Life Cycles of Watershed Councils

NOWC *Insider* Webinar
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Life Cycles We Know!

Characteristics:

- **Beginning & Ending**

- **Distinct Phases**

- **Different Needs At Each Phase**

- **Changing Threats Over Time**

- **No Certainty About Continuing Over Time**
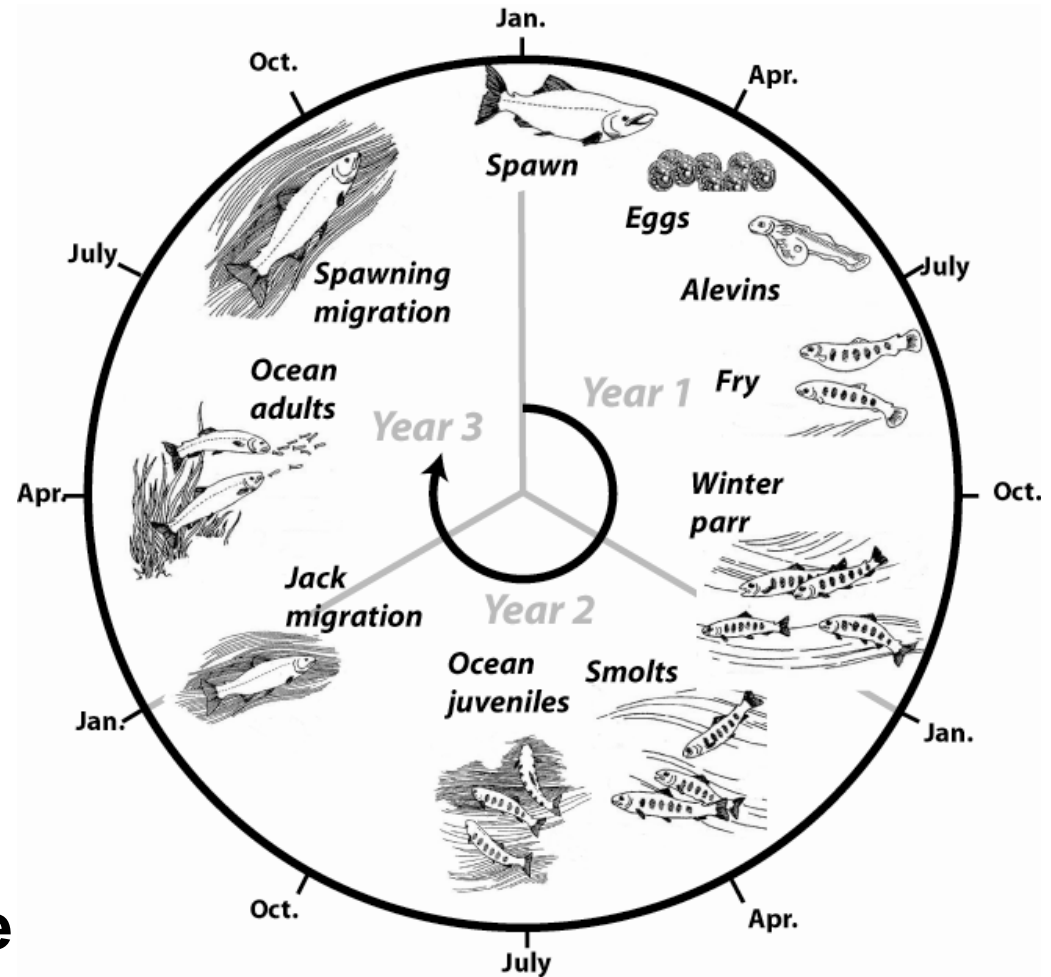
Organizations Are Similar!

Cycle ≈ 10 Years

Formation

Expansion

Stabilization

Crises & Decline

Renew or Dissolve

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Organizational Behavior Types (Anthony Downs, 1967)

1. **Zealots** seek power so that they can affect their own view of the world. Often their perspectives of what should be done are relatively narrow.

2. **Climbers** are people who are focused on how they can get ahead. When advancement is not forthcoming, these officials may seek to aggrandize their current position to make themselves appear more powerful.

3. **Advocates** are loyal to organizations, policies, and causes and will protect these interests against outsiders who threaten them. They are strong team players.

4. **Conservers** are people who are primarily interested in protecting their security and convenience. They are generally resistant to change if it might affect their current situation.

5. **Statesmen** seek power and authority in furtherance of broad governmental or society or corporate goals; they enjoy being recognized for the influence they wield.

Characteristics:

Formation

Zealots ⬆

Expansion

Renew or Dissolve

- **Meets Identified Need**
- **Entrepreneurial & Creative**
- **Searching For Resources**

Stabilization

Crises & Decline

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Characteristics:

Formation

Climbers & Advocates ⬆️

Expansion

Renew or Dissolve

- **Rapid Growth**
- **Innovation & Expansion**
- **High Staff Commitment**
- **Informal Structure**

Zealots ⬇️

Crises & Decline

Stabilization

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Characteristics:

Formation

Conservers

Advocates

Expansion

Renewal or Dissolution

- **Formal Rules & Controls**
- **Efficiency & Stability**
- **Planning Emphasized**
- **Performance Measures**

Climbers

Crises & Decline

Stabilization

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Characteristics:

Formation

Expansion

Renew or Dissolve

Statesmen
Conservers

Advocates

- **Staff Burnout & Turnover**
- **Entrenched Programs**
- **Performance Declines**
- **Loss of Support**

Stabilization

Crises & Decline

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Characteristics:

Formation

Advocates

Expansion

Renew or Dissolve
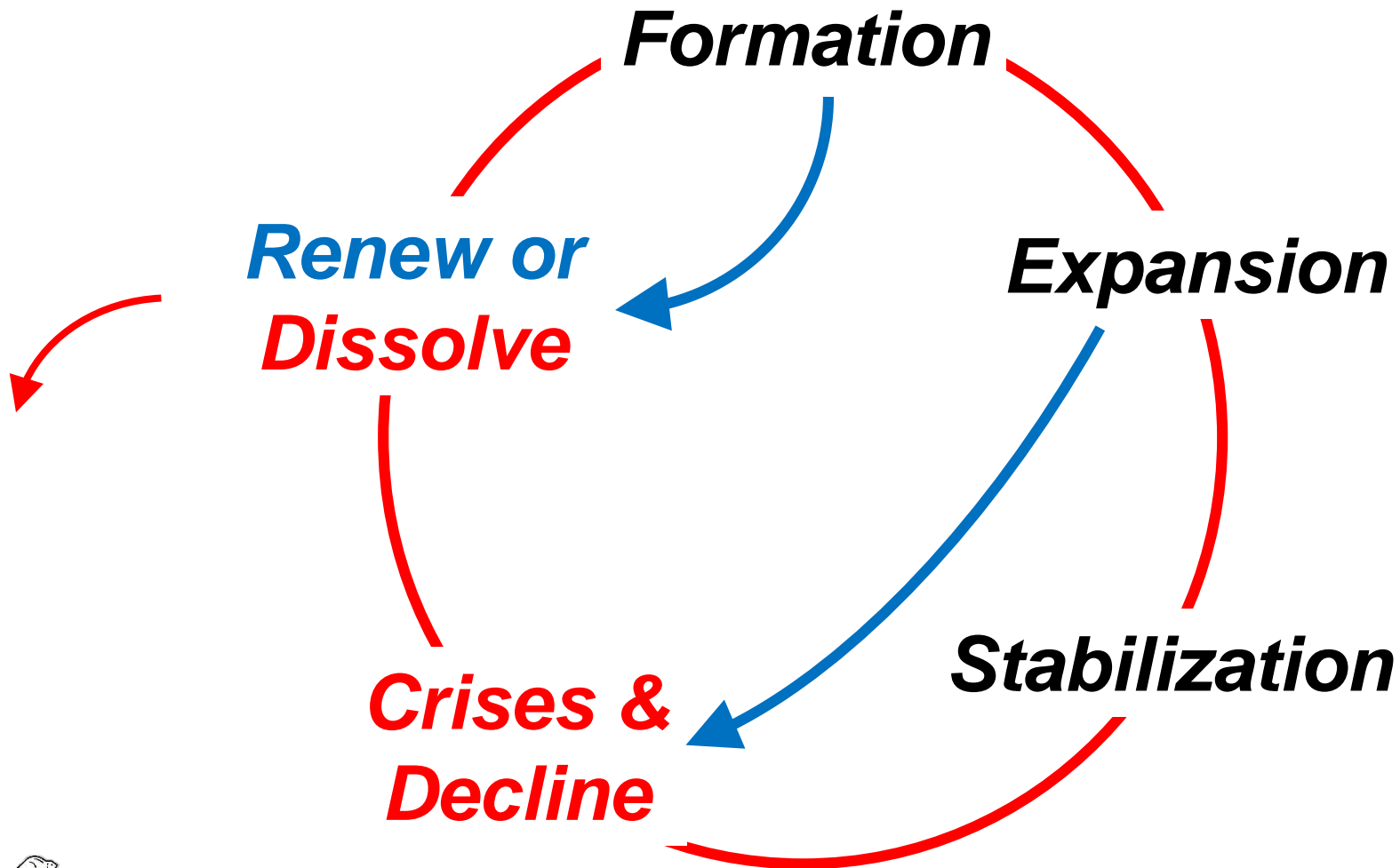
- **Adapt Or Die!**
- **Search For New Programs**
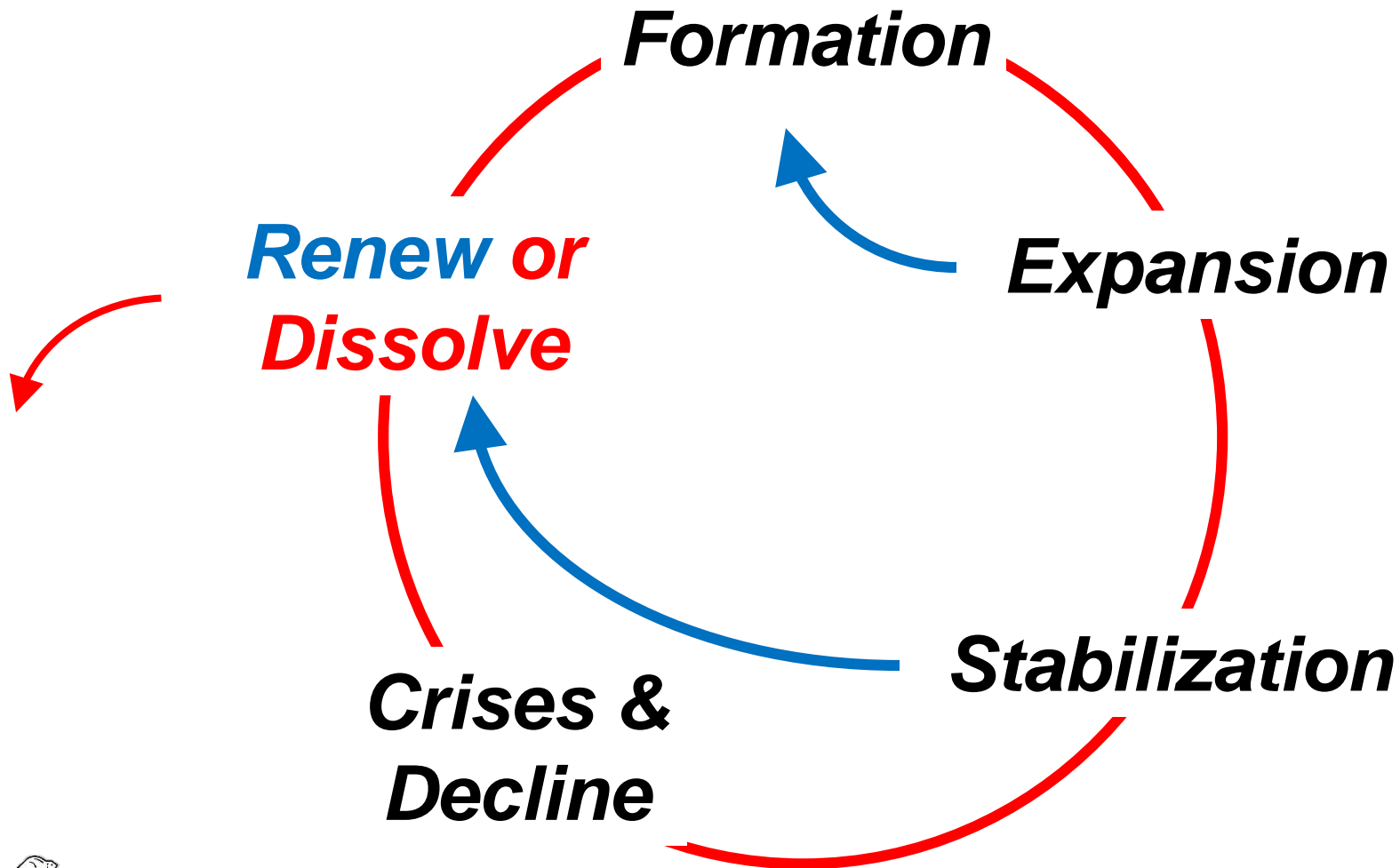- **Reflect On Purpose**
- **Spinoff Organizations**

Statesmen

Crises & Decline

Stabilization
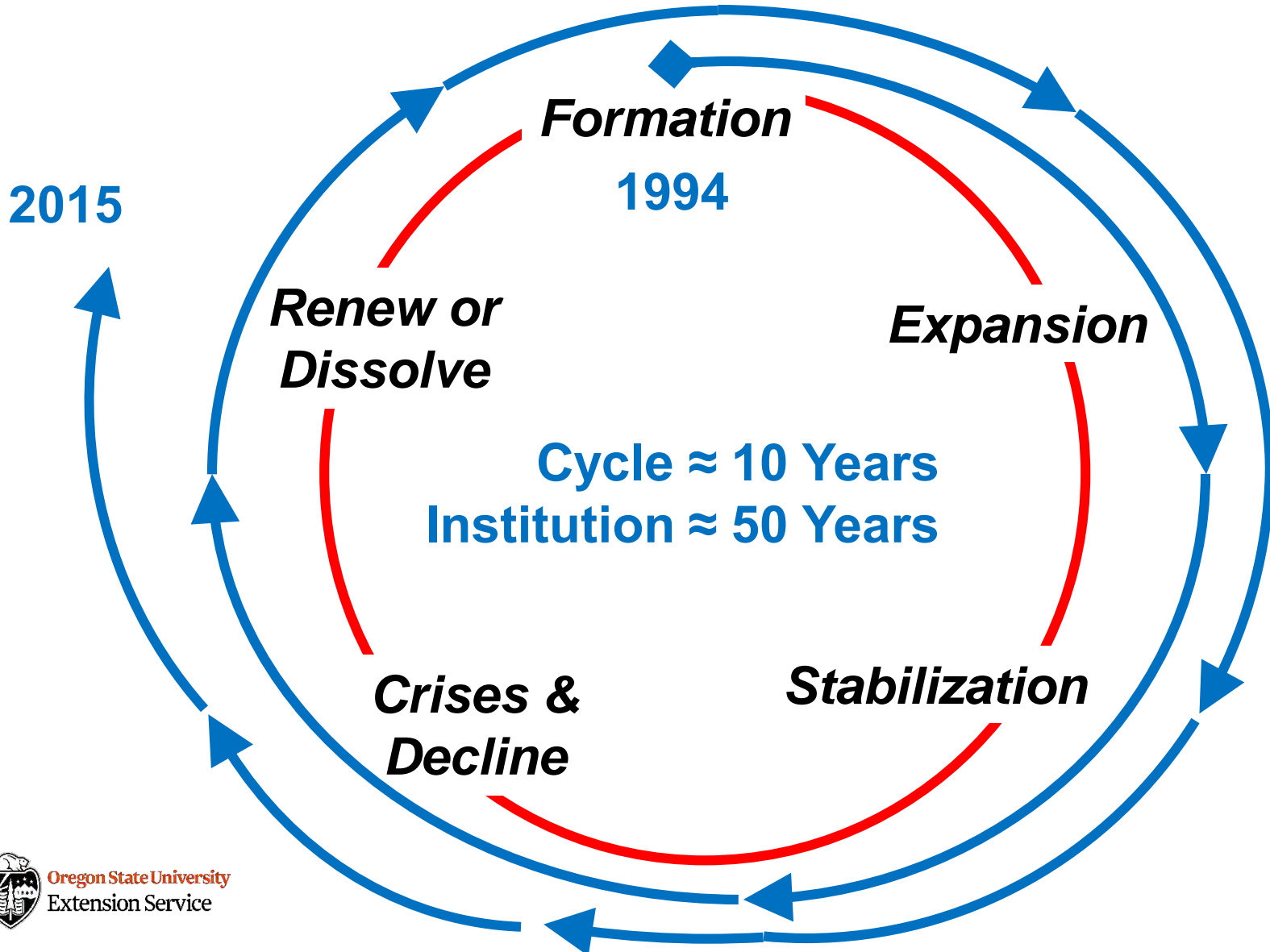
Paths Not Always Sequential!

Paths Not Always Sequential!

Reflection:

- Where is your organization in this life cycle?

- Do you recognize yourself in one of the organizational behavior types?

- Have you seen yourself, or others, change organizational behaviors? From what to what?

- What particularly resonates with you about this approach? Could you outline your organization's life cycle?

Stories From The Coos

Formation
1994

2015

Renew or
Dissolve

Expansion

Cycle ≈ 10 Years
Institution ≈ 50 Years

Crises &
Decline

Stabilization

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Stories:

Formation

1994 - 1996

- **Experience of spotted owl**
- **Potential coho listing**
- **"Statement of Shared Values" (took 2 years)**

Expansion

Renew or Dissolve

Stabilization

Crises & Decline

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Stories:

Formation

Expansion
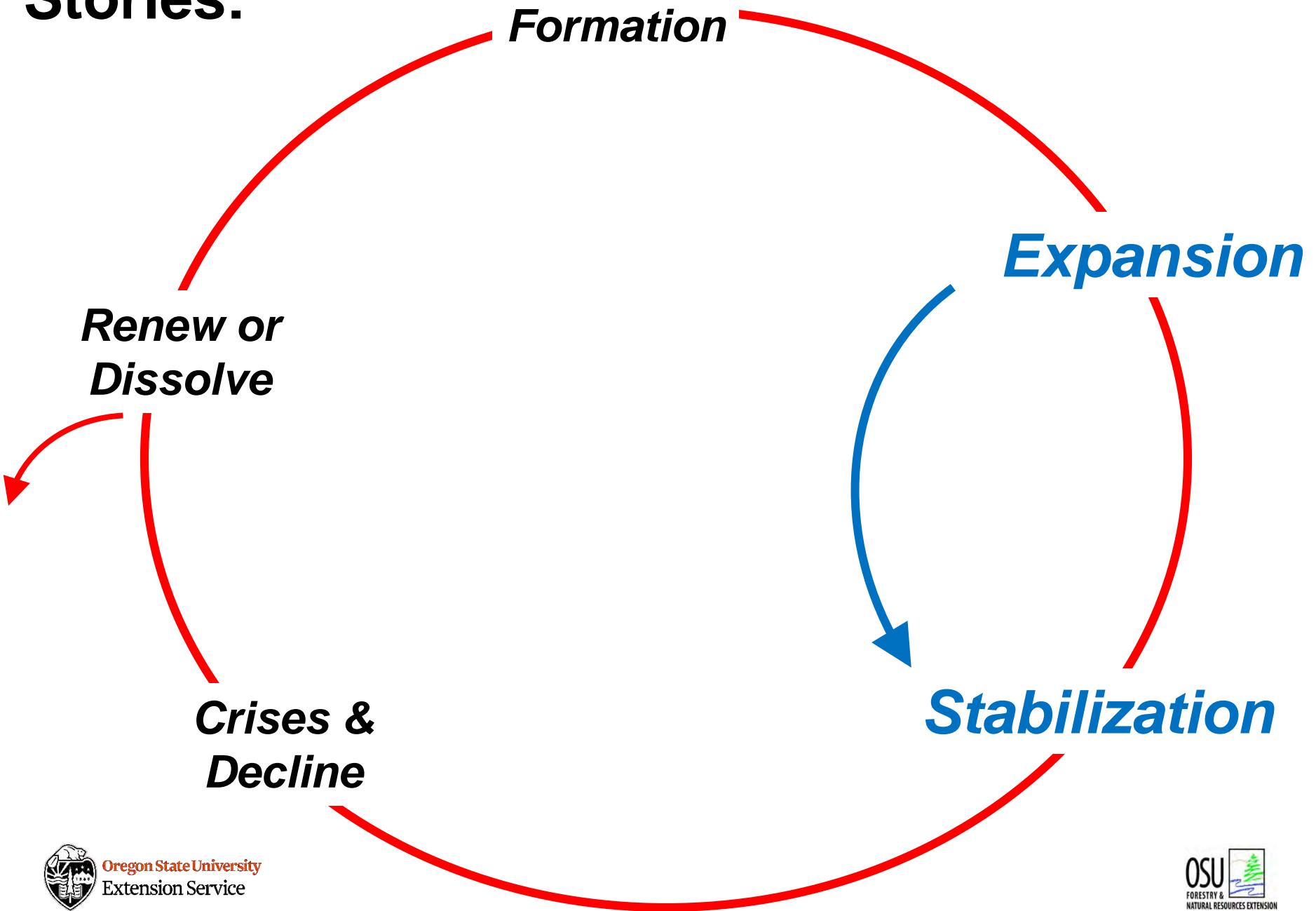
Renew or Dissolve

- **1996 Storm Response**
- **Jobs-in-Woods; Hire-the-Fishermen Work Crews**
- **$1.2MM Coastal Wetlands**

1997 - 2001

Crises & Decline

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Stories:

Formation

Expansion

Renew or Dissolve

Stabilization

Crises & Decline

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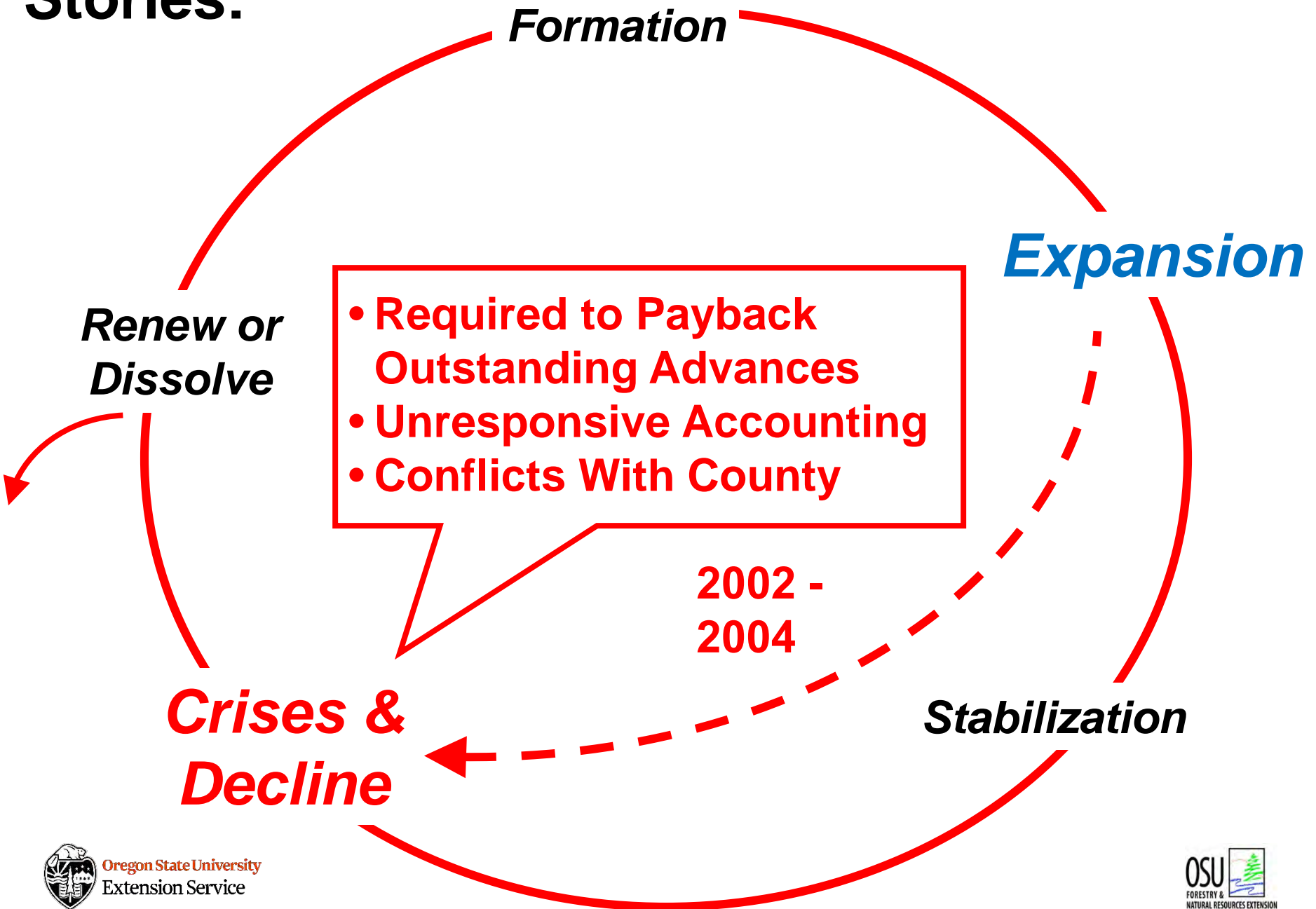
Stories:

Formation

Expansion

Renewal
or Dissolution

2004 - 2006

- Organizational Audit
- Strategic Framework Plan
- Changed Bookkeeping
- Board Development

Crises & Decline

Stabilization

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Stories:

Formation

2007 - 2009

Expansion

Renew or Dissolve

- Model Watershed Program
- Higher Order Restoration
- Focus on Science
- Partnerships

Stabilization

Crises & Decline

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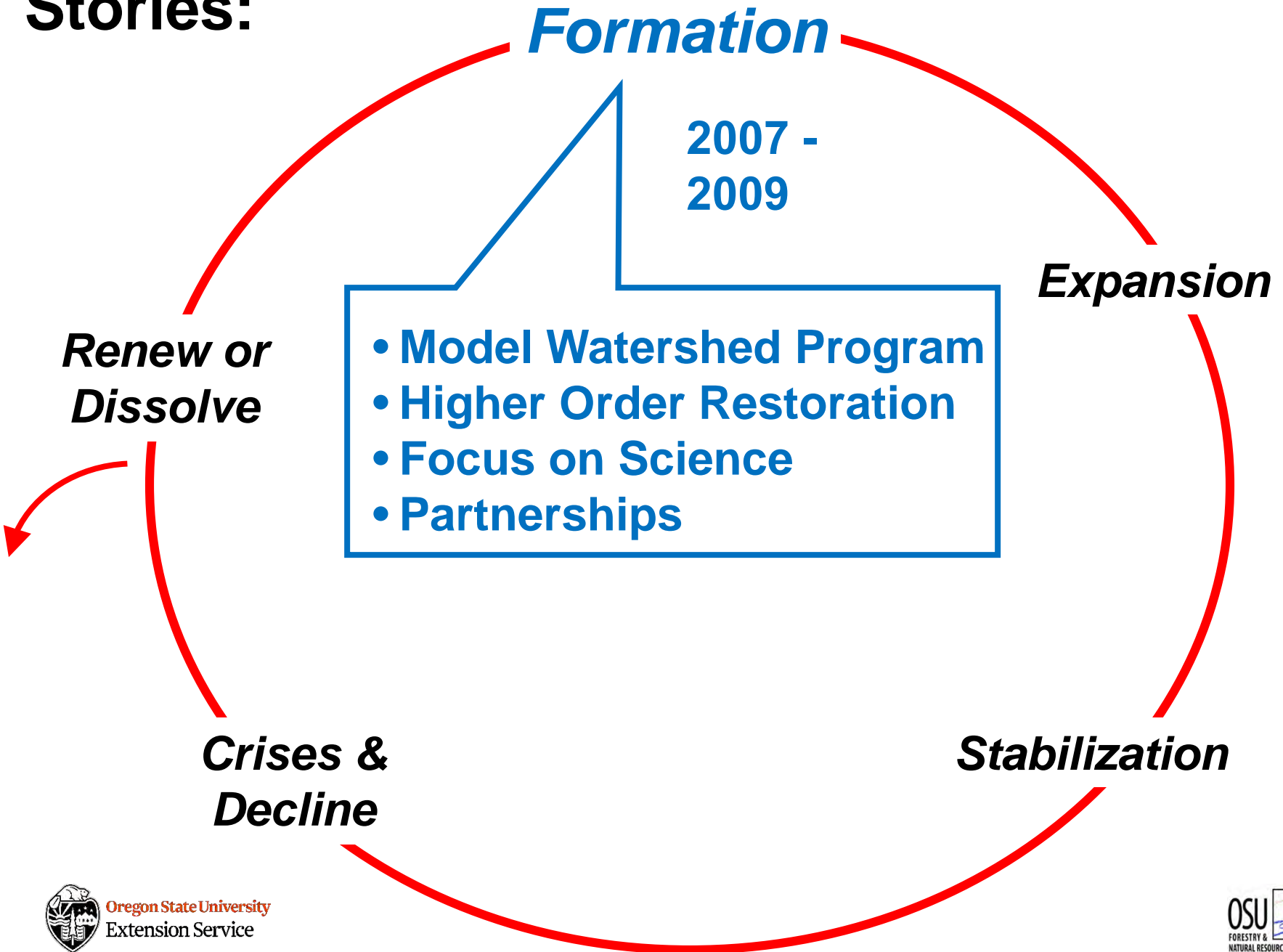
Stories:

Formation

Expansion

Renew or Dissolve

- **Expand Internships**
- **Youth Programs with H.S.**
- **Community Sustainability**
- **Regional Planning**

2010 – 2012

Crises & Decline

Stabilization

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Stories:

Formation

Expansion

Renew or Dissolve

Crises & Decline
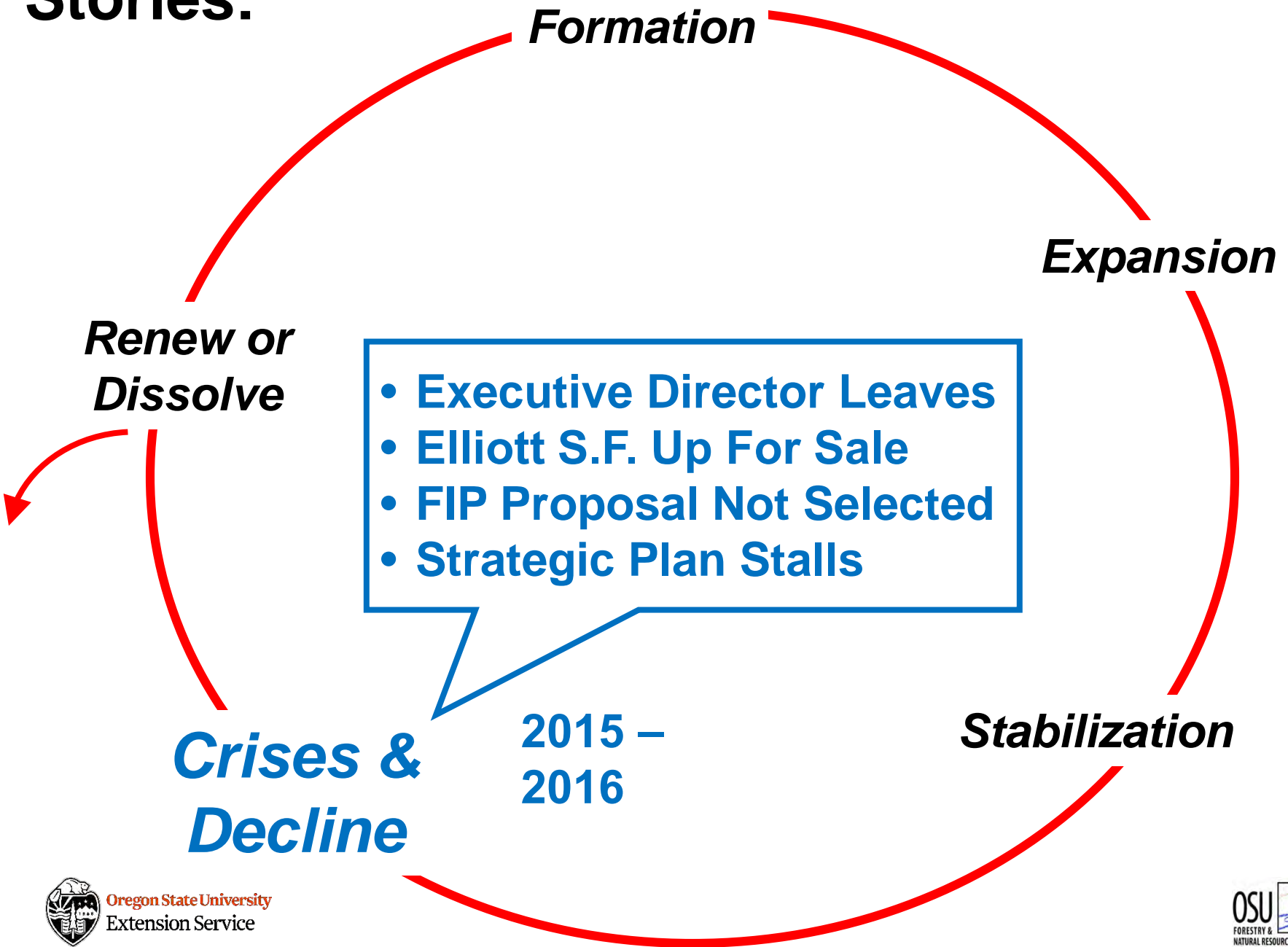
- **Complex, High $, Projects**
- **PCSRF Grant w/ Tribe**
- **Focused Investment Plan**
- **Estuary Management Plan**

2013 – 2015

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Stories:

Formation

Expansion

Renew or Dissolve

- **Executive Director Leaves**
- **Elliott S.F. Up For Sale**
- **FIP Proposal Not Selected**
- **Strategic Plan Stalls**

2015 – 2016

Crises & Decline

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Stories:

Formation

Expansion

2016 – 2017

Renew or Dissolve

- **New Executive Director Hire**
- **Successful Grants Cycle**
- **Lowland Stream Remeander**
- **Strategic Plan Restart**

Stabilization

Crises & Decline

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Take Home Messages

1. Organizations go through cycles

2. Success is not a linear path

3. Threats & challenges change over time

4. Different strengths are needed to respond to these changes

5. Understanding cycles allows you do develop strategies to anticipate and effectively respond

Acknowledgements

- <u>Based On</u>:

"The Human Dimensions of Stream Restoration Working with Diverse Partners to Develop and Implement Restoration" chapter in *Stream Restoration: A Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Implementation and Evaluation* edited by Roni, Beechie, & Hanson and published by Blackwell in 2012.

- <u>Literature Foundation</u>:

Quinn, R.E. & Cameron, K. (1983). "Organizational life cycles and shifting criteria of effectiveness: some preliminary evidence." Management *Science* 29(1): 33-51.

Downs, A. (1967). *Inside Bureaucracy* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co.).

- <u>Organizational Training</u>:

Guadalupe Guajardo and Cliff Jones, Non-profit Association of Oregon
Ford Institute Leadership Program, Ford Family Foundation

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