

AUG 02 2023

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF DOUGLAS COUNTY

AN ORDER IN THE MATTER OF)		
REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR)	ORDER	DOUGLAS COUNTY CLERK
ISSUE A DECLARATION, PURSUANT TO)		
ORS 536.740, THAT A)		
SEVERE, CONTINUING DROUGHT EXISTS)		
IN DOUGLAS COUNTY, OREGON)		
)		

WHEREAS, the Douglas County Board of Commissioners finds that the Douglas County agricultural, livestock and forest products industries, and related businesses are experiencing economic hardship and potential serious injury and losses resulting from extreme weather conditions within the county; and

WHEREAS, the July 20, 2023, Oregon Water Resources Department Water Conditions Report states that Douglas County stream flows were 61% of average for the month of June 2023. The report also states that soil moisture levels are very low. The most recent three-month outlook prepared by NOAA Climate Prediction Center indicates "conditions are likely to continue or worsen, as probabilities favor above average temperatures and near average precipitation". The South Umpqua River and multiple smaller tributaries in the Umpqua Basin have already been regulated by the state watermaster in favor of senior rights, and it is anticipated that further reductions will take place in the weeks ahead. Due to dry soils and low stream flows, basin water managers expect to regulate surface water right users much earlier and to older priority dates than normal. This lack of surface water resources will negatively impact consumptive water users including irrigators, industrial and domestic users resulting in economic losses and hardship. Groundwater resources will also be affected by a lack of sufficient recharge resulting in reduced spring and well water supplies for household uses. As of July 11, 2023, the U.S. Drought Monitor for Oregon illustrates the majority of Douglas County is already in Moderate Drought.

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

WHEREAS, the above conditions will result in the loss of economic stability, decreased feed and pasture production, shortened growing season and decreased water supplies for Douglas County agricultural, livestock and vineyard producers. In addition this multi-year cumulative drought has resulted in decreased fuel moisture and early onset fire danger; and

WHEREAS, the Douglas County Board of Commissioners determines that extraordinary measures must be taken to alleviate the suffering of citizens and livestock and to protect or mitigate economic loss, and to be responsive to the threat of wildfires.

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF DOUGLAS COUNTY FINDS AND ORDERS AS FOLLOWS:

1. The Board finds that an emergency exists in Douglas County, Oregon due to the severe and continuing drought conditions, and that such emergency threatens the availability of essential services and jeopardizes the peace, health and welfare of the people of Douglas County, Oregon.
2. The Board finds that additional action by and support from the State is necessary to address this emergency, which may include assistance from the Oregon Water Resources Commission and other Oregon executive branch agencies.
3. The Board requests the Honorable Tina Kotek, Governor of Oregon, find that there is a need for statewide coordination of water resource conservation measures by municipal and other political subdivisions of this state in order to minimize problems caused by a severe shortage of water, and issue a declaration pursuant to ORS 536.740 that a severe, continuing drought exists in Douglas County, Oregon.
4. The Board requests the Governor address this emergency through the provisions of ORS Chapter 536, including providing the assistance of the Water Resources Commission.

DATED August 2, 2023

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF DOUGLAS COUNTY

By [Signature]
Chair

By [Signature]
Commissioner

By [Signature]
Commissioner

Date August 2nd, 2023

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT

By [Signature]
Department Head
Date: 7/26/2023

APPROVED AS TO FORM

By Tiffany Podlask
County Counsel
Date: July 31, 2023

Ryan Andrews
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Co-Chair, Oregon Drought Readiness Council
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RE: Douglas County Drought

Date: ~~July 24, 2023~~

Mr. Andrews and Ms. Naile:

Douglas County, by and through its County Elected Officials, requests that the Governor of Oregon issue an executive order for all of Douglas County under the provisions of ORS 536 as a direct result of severe and projected drought conditions.

There is the potential for the Douglas County agricultural and livestock, natural resources, recreational, tourism, and related economies to experience widespread and severe damage resulting from extreme weather conditions within the county. The annual water supplies available for irrigators and ranchers within Douglas County depends upon adequate stream flows, which are significantly lower than normal in the Umpqua basin. Current predictions by NOAA are that drought within our region will persist or intensify and could dramatically increase wildland fire danger due to higher than normal temperatures and below average precipitation.

Additionally, a large share of the county's economy is dependent upon the agriculture sector which is adversely affected by low rainfall. Our initial assessment of impacts indicates imminent and significant damages and losses to the agricultural economy of Douglas County.

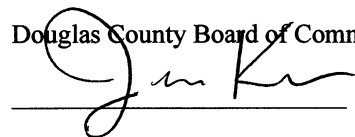
Douglas County has already formally declared a drought and has attached a copy of the adopted resolution for your files.

The Douglas County Board of Commissioners has determined that additional action by and support from the state is needed. This may include assistance from the Oregon Water Resources Department and other Oregon executive branch agencies, operating within their statutory authorities.

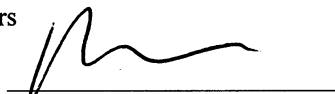
Douglas County Board of Commissioners therefore requests an executive order from the Governor, declaring drought in Douglas County.

We extend in advance our appreciation for your consideration on this matter

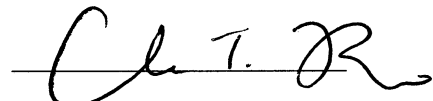
Douglas County Board of Commissioners



Tom Kress, Chair



Tim Freeman



Chris Boice