

**BEFORE THE WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
OF THE
STATE OF OREGON**

In the Matter of Transfer Application	)	PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION
T-14409, Wallowa County	)	PROPOSING DENIAL OF A CHANGE IN
	)	POINT OF DIVERSION AND A CHANGE IN
	)	PLACE OF USE

Authority

Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 540.505 to 540.580 establish the process in which a water right holder may submit a request to transfer the point of diversion, place of use, or character of use authorized under an existing water right. Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) Chapter 690, Division 380 implement the statutes and provides the Department's procedures and criteria for evaluating transfer applications.

Applicant

KURT MELVILLE
1302 SAGEWOOD STREET
ENTERPRISE, OR 97828

Findings of Fact

1. On February 15, 2024, Kurt Melville filed an application to change the point of diversion and to change the place of use under Certificate 2993. The Department assigned the application number T-14409.
2. Notice of the application for transfer was published on February 27, 2024, pursuant to OAR 690-380-4000. No comments were filed in response to the notice.
3. The map submitted with Transfer Application T-14409 does not identify points of diversion with measured distances from a recognized survey corner, as is required by OAR 690-380-3100(1)(h).
4. Imagery submitted with the Evidence of Use Affidavit was from July 13, 2016. The imagery needs to be within the period of five years prior to the submittal date of February 15, 2024, pursuant to OAR 690-380-3000(12).

Pursuant to OAR 690-380-4030, any person may file a protest or standing statement within 30 days after the last date of publication of the newspaper notice or the Department's weekly notice as prescribed by OAR 690-380-4020, whichever is later, of this preliminary determination.

5. On August 21, 2025, the Department sent a copy of the draft Preliminary Determination to the applicant, proposing to deny Transfer Application T-14409. The draft Preliminary Determination cover letter provided a deadline of September 20, 2025, for the applicant to respond and submit the required information. The applicant did not respond by the deadline.

6. The portion of the right to be transferred is as follows:

Certificate: 2993 in the name of GEO. S. CRAIG (confirmed by Wallowa River decree)
Use: IRRIGATION of 4.0 ACRES
Priority Date: 1895 FOR TRACT NO. 1
Limit/Duty: That the amount of water to which such right is entitled and hereby confirmed for the purposes aforesaid, is limited to an amount actually beneficially used for said purposes, and shall not exceed ONE-EIGHTIETH of one cubic foot per second per acre; and said right shall be subject to all other conditions and limitations contained in said decree.
Source: PRAIRIE CREEK, a tributary of the WALLOWA RIVER

Authorized Point of Diversion:

Twp	Rng	Mer	Sec	Q-Q
NOT DESCRIBED IN CERTIFICATE				

Authorized Place of Use:

IRRIGATION						
Twp	Rng	Mer	Sec	Q-Q	Glott	Acres
2 S	44 E	WM	1	NE SE	9	0.8
2 S	44 E	WM	1	NW SE	10	3.2
					Total	4.0

7. The Department received information from the applicant that describes the location of the authorized point of diversion for Certificate 2993 as follows:

Twp	Rng	Mer	Sec	Q-Q	Measured Distances
2 S	44 E	WM	1	SE SE	DITCH - APPROXIMATELY 350 FEET NORTH FROM THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SECTION 1

8. Transfer Application T-14409 proposes to move the authorized point of diversion approximately 0.5 miles downstream to:

Twp	Rng	Mer	Sec	Q-Q	GLot	Measured Distances
2 S	44 E	WM	1	NW SE	10	PUMP - 2060 FEET NORTH AND 1890 FEET WEST FROM THE SE CORNER OF SECTION 1

9. Transfer Application T-14409 proposes to change the place of use of the right to:

IRRIGATION						
Twp	Rng	Mer	Sec	Q-Q	GLot	Acres
2 S	44 E	WM	1	SW NE	7	1.6
2 S	44 E	WM	1	SE NW	6	2.4
					Total	4.0

10. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) has determined that a fish screen is necessary at the new point of diversion to prevent fish from entering the diversion and that the diversion is not currently equipped with an appropriate fish screen. This diversion may be eligible for screening cost-share funds.

Transfer Review Criteria [OAR 690-380-0100(14), OAR 690-380-4010(2), OAR 690-380-2200, and OAR 690-380-2110(2)]

11. The evidence of use submitted with the application does not indicate that water was used within the last five years according to the terms and conditions of the right.
12. A water delivery system sufficient to use the full amount of water allowed under the existing right was present within the five-year period prior to submittal of Transfer Application T-14409.
13. The water right is subject to transfer as defined in ORS 540.505(4) and OAR 690-380-0100(14).
14. The proposed point of diversion diverts water from the same source of surface water as the authorized point of diversion, as required by OAR 690-380-2110(2).
15. The proposed changes would not result in enlargement of the right.
16. The proposed changes would not result in injury to other existing water rights.
17. The application is incomplete because the map submitted was missing points of diversion with measured distances and the evidence of use was deficient. Therefore, all other application requirements are not met.

Determination and Proposed Action

The change in point of diversion and change in place of use proposed in Transfer Application T-14409 appears to be not consistent with the requirements of ORS 540.505 to 540.580 and OAR 690-380-5000. If protests are not filed pursuant to OAR 690-380-4030, the transfer application will be denied.

If the issues identified above are resolved and Transfer Application T-14409 is approved, the final order will include the following:

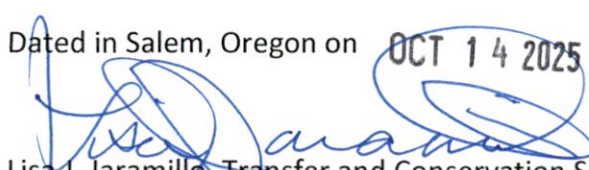
1. *The change in point of diversion and change in place of use proposed in Transfer Application T-14409 are approved.*
2. *The right to the use of the water is restricted to beneficial use at the place of use described and is subject to all other conditions and limitations contained in Certificate 2993 and any related decree.*

3. *Approval of this transfer application does not constitute nor grant legal access onto or through another person's property for purposes of accessing the new point of diversion and the new place of use.*
4. *Water right Certificate 2993 is cancelled. A new certificate will be issued describing that portion of the right not affected by this transfer.*
5. *The quantity of water diverted at the new point of diversion (Pump) shall not exceed the quantity of water lawfully available at the original point of diversion (Ditch).*
6. *Water shall be acquired from the same source of surface water as the original point of diversion.*
7. *The former place of use of the transferred right shall no longer receive water under the right.*
8. *Prior to diverting water, the water user shall install an approved fish screen at the new point of diversion and shall provide to the OWRD a written statement from Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) that the installed screen meets the state's criteria, or that ODFW has determined a screen is not necessary.*

The water user shall operate and maintain the fish screen at the new point of diversion consistent with ODFW's operational and maintenance standards. If ODFW determines the screen is not functioning properly and is unsuccessful in working with the water user to meet ODFW standards, ODFW may request that OWRD regulate the use of water until OWRD receives notification from ODFW that the fish screen is functioning properly.

9. *Full beneficial use of the water shall be made, consistent with the terms of this order, on or before **October 1, 2027**. A Claim of Beneficial Use prepared by a Certified Water Right Examiner shall be submitted by the applicant to the Department within one year after the deadline for completion of the changes and full beneficial use of the water.*
10. *After satisfactory proof of beneficial use is received, a new certificate confirming the right transferred will be issued.*

Dated in Salem, Oregon on **OCT 14 2025**


Lisa J. Jaramillo, Transfer and Conservation Section Manager, for
IVAN GALL, DIRECTOR
Oregon Water Resources Department

This Preliminary Determination was prepared by Scott Grew. If you have questions about the information in this document, you may reach him at scott.a.grew@water.oregon.gov or 503-986-0890.

Protests

Under the provisions of ORS 540.520(6) & (7) and OAR 690-380-4030, within 30 days after the last date of publication of the newspaper notice or the Department's weekly notice as prescribed by OAR 690-380-4020, whichever is later, any person may file, jointly or severally, a protest expressing opposition of approval of the transfer application and disagreement with this Preliminary Determination or a standing statement in support of this Preliminary Determination. If this Preliminary Determination determines that a change in point of diversion or appropriation would result in injury, the applicant may file a notification of intent to pursue approval of the transfer under OAR 690-380-5030 to 690-380-5050. Protests and standing statements must be received by the Water Resources Department within 30 days after the last date of publication of the newspaper notice or the Department's weekly notice as prescribed by OAR 690-380-4020, whichever is later.

Protests must be in writing and received in hard copy form with the appropriate statutory protest filing fee; protests cannot be filed by electronic mail. [OAR 690-002-0025(3) and 690-380-0100(9)]. The protest must include the following:

- The person's name, address, and telephone number;
- All reasonably ascertainable issues and all reasonably available arguments supporting the person's position by the close of the protest period. Failure to raise a reasonably ascertainable issue in a protest or failure to provide sufficient specificity to afford the Department an opportunity to respond to the issue may preclude consideration of the issue during the hearing;
- If you are the applicant, a protest fee of \$720 required by ORS 536.050; and
- If you are not the applicant, a protest fee of \$1425 required by ORS 536.050 and proof of service of the protest upon the applicant.

Requests for Standing

Under the provisions of OAR 690-380-4030(5), the Department shall provide to persons who have filed standing statements as defined under OAR 690-380-0100(11) notice of any differences between the Department's Preliminary Determination and the Final Order, notice of a hearing on the application under OAR 137-003-0535, and an opportunity to request limited party status or party status in the hearing.

Requests for standing must be received in the Water Resources Department no later than 30 days after the last date of publication of the newspaper notice or the Department's weekly notice as prescribed by OAR 690-380-4020, whichever is later. Requests for standing must be in writing, and must include the following:

- The requester's name, mailing address and telephone number;
- If the requester is representing a group, association or other organization, the name, address and telephone number of the represented group;
- A statement that the requester supports the preliminary determination as issued.

After the protest period has ended, the Director will either issue a Final Order or schedule a contested case hearing. The contested case hearing will be scheduled only if a protest has been filed under OAR 690-380-4030. In accordance with OAR 690-380-4200, notice and conduct of the hearing shall:

- Be under the applicable provisions of ORS 183.310 to 183.550, pertaining to contested cases, and the hearing shall be held in the area where the rights are located unless all parties stipulate otherwise; and
- If a protest has asserted that a water right to be transferred has been forfeited through non-use, include the notice and procedures described in OAR 690-017-0500 to 690-017-0900.

If after hearing the Department issues a proposed Final Order finding that a change in point of diversion or appropriation will result in injury, the applicant may file a notification of intent to pursue approval of the transfer under OAR 690-380-5030 to 690-380-5050 within 15 days of receipt of the proposed order. Notwithstanding 690-002-0175, if the applicant files a notification of intent to pursue approval of the transfer under 690-380-5030 to 690-380-5050, the deadline for filing exceptions to the proposed order shall be 30 days after the Department provides notice to the parties that the transfer does not meet the requirements of 690-380-5030 to 690-380-5050.

If you do not request a hearing within 30 days after the close of the protest period, or if you withdraw a request for a hearing, notify the Department or the administrative law judge that you will not appear, or fail to appear at a scheduled hearing, the Director may issue a final order by default. If the Director issues a Final Order by default, the Department designates the relevant portions of its files on this matter, including all materials that you have submitted relating to this matter, as the record for purpose of proving a *prima facie* case upon default.

You may be represented by an attorney at the hearing. Legal aid organizations may be able to assist a party with limited financial resources. Generally, partnerships, corporations, associations, governmental subdivisions, or public or private organizations are represented by an attorney. However, consistent with OAR 690-002-0020 and OAR 690-137-0555, an agency representative may represent partnerships, corporations, associations, governmental subdivisions or public, or private organizations if the Department determines that appearance

of a person by an authorized representative will not hinder the orderly and timely development of the record in this case.

Notice Regarding Servicemembers: Active-duty servicemembers have a right to stay proceedings under the federal Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. 50 U.S.C. App. §§501-597b. For more information contact the Oregon State Bar at 800-452-8260, the Oregon Military Department at 971-355-4127, or the nearest United States Armed Forces Legal Assistance Office through <http://legalassistance.law.af.mil>.

If you have questions about how to file a protest or if you have previously filed a protest and you want to know the status, please contact Will Davidson at 503-507-2749.

If you have questions about the Department or any of its programs, please contact our Water Resources Customer Service Group at 503-986-0900.

Address any correspondence to: Oregon Water Resources Department, Transfer and Conservation Section, 725 Summer Street NE, Suite A, Salem OR 97301-1266.



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Water Resources Department

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October 14, 2025

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL AND E-MAIL

KURT MELVILLE
1302 SAGEWOOD STREET
ENTERPRISE, OR 97828

SUBJECT: Water Right Transfer Application T-14409

Please find enclosed the Preliminary Determination indicating that, based on the information available, the Department intends to deny application T-14409. This document is an intermediate step in the denial process; water may not be used legally as proposed in the transfer application until a Final Order approving the transfer has been issued by the Department. Please read this entire letter carefully to determine your responsibility for additional action.

A public notice is being published in the Department's weekly publication, simultaneously with issuance of the Preliminary Determination. The notice initiates a period in which any person may file either a protest opposing the decision proposed by the Department in the Preliminary Determination or a standing statement supporting the Department's decision. The protest period will end 30 days after the Department's notice.

If no protest is filed, the Department will issue a Final Order consistent with the Preliminary Determination. You should receive a copy of the Final Order about 30 days after the close of the protest period.

If a protest is filed, the application may be referred to a contested case proceeding. A contested case provides an opportunity for the proponents and opponents of the decision proposed in the Preliminary Determination to present information and arguments supporting their position in a quasi-judicial proceeding.

Please contact me at scott.a.grew@water.oregon.gov or 503-986-0890 if I may be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Scott Grew

Transfer Specialist
Transfer and Conservation Section

cc: Transfer Application file T-14409
David Bates, District Watermaster (*via e-mail*)

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