



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Water Resources Department

North Mall Office Building
725 Summer Street NE, Suite A
Salem, OR 97301-1271
503-986-0900
FAX 503-986-0904

MEMORANDUM

TO: Water Resources Commission
FROM: April Snell, Sea Grant Fellow
SUBJECT: Work Session Item I, May 31, 2007
Water Resources Commission Work Session

County Outreach Project Update

I. Issue Statement

This report provides an overview and progress report on the Department's county outreach project to Oregon counties. This is an informational report only.

II. Background

Adequate water supply is essential for a strong economy and healthy communities for both current and future generations of Oregonians. Much of Oregon's surface water supply is fully-appropriated during summer months, and demand on ground water sources is ever increasing. For these reasons, many communities are facing challenges in providing for the needs of today while planning for the demands of the future. The County Outreach Project was initiated in March 2007 by the Director's office to learn how communities are addressing these water supply challenges and opportunities for the Department to better assist communities.

III. Discussion

To better understand what water supply planning efforts are underway around the state, April Snell, the 2006-07 Oregon Sea Grant Natural Resource Policy Fellow, is conducting interviews with county planners from around the state. This project began in March and will continue through July 2007, in conjunction with her Sea Grant position with the Department. The goals of this project include learning more about what counties are doing in terms of water supply planning, provide information about resources available from the Water Resources Department to aid their ongoing and future efforts, and to build stronger links between land use and water planning. Possible outcomes of this project include water supply planning lessons learned, challenges from the perspective of different counties, and successful strategies and tools used by various counties.

The County Outreach Project is underway and several interviews have been conducted around the state. Of the thirty-six Oregon counties, twenty-five have been, or will be, interviewed by the end of May 2007. Due to the limited duration of this project, and other constraints, not all counties will likely be interviewed. The Department has received positive responses from counties when contacted about participating. April Snell was also invited to present an overview of the County Outreach Project to the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) Planning Directors and AOC legislative committee meetings in March and April 2007.

A map of counties interviewed (Attachment 1) and a sample of the interview questions are included with this report (Attachment 2). Department staff will present the preliminary results of the county outreach project at the May 31 WRC meeting. A detailed report will be provided to the Commission and to project participants in July 2007.

IV. Recommendation

This is an informational report. No Commission action is required.

Attachments:

1. Map of counties interviewed
2. Sample interview questions

April Snell
503-986-0879