are able to continue providing equitable access to environmental education opportunities in the beautiful wilderness of the Cascades-Siskiyou National Monument."

– Sarah Kreisman, Executive Director

### ● Harney County Senior & Community Services Center (Burns)

*Containers for Change Recipient*

"This generous donation by BottleDrop is appreciated and will help support our senior meal programs. As food prices continue to rise, we struggle to have the resources to meet the current demand for services, and donations like this are crucial to keeping our programs going."

– Sue Weathers, Volunteer Coordinator





## Supporting Oregon Nonprofits, One Dime at a Time

OBRC is proud to provide two avenues for Oregon nonprofits to fundraise by recycling bottles and cans included in Oregon's Bottle Bill. With nearly 7,000 community nonprofits participating across the state, OBRC helps support the efforts and causes that matter most to Oregonians.

**\$5.55m**  
raised for  
nonprofits in 2024

**612,966**  
Blue Bags processed  
*A 6% increase from 2023*

**6,938** participating  
nonprofits across Oregon\*

\*OBRC launched a new accounting system at the beginning of 2024, and the total number of nonprofits was adjusted upward in Q1 due to a change in methodology for tabulating registered nonprofits. 899 new groups signed up to raise funds through BottleDrop Give in 2024.



**\$4,446,937**  
raised through Blue Bags

**\$1,104,440**  
raised through high-  
volume fundraisers

## Turbocharging Positive Change with Give Matching Campaigns

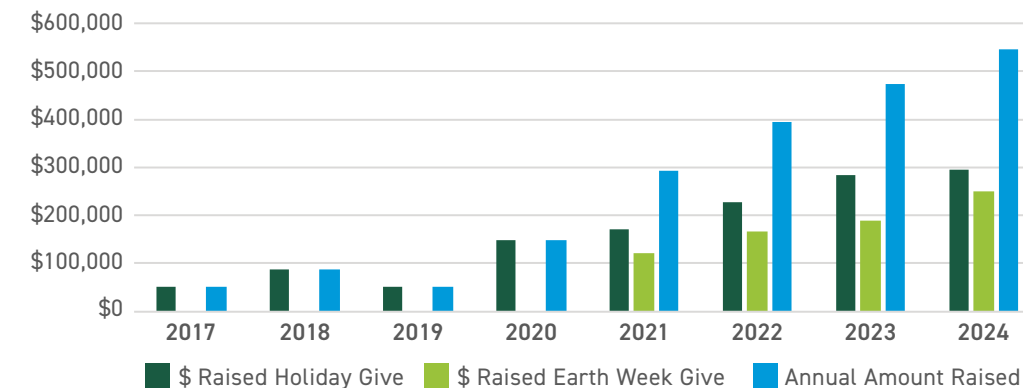
The Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative proudly supports thousands of local nonprofits who fundraise year-round with BottleDrop Give. OBRC hosts two annual promotional campaigns, Earth Week Give and Holiday Give, where fundraisers can engage their supporters and make donations go further. During these special events, participating nonprofits earn a 20% match on all funds raised through BottleDrop and have a chance to win prizes in a social media contest.

Holiday Give has been helping nonprofits earn extra funds around the holiday season since 2017. The 8th annual Holiday Give event was held from November 15 – December 2, 2024, and a record-breaking 1,152 nonprofits participated. In total, they raised nearly \$300,000, including match funds and prizes.

In 2021, Earth Week Give was launched to celebrate Earth Day while providing an extra boost for participating nonprofits during the spring. The 4th annual Earth Week Give promotion was held from April 22 – May 4, 2024. A total of 947 nonprofits participated and raised over \$250,000 with OBRC's help.

Since their inception, these promotional campaigns have helped nonprofits raise more than \$2 million, with more than half a million dollars being raised during Earth Week Give and Holiday Give in 2024 alone. OBRC looks forward to hosting these events again in the future.

Funds Raised During Give Campaigns







## Celebrating Five Years of College Savings

"Our partnership with BottleDrop has truly had a positive impact on people's lives. Oregon families have saved more than \$1.7 million for education and career training through this innovative program, providing real hope and opportunity. And BottleDrop's recycling efforts contribute to a cleaner, healthier Oregon for everyone. This five-year milestone demonstrates the power of collaboration and its positive impact across the state."

– Elizabeth Steiner  
Oregon State Treasurer

## BottleDrop Benefits: Steering Refunds to Achieve Goals

Container redemption is about more than just the refund value. Oregon's Bottle Bill boosts community organizations across the state, helps keep Oregon beautiful by reducing litter and waste, reaches new heights through creative partnerships and continues to improve through relentless innovation.

### SAVING FOR THE FUTURE



In 2024, BottleDrop account holders transferred **\$518,166 to 5,173** Oregon College and ABLE Savings Plan accounts. Oregon is the only place in the world where people can directly save for education through container redemption.

### INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY



A growing number of account holders continued to download and use the BottleDrop mobile app, making accessing Green Bag accounts easier on the go. Since the mobile app launched in 2021, it has been downloaded nearly **567,000** times.

### SAVINGS TODAY



**226,699** BottleDrop account holders took advantage of BottleDrop Plus in 2024, making their redemption dollars stretch farther by getting an extra 20% added to their refunds to shop with in-store credit at participating retailers. That's a **4% increase** from 2023.



BottleDrop account holders made **2,719** online donations, totaling **\$136,278**, directly from their Green Bag accounts to support BottleDrop Give nonprofits in 2024.

## An Annual Celebration of Oregon's Bottle Bill

In the first week of July of 2024, OBRC once again celebrated the anniversary of Oregon's Bottle Bill (53!) by engaging Oregonians in a statewide hunt for six hidden commemorative bottles. Each lucky finder got to direct a \$1,000 donation to the BottleDrop Give nonprofit of their choice.



**Heather Self of Tualatin**  
Found in Forest Grove's Fernhill Wetlands

SELECTED NONPROFIT:  
Edwards Center



**Beth Simpson-Flem and family of Hood River**  
Found on The Dalles' Riverfront Trail

SELECTED NONPROFIT:  
The Next Door



**Jason Stride of Portland**

Found in La Grande's Riverside Park

SELECTED NONPROFIT:  
Portland Rose Festival Foundation



**Amber Kaney and family of Oregon City**

Found in Corvallis' Bruce Starker Arts Park

SELECTED NONPROFIT:  
Portland Rose Festival Foundation



**Caitlin Fernandez and family of Medford**

Found in Ashland's Lithia Park

SELECTED NONPROFIT:  
Shriners Children's Portland



**A.D. of Bend**

Found in Prineville's Crooked River Park

SELECTED NONPROFIT:  
Humane Society of Central Oregon

The Hidden Bottle Hunt would not be possible without our incredible volunteer clue writers who spent countless hours scouting hiding locations, researching Oregon history and writing these special clues: Neal Dietz and Sue Peterson • John Dutt • Joe Gantt • Glorie Totten Gary • Kelly Luzania • Devon Morales







## OBRC Helps “Cans for Kids” Recover After Theft

The Illinois Valley Community Development Organization (affectionately known as IVCaDo) has been supporting their community since 1995. Founded by dedicated volunteers in rural Josephine County, they work to improve the quality of life for residents, businesses and organizations in Cave Junction, Kerby, Selma, O'Brien, Takilma and surrounding communities.

In 2018, IVCaDo launched a program called Cans for Kids that does exactly what its name implies – they collect donated redeemable cans and bottles to support youth-focused organizations. Since the program's inception, they have distributed nearly \$150,000 to programs in their community. The Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative helps facilitate this community donation program by picking up the containers from their drop off location and paying the refund value to IVCaDo.

In early 2024, the Cans for Kids trailer was vandalized and burglarized on multiple occasions. The perpetrators stole a substantial amount of aluminum cans and plastic bottles and damaged the collection container itself.

IVCaDo reached out to OBRC to alert them of the incidents, which inspired OBRC to pay it forward. OBRC's Containers for Change program helps support community organizations that are operating in the spirit of Oregon's Bottle Bill, like the Cans for Kids program. OBRC donated \$2,000 to help

cover the value of the stolen containers and worked with them to help deter the vandals.

“When we learned that somebody had recently stolen the containers they use to provide those programs, we wanted to be part of the solution,” said Devon Morales, Vice President of External Affairs of OBRC. “Oregon's Bottle Bill does a great job of preventing litter and dramatically increasing recycling rates, but its strength is most pronounced when community groups harness the power of containers to provide critical services in their communities. We're proud to be a partner in that.”

“Cans for Kids has long been a beloved source of support for the youth in the Illinois Valley, promoting environmental sustainability through recycling and distributing the proceeds to local youth-focused initiatives,” said Anna Wiley, Communications and Outreach Manager at IVCaDo. “The recent theft could have threatened the program's ability to fulfill its mission, but the support of our community and partners like OBRC will help Cans for Kids recover its losses and continue its valuable work.”



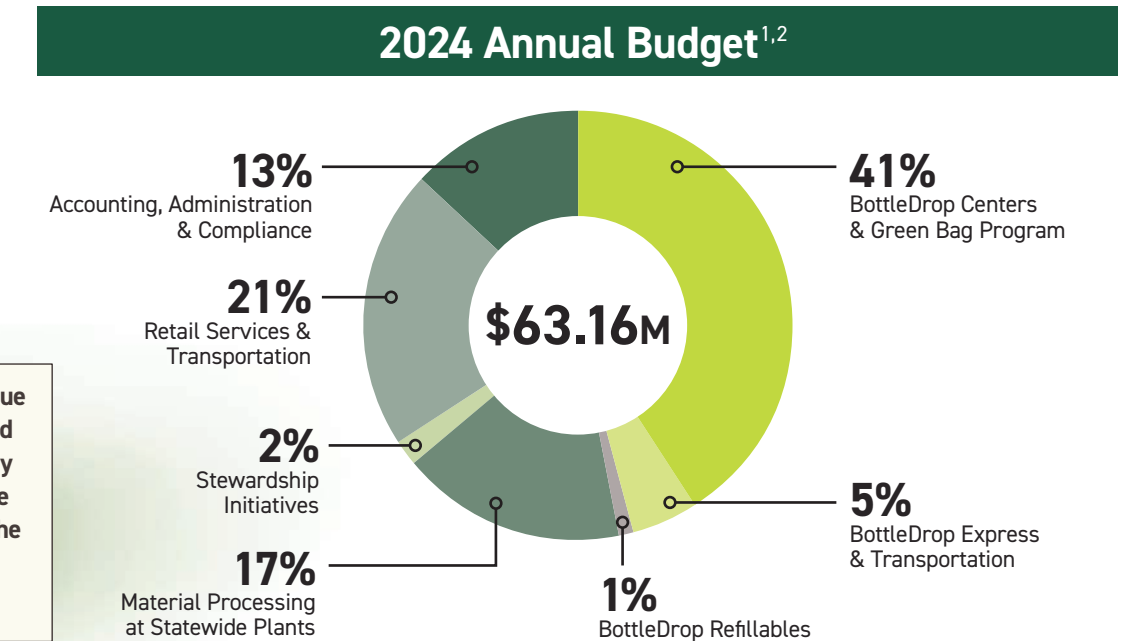
Photos courtesy of IVCaDo



\*Additional funds in the operating budget come from fees paid by OBRC members, retailers and other system revenues.

## Big Returns. Zero Tax Dollars.

Oregonians who redeem their containers responsibly get to enjoy the system's strong environmental and recycling outcomes at almost no cost – and at no taxpayer expense. That's because Oregon's Bottle Bill is an advanced form of Extended Producer Responsibility, where OBRC serves as the operational steward on behalf of the beverage industry and invests the value of unredeemed refunds directly into its operations and the improvement and expansion of the network. Additionally, beverage distributors make significant financial contributions to cover the remaining costs of the program.



<sup>1</sup>Pie chart percentages and data reviewed by the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission (OLCC).

<sup>2</sup>Budget and redemption data for 2024 in this report is preliminary. OBRC is committed to accurate and transparent accounting and files an official report with the OLCC as required by Oregon's Bottle Bill in June of each calendar year. OBRC does not include the value of scrap material sold in its operating budget, nor does it retain any revenue generated by scrap material sold.





## Thank You to Our Partners in the Success of Oregon's Bottle Bill

The success of Oregon's Bottle Bill has long been a source of pride for Oregon. As the first in the nation, the policy and system have been continuously iterated upon to meet the needs of the day. Those iterations came about through the experience and instinct of beverage distributors working with partners to devise and implement convenient and efficient methods for Oregonians to get their deposits back and to maximize the benefit of the program for the state that we all love.

From the very beginning, retailers large and small have played a fundamental role in providing convenient access for consumers to redeem their containers in every community in Oregon.

Large format stores such as grocery stores are critical to the success of the Oregon model. Representatives from the **Northwest Grocery Retailer Association** collaborated with OBRC to come up with the vision for the convenient options that now make up the BottleDrop network. Nearly 1,000 active large format retailers across Oregon provide access for redemptions through a mix of options, and OBRC appreciates the longstanding partnership and the ability to work together to come up with solutions that serve all Oregonians. In addition, Oregon's nearly 2,000 active small format stores provide access to redeem containers across the state in both rural and urban areas. OBRC is grateful for these important partners and the role they play in allowing Oregonians to participate in their Bottle Bill.



Accountability is also essential and as the program regulator, the **Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission** is critical to ensuring parties are following through on their responsibilities under the Bottle Bill so consumers can access their redemptions when and where they need them. OLCC is an important partner in helping Oregonians navigate their Bottle Bill, including understanding their rights and guidance for how to use the system.

Nonprofit partners like **SOLVE** magnify the impact of Oregon's Bottle Bill and demonstrate that a redeemed container can be worth so much more to Oregon than 10 cents.

The Oregon Bottle Bill's nation-leading results would not be possible without our partners and the important roles they play in the success of this system.



## BottleDrop Community Raised \$40,000 to Support Wildfire Relief in Oregon



In 2024, Oregon experienced a record-breaking wildfire season, with nearly 2 million acres burned across the state. The Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative helped facilitate container redemptions for the boots-on-the-ground wildland firefighting camps to help them recycle their beverage containers. Inspired by their efforts, combined with the devastation caused by these wildfires, OBRC activated its Emergency Fund to aid relief efforts and invited Oregonians to support the cause through beverage container donations.

"At OBRC, we are both in awe of the tireless resolution of the brave first responders who are risking their lives to protect their fellow Oregonians and deeply saddened by the devastation to our beautiful state caused by the all-too-common wildfires," said Devon Morales, Vice President of External Affairs at OBRC. "BottleDrop customers are incredibly generous, and we are proud to work together to leverage the power of bottles and cans to support organizations that are making a big difference for communities impacted by wildfires."

From mid-August through the end of September, customers were encouraged to donate containers in-person at any of the 27 full-service BottleDrop Redemption Centers. Additionally, Green Bag account holders could donate online from their available account balance.

An astounding 116,832 containers were donated in-person, and 186 Green Bag customers donated online through their BottleDrop accounts, resulting in \$17,422 raised by individual supporters. OBRC matched all donations, plus contributed additional funds, to round out the total amount raised to \$40,000.



Funds were evenly distributed to four nonprofits that provided direct assistance to ranching and farming families impacted by wildfires:

- Oregon Cattlemen's Association's Wildfire Fund
- Oregon Farm Bureau's Wildfire Relief Fund
- Oregon State University Foundation's Post-Fire Recovery Fund
- Oregon Chapter of the Wildland Firefighter Foundation

"We are awestruck and humbled by the generosity of those Oregonians participating in this program and OBRC for matching each donation received," said Matt McElligott, President of Oregon Cattlemen's Association. "With sincere appreciation, we thank everyone who has so graciously and selflessly donated to help your fellow Oregonians in a time of such great need."

Launched in 2020, OBRC's Emergency Fund has raised and distributed more than half a million dollars to help support communities and neighbors during times of urgent need. Learn more: <https://obrc.com/community/how-our-customers-are-helping/>

*Photos courtesy of Oregon Chapter of the Wildland Firefighter Foundation*





**BottleDrop®**  
Oregon Redemption Center

**LEARN MORE**

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**PR@obrc.com**

WEBSITES  
**OBRC.com**  
**BottleDrop.com**