

**IN THE COUNTY COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON  
FOR THE COUNTY OF WHEELER**

IN THE MATTER OF: )  
Declaration of Local Disaster and Request to ) RESOLUTION 2015-13  
Governor Brown to Declare a State Drought )  
Emergency for Wheeler County, Oregon )

WHEREAS, on this 18<sup>th</sup> day of March 2015, the Wheeler County Court finds that the Wheeler County agricultural and livestock industries, and related economy are suffering widespread and severe economic damage, potential injuries and loss of property resulting from extreme weather conditions within the county; and

WHEREAS, Wheeler County declared a drought disaster in 2014 and conditions are more bleak than before; and

WHEREAS, this is the fourth consecutive year of low snow pack and below average run off. The depletion of water storage in our reservoirs is also historically high; and

WHEREAS, annual water supplies available for irrigators and ranchers within Wheeler County are a function of both available water storage in Wheeler County and in various reservoirs, and the estimated seasonal inflow from winter snow pack. The Bureau of Reclamation has estimated the January through July 2015 stream flow to be extremely below average. Storage for the reservoirs is below average and water supplies are in serious jeopardy. The drought monitor is currently at D3 – indicating Extreme Drought; and

WHEREAS, with current snow pack and forecast runoff, all storage water is estimated to be depleted by early summer 2015. In 2014, irrigation districts and ranchers throughout Wheeler County ran out of water before the end of July. Combined snow pack and storage water levels are currently less than what existed in 2014 and therefore it is estimated water will run out before the end of July 2015; and

WHEREAS, water conditions were severe in 2014 as it affected more landowners than the drought in 1992 when irrigators and ranchers ran out of water in June; and

WHEREAS, the extended water forecast for Wheeler County projects higher than normal temperatures, and below average precipitation; and

WHEREAS, the above conditions result in loss of economic stability, pasture shortages,

decrease in feed production, shortened growing seasons, and decreased water supplies for Wheeler County livestock and agricultural producers. In addition, this multi-year cumulative drought has resulted in decreased fuel moisture and early onset fire danger; and

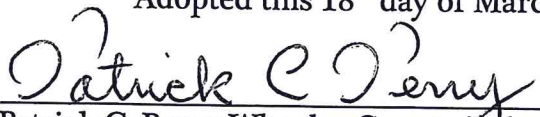
WHEREAS, Wheeler County experienced three major complex fires throughout its three communities and many areas in Wheeler County still suffer from the devastating effects of these fires. Due to drought conditions more of the same is expected in 2015; and

WHEREAS, Wheeler County Court determines that extraordinary measures must be taken to alleviate suffering of people and livestock and to protect or mitigate economic loss, and to be responsive to the threat of wildfires.

THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Wheeler County Court that:

1. A local disaster is declared for Wheeler County.
2. The Wheeler County drought Emergency Management Plan has been implemented
3. Pursuant to ORS 401.015 (2), we find that appropriate response is beyond the capability of Wheeler County. We are declaring a state of emergency for the purpose of assessment, evaluation and acquiring the ability to provide appropriate available resources.
4. Request: The Honorable Kate Brown, Governor of Oregon, declare a Drought Emergency for all of Wheeler County under the provisions of ORS 401.055 due to severe and continuing drought conditions beginning at this time and continuing for an unknown period of time; and direct the Oregon Department of Water Resources to make available in Wheeler County: Temporary Transfers of Water Rights, and Emergency Water Use Permits, and Use of Existing Right Option/Agreement; and other federal and state drought assistance and programs as needed.
5. This proclamation shall take effect immediately from and after its issuance.

Adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of March 2015.

  
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Patrick C. Perry, Wheeler County Judge

  
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Robert L. Ordway, County Commissioner

  
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Lynn Morley, County Commissioner