



IN THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE STATE OF OREGON

IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF WASCO

IN THE MATTER OF A DECLARATION AND REQUEST TO DECLARE A STATE DROUGHT EMERGENCY FOR WASCO COUNTY, OREGON

RESOLUTION 23-003

NOW ON THIS DAY, the above-entitled matter having come on regularly for consideration, said day being one duly set in term for the transaction of public business and a majority of the Board of Commissioners being present; and

IT APPEARING TO THE BOARD: That the USDA has designated Wasco County as being in drought; and

IT FURTHER APPEARING TO THE BOARD: The U.S. Drought Monitor classifies Wasco County in abnormally dry to severe drought; and

IT FURTHER APPEARING TO THE BOARD: That As of February 28, 2023, the US Drought Monitor shows that all of Wasco County is abnormally dry, with 23% of the land in moderate drought (D1) and 49% in severe drought; and

IT FURTHER APPEARING TO THE BOARD: That as of February 28, 2023, the NOAA Drought Outlook indicates that drought will remain or persist through at least May 31, 2023; and

IT FURTHER APPEARING TO THE BOARD: That as of March 1, 2023, the USDA NRCS Oregon Water Supply Outlook Report shows the precipitation water year to date (October 1 to March 1) for the Hood-Deschutes Basin is below normal at 80%; and

IT FURTHER APPEARING TO THE BOARD: That as of March 1, 2023, the basin snowpack is 105% of median, modestly higher than last month when the basin snowpack was 92% of median. However, this near-average snowpack may be deceiving as rainfall has been below normal since the start of the water year, Oct. 1. The ground is extremely dry and likely to soak up the snowmelt rather than it running off as surface/stream water; and

IT FURTHER APPEARING TO THE BOARD: That as of March 6, 2023, the NASA shallow groundwater drought indicator shows large swaths of Oregon and Wasco County within the 2 and 5 percent wetness percentiles, which is much drier than normal; and

IT FURTHER APPEARING TO THE BOARD: That the over 71% of Wasco County citizens are affected by drought; and

IT FURTHER APPEARING TO THE BOARD: That in Wasco County 2023 is the 11th driest year over the past 129 years; and

IT FURTHER APPEARING TO THE BOARD: that extraordinary measures must be taken to alleviate suffering of people and livestock and to mitigate economic loss and to be responsive to the threat of wildfires.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DECLARED by the Wasco County Board of Commissioners that:

1. A local disaster is declared within Wasco County.
2. The Wasco County drought Emergency Management Plan has been implemented.
3. Pursuant to ORS 401.165, we find that appropriate response is beyond the capability of Wasco 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 Tina Kotek, Governor of Oregon, declare a Drought Emergency for all of Wasco County under the provisions of ORS 401.165 and ORS Chapter 536 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 Wasco 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 superseding any previous declarations of drought emergency.

DATED this 15th Day of March, 2023.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:




Kristen Campbell, County Counsel

WASCO COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:



Steven D. Kramer, Commission Chair



Scott C. Hege, Vice-Chair



Philip L. Brady, County Commissioner