

OREGON



WATER RESOURCES
DEPARTMENT

Update on Project Implementation

Oregon Water Resources Commission

June 16, 2022

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Overview

- High level review of new workload
- Update on recruitments and project implementation
- Tracking Progress, Outreach and Communication

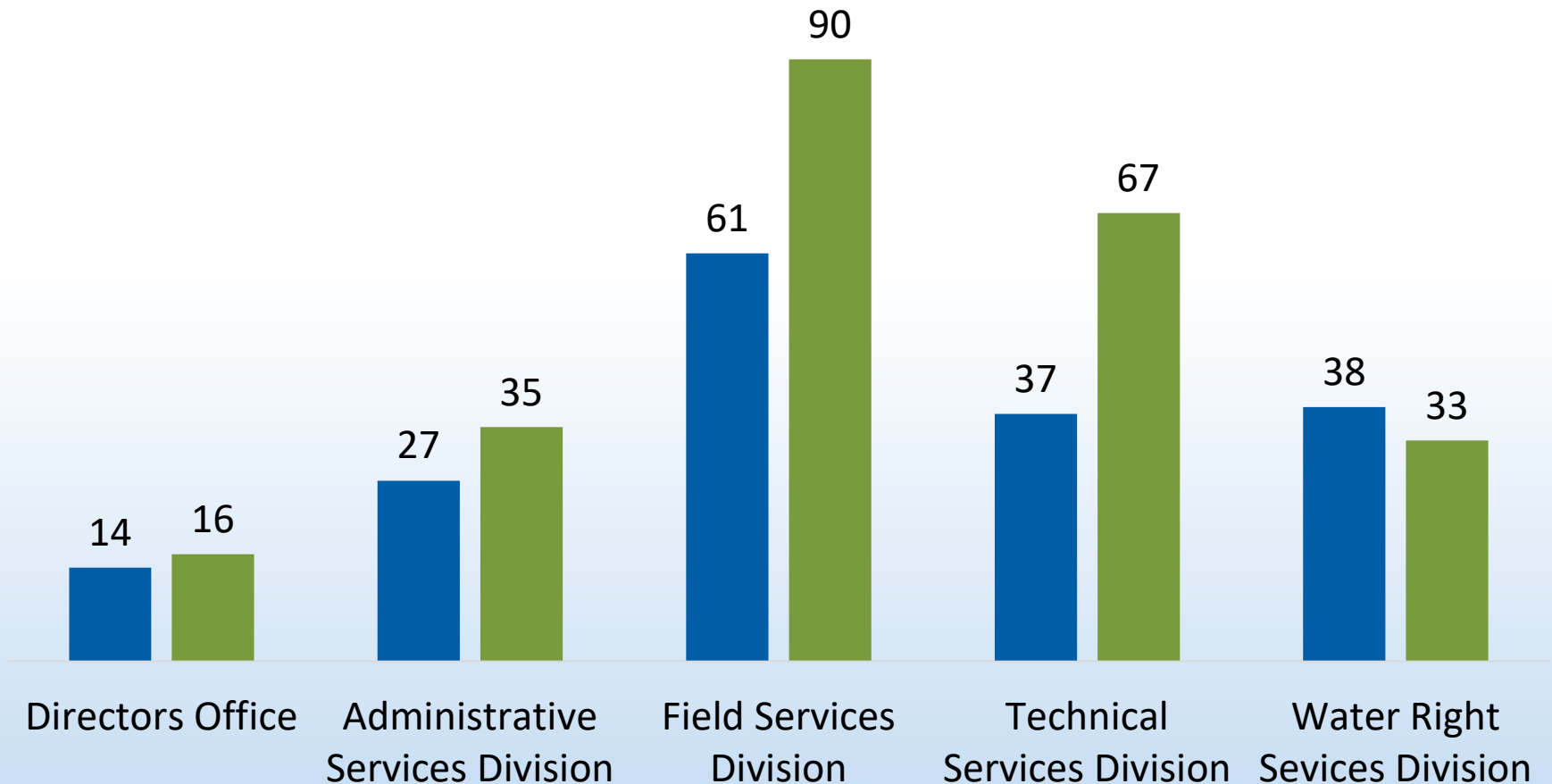
New Workload

- 2021-2023 budget contains significant increase for WRD
 - Over 40 new projects
 - 38 new positions
- 2021 December Special Session
 - Drought and Cannabis
 - 32 new positions

Recruitments: High Priority

■ 2019-21 Positions (177 Total)

■ 2021-23 Positions (241 Total)



Recruitments Status

- 65 positions filled to date
- 10 open recruitments
- 74 remaining

- Vacancy numbers changing: staff move into new positions, leave agency, or retire
 - 23 vacancies created from filling positions
 - 6 new vacancies due to staff leaving

- Hired a new human resources position to help with recruiting

Project Implementation



- Workgroups, new funding programs, data, legislation and associated rulemakings
- Focusing on recruitments to establish capacity to work on new projects
- Prioritization of projects
- See Project Tracking List (attachment 1)

Project Progress Highlights

- Protest backlog
 - Referred 30 cases / 11 protests withdrawn from OAH (Prior average: 2-3 cases in a biennium)
- Dam safety contracts
 - 16 contracts for \$1 million in General Fund
 - 12 contracts completed/in development for \$3M of \$4M in ARPA funds
- Well Abandonment, Repair, and Replacement Fund



Project Progress Highlights

- Modernization of Well Construction and Compliance Program (HB 2145)
- State Supported Regional Water Planning and Management Workgroup (HB 5006)
- Tribes-State Agency Task Force (SB 5545)

Project Progress Challenges

- Water Right Programs Backlog Reduction and Fee Work Group
 - Delayed due to uncertain eligibility of American Rescue Plan Act funds
- Water Budgets
- Recruitments

Tracking Progress

- Project and portfolio management practices
- IWRS and Strategic Plan as guiding documents

Oregon's **2017**
Integrated Water Resources Strategy



Planning, Collaboration, and Investments Section 2021-23 Biennium Work Priorities and Projects

The Planning, Collaboration, and Investments (PCI) Section within the [Oregon Water Resources Department](#) (WRD) builds partnerships and incentivizes Oregonians to pursue integrated and innovative solutions for complex water challenges and an uncertain water future. We do this work to achieve a secure and sustainable water future, addressing instream and out-of-stream needs, for all Oregonians and Oregon's environment, economy, communities, and cultures as outlined in [Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy](#) and WRD's [2019-24 Strategic Plan](#). The purpose of this document is to highlight our section priorities and projects for the 2021-23 biennium. We would like to transparently communicate what we are doing and what we will not be able to do this biennium.

Ongoing Operations - Day-to-day work and standard section business that spans the biennium

- Annual funding cycles for [Feasibility Study Grants](#) (applications due fall 2021 and 2022)
- Annual funding cycles for [Water Project Grants and Loans](#) (applications due spring 2022 and 2023)
- Grant administration
- Partner with the [Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed Planning Partnership](#), supporting efforts to finalize their plan, seek state-recognition (March 2022), and transition to plan implementation
- Partner with the [Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership](#), supporting efforts to finalize their plan, seek state-recognition (June 2022), and transition to plan implementation
- Partner with the [Lower John Day Place-Based Partnership](#), supporting efforts to finalize their plan, seek state-recognition (June 2022), and transition to plan implementation

Regular external communication on budget implementation status

Project	Description	Category	Type	Stage	Status	Completed	In Progress	Next Steps	Issues / Risks
Columbia River - Umatilla Solutions task force grant and Participate in CRUST	\$500,000 in General Fund - Grant to Umatilla county to implement agreements of the Columbia River - Umatilla Solutions task force	Water Projects	Direct Grant	In Progress	Concerned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Met with recipient •Gathered information from DAS and DOJ on how to responsibly issue funds upfront •Developed form to gather information needed for grant agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reaching out to grantee to talk about info we need to develop grant agreement (did not get a response to phone calls and will be reaching out again soon) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Gather information to incorporate into an inter-governmental agreement or grant agreement 	Funded by General Fund - must be complete by 6/30/2023. Multi-year project, not feasible to complete in that timeframe due to nature of project - will need funding carry over.
Deschutes Basin Board of Control piping Project Grant	\$10 million in the Water Supply Development Account SB 5006 / SB 5534	Water Projects	Direct Grant	In Progress	Meeting Expectations	Grant Agreement became effective 2/7/2022 and DBBC is getting ready to submit requests for fund reimbursement on project work completed to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Manage grant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Manage grant 	Lottery Bond Sale May 2022
Ordinance regional water infrastructure project.	\$6 million in ARPA Funds for a grant to Umatilla County for the Ordinance Project.	Water Projects	Direct Grant	Scoping	Meeting Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Met with recipient to get general understanding or project timeline and share what limited information is known about ARPA funding requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work with recipient to develop a grant agreement after we understand what the federal government may require that would need to be incorporated into the grant agreement •Execute grant agreement •Manage grant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Awaiting information on ARPA funding 	

Closing Thoughts

- Greatly appreciate the Legislature's investment in water in 2021
- Working hard to build staff capacity and implement programs for both near-term and long-term success
- Adaptively managing workloads based on lessons learned
- Committed to providing updates on progress

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