

Oregon Water Resources Commission Work Session  
June 24, 1999  
Salem

Members

Nancy Leonard  
Mike Jewett  
Jim Nakano  
Dan Thorndike  
Ron Nelson  
John Frewing

Staff

Martha Pagel  
Geoff Huntington  
Dwight French  
Weston Becker  
Tom Paul  
Bruce Moyer  
Barry Norris  
Pat Lee  
Bob DeVylde  
Dave Jarrett  
Adam Sussman  
Diane Addicott  
Rick Cooper

Others

Kimberley Priestley  
Steve Applegate  
Roger Bachman  
Jan Lee  
John Youngquist  
Jill Zarnowitz  
Kip Lombard

In addition to those listed above, other staff were present for particular segments of the work session. Written material submitted at this work session is part of the official record and on file at the Oregon Water Resources Department, 158 12<sup>th</sup> Street NE, Salem, Oregon 97310. Audiotapes of the work session are on file at the same address.

**1. Peak Flow Panel Discussion**

Dwight French, Acting Administrator for Water Rights Division, and Pat Lee, Special Projects Coordinator, facilitated a panel discussion focusing on the progress of the Peak Flow Working Group's effort to find ways to protect critical peak flows for fish while still allowing storage of these seasonal high flow events. Panel members included Jill Zarnowitz, Department of Fish and Wildlife; John Youngquist, water rights consultant; Kip Lombard, Oregon Water Resources Congress; and Roger Bachman, Oregon Trout. Steve Applegate, representing Oregon Department of Agriculture, and Kimberley Priestley of WaterWatch joined the Commissioners at the table for this discussion.

Pat Lee explained that a peak flow is an event of high levels of water discharge within a watershed generally resulting from weather conditions such as major rain storms and rapid snow melt. Peak flows will often reach or exceed a river channel's bank-full stage out onto the floodplain. Historically peak flows in the state's rivers and streams have been viewed as an opportunity to capture and store water for use in low-flow seasons; however, in recent years science and water management have shown the ecological role of these high flows in maintaining watershed health.

The Department convened the Peak Flow Working Group to provide information and advice on how to protect peak flows in a systematic, scientifically-based manner as water right permit decisions are made. Each of the panel guests, as members of the Working Group, offered their individual perspectives and responded to Commissioners' questions and comments. There seemed to be general interest in promoting a pilot project. The panel encouraged the Commission to consider a more customized approach in dealing with conditions in individual water basins rather than a statewide rulemaking. All agreed that a lot more work needs to be done on this issue. The discussion provided an opportunity for the Commissioners to hear stakeholder perspectives and better understand the challenging policy issues confronting the Work Group.

## **2. Information Management Update**

Bob DeVylde, Manager of Information Services, used a computer overhead projector to demonstrate the Department's development of new access to information and improvement of existing access tools. Access to this information is important not only to staff but also to the general public. DeVylde explained that people can obtain some information through the Department Web page; other information, such as the well logs, is available on CD.

Following the information management update, the Commissioners went into an Executive Session under ORS 192.660(1)(h) to consult with counsel on legal rights and duties of the Commission regarding current litigation and litigation likely to be filed.

At the completion of the Executive Session the Work Session was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane K. Addicott  
Commission Assistant

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