



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Water Resources Department

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Water Resources Commission

FROM: Phillip C. Ward, Director

SUBJECT: Agenda Item B, February 18, 2010
Water Resources Commission Meeting

Integrated Water Resources Strategy Update

I. Introduction

During this agenda item, Commission members will receive a briefing from the Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) Project Team, and will have an opportunity to discuss recent events and accomplishments.

In addition, the Commission will host Christine Valentine, from the Governor's Office, to share some of the work she has led with the economic development community, in support of the Strategy.

Next, Commission members will have an opportunity to review the project "vision" first discussed and presented during the Commission's June 2009 meeting. The Commission will have an opportunity to consider this vision, together, with the project's goals and objectives, for potential adoption by the Commission during this meeting.

Finally, the Project Team has a number of new updates and documents to share, as well as a number of public policy issues to bring to the Commission for discussion.

II. Governor's Economic Revitalization Team

The Governor's office has helped greatly with outreach to the economic development community as part of this strategy. During the past several weeks, Christine Valentine, Special Projects Coordinator, for the Governor's Office / Economic Revitalization Team (ERT), has been partnering with the IWRS Project Team to conduct interviews of officials at the Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD). She has hosted a workshop on the topic with OBDD staff, and has facilitated and scheduled meetings with representatives of Oregon's business sectors.

Ms. Valentine has nearly 17 years experience in state government and during this time has been involved in a wide variety of community development and natural resources management issues.

She worked for the Alaska Governor's Office, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, and Oregon Business Development Department before joining Governor Kulongoski's Office in July 2008. Her current assignment involves supporting the Governor's five regional coordinators for the ERT, working to promote customer service with ERT partners, and promoting interagency connections and communications among the ten state agencies participating in the ERT.

III. Report-Back on the December 2009 Agency Advisory Group Meeting

Fifteen natural resource and economic development agencies and staff from the Governor's Office have formed an Agency Advisory Group, designed to provide technical expertise to the Integrated Water Resources Strategy. This group has provided much of the new content to the draft issue papers, and will continue to provide the data, text, maps, and other materials needed for Policy Advisory Group and other discussions. Already, members have hosted a number of IWRS workshops for their agencies, to facilitate an exchange of information between their agency staff members and the Project Team.

The Agency Advisory Group will continue to meet throughout the process, preparing technical analysis and materials for the Project Team to use in its work with other Advisory Groups, stakeholders, and partners. See Attachment 1 for a roster of Agency Advisory Group members.

IV. Report-Back on January 19, 2010 Policy Advisory Group Meeting

The Policy Advisory Group (PAG) met for the first time on January 19, 2010 at the Department of Fish and Wildlife in Salem. The 18 members introduced themselves, including their vision for what Oregon's water resources will like 50 years from now. The vision the Policy Advisory Group members articulated is directed toward the physical water resources of the state. The PAG expressed interest in fleshing out a formal vision statement as part of its overall workplan.

The PAG also heard presentations and participated in discussions relating to the scope, purpose, structure and timeline of the Strategy. As the group worked, a professional facilitator and the Project Team took notes on a flip chart, and subsequently compiled meeting notes that included suggestions for future issues and tasks to consider.

At midday, the group reviewed an organizational charter and meeting protocols. Most of the conversation centered on the desire to move recommendations forward by way of consensus. The group noted that any decisions that could be presented as a consensus would be very powerful, considering the wide variety of perspectives among members. Failing consensus, the group requests that the majority and minority views on any given topic be recorded in the meeting notes and forwarded / publicized along with all the other products of the committee.

The afternoon session focused on a high-level discussion of the draft issue papers and public involvement plan. The second version of draft issue papers was not available in time for the meeting, and presentations focused on some of the basic challenges and opportunities that will be

discussed in each chapter. Staff notes areas where new text has been added, such as public health and drinking water systems, land-use planning, federal storage reservoirs, commercial fisheries, and environmental justice. The next edition of these papers is scheduled for release during mid 2010.

The next meeting of the Policy Advisory Group is scheduled for April 14 at the Water Resources Department. The discussion will center on the types of information and data that water resource practitioners and policy-makers use in order to manage Oregon's water resources. Presentations will focus on "what we know and don't know" in terms of instream and out-of-stream water needs, the quality and quantity of water resources, and future pressures. Upcoming meeting dates and materials for the Policy Advisory Group will continue to be posted on the IWRS project webpage.

V. Report-Back on January 28, 2010 Environmental Flows Technical Advisory Group

On January 28, an Ecological Flow Technical Advisory Group met at the Water Resources Department, for the first in a series of meetings in 2010. The group is comprised of scientists from the academic, public and private sector, led in their efforts by George Robison, Ph.D., P.E., from the Water Resources Department and Barry Norris, State Water Engineer. This group is developing a white paper that clearly defines ecological flows and describes the methodologies available for determining such flows. The Water Resources Department is currently in negotiations with the Independent Multidisciplinary Science Team (IMST) to provide peer review for this project.

HB 3369 requires the Water Resources Department to protect peak and ecological flows during the course of its grant and loan programs, and to have such protections in place by 2012.

Information about upcoming Technical Advisory Group meetings, related materials, and a roster of Advisory Group members will continue to be available on the IWRS project webpage.

VI. Addressing 2009 Public Comments on the Preliminary Workplan.

During a public comment period that closed November 1, 2009, the Project Team received comments from more than 20 stakeholders, partners, and members of the public, resulting in more than 230 additions, clarifications, or other modifications to both the preliminary workplan and draft issue papers. Staff included those comments in the Commission's November 18, 2009 agenda packet. This worksession will review some of the key components in the revised workplan.

Workplan-related comments have helped the Project Team clarify terms and develop a project framework. The questions and suggestions provided have resulted in more clear graphics and narrative. Please see the revised preliminary workplan in Attachment 2 for discussion of the following items:

1. vision, goals, objectives, and recommended actions
2. updated roles and responsibilities
3. discussion of a technical agenda
4. updated project timeline
5. a new public involvement plan
6. design of Spring 2010 open houses
7. potential grant applications

A new round of public arrived at the Water Resources Department between November 1, 2009 and January 31, 2010. Those comments, pertaining to the workplan, issue papers, and overall process, are enclosed as Attachment 3.

The comments came from 13 different organizations and citizens representing agricultural interests, forestry, environmental interests, Tribes, cities, private consultants, and the public. Comments were supportive of the overall efforts, and commenters thanked the Commission for taking the time and effort to draft issue papers for the public in a way that thoughtfully addresses water issues. Commenters asked to be kept involved in the formation of the strategy.

One commenter encouraged the Strategy to include “education” as a focus, particularly related to appointed officials, elementary and secondary education, and also higher education.

Four commenters offered additional ideas for text/content of the issue papers, including a discussion of “groundwater dependent ecosystems,” “River Ecology 101,” “healthy riparian ecosystems,” and salmon recovery and restoration successes.

Of the 13 respondents, two took issue with the project itself, concerned that the Strategy might overhaul Oregon water law, and that the Strategy might not recognize the trade-offs that occur when trying to balance instream and out-of-stream needs.

The Project Team will continue to accept public comments on both the preliminary workplan and the draft issue papers throughout the project, and will incorporate both documents into the final Strategy, due to the Oregon Legislature in 2012.

VII. Next Steps: Open Houses

From March through June 2010, open house events are scheduled in ten Oregon communities to serve three purposes:

- First, the Project, comprised of senior agency staff, will disseminate information about the state-wide strategy.
- Second, facilitated roundtable discussions will solicit input from community members, in terms of water resource challenges, opportunities, and recommended actions.
- Third, the Project Team plans to showcase successful examples of water resource solutions in Oregon communities today.

This will use a true open house format, with one or more big rooms hosting tables or "stations" where participants can get information, participate in conversations and brainstorming sessions with facilitators, and ask agency field staff (and other sponsor organizations) questions about current issues and projects.

The Project Team will advertise these events through local newspapers, community fliers, field offices, local radio stations, stakeholder networks, and websites.

During this agenda item, Commissioners will have an opportunity to discuss the plans for sponsorship, facilitation, advertising, and format, related to the 2010 open houses.

Please review Attachment 4 for a draft schedule of Open Houses, and let us know if you are available and interested in participating in the events in your region. As details develop, we will update the project webpage. Be sure to check the project webpage for the latest dates, times, and venues before heading to any open house events.

The Project Team recognizes the need to revisit communities late in 2011, when recommended actions and more detailed strategy are ready for review and comment. The Team envisions a series of public hearings, conducted by a Water Resource Commissioner in each region, in order to solicit and document public comment in a more formal venue.

Commissioners should plan to discuss these next steps in public involvement during this agenda item as well.

VIII. Potential Adoption of Vision, Goals, and Objectives

At the June 2009 Water Resources Commission meeting, the Water Resources Commission's Water Planning Committee offered the following vision statement about how the integrated water resources strategy would work:

A statewide integrated water resources strategy will bring various sectors and interests together to work toward the common purpose of maintaining healthy water resources to meet the needs of Oregonians and Oregon's environment for generations to come.

The Commission discussed this vision statement at the June 2009 meeting, but took no formal action. In the subsequent months, the Project Team drafted a series of goals and objectives that flow from the vision statement and address the requirements in HB 3369.

HB 3369 requires a Strategy to include "objectives of the strategy" and "actions that are designed to achieve the objectives of the strategy." Below and also reproduced on page 4 of the Preliminary Workplan, the Water Resources Commission's vision has been translated into goals and objectives.

During the February 18 meeting, Commissioners will have an opportunity to review this vision, goals, and objectives, and discuss whether these are crafted satisfactorily, and how and when then Commission would like to adopt them.

The “recommendations for action,” for which a placeholder has been left, will come from the collective work of the Advisory Groups and public involvement process. These recommendations for action may be statewide and/or local in nature. They may include information/data, planning, policy, statute/rule, funding, or outreach/education tools.

Other groups participating in this process, such as the Policy Advisory Group, have had a cursory opportunity to review this text. As part of their meetings and discussions, they have not grappled with the wording in very much detail, but have expressed a desire to do so. As a result, changes to some of the wording may be recommended throughout the next several months.

Goal #1: Improve understanding of Oregon’s water resource needs

- Objective #1: Improve understanding of instream (non-consumptive) needs:
Ecological needs ~ watershed, forest, estuary, flood plains
Transportation, hydropower, recreation, and scenic waterways
Recommended Action: _____
 - Objective #2: Improve understanding of Oregon’s out-of stream (consumptive) needs:
Economic development, public health and safety, cultural needs
Recommended Action: _____
 - Objective #3: Improve understanding of Oregon’s water resources today:
Surface water quantity and quality
Groundwater quantity and quality
Interaction between surface water and groundwater.
Recommended Action: _____
- } Understanding water needs and resources today

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- Objective #4: Improve understanding of pressures that could affect needs:
Population growth, land-use changes, economic development goals
~ more ideas collected throughout project (workshops and open houses)
Recommended Action: _____
 - Objective #5: Better understand what pressures could affect access to clean & reliable water resources:
Climate change, land-use changes
Drought, flood, seismic events and other natural disasters
Federal regulations
~ more ideas collected throughout project (workshops and open houses)
Recommended Action: _____
- } Understanding the coming pressures
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Goal #2: Meet Oregon's water resource needs

Objective #6: Improve water resource health:

Strive for healthy watersheds, forests, estuaries, floodplains, aquifers

Recommended Action: _____

Objective #7: Improve economic certainty and cultural access:

Strive for adequate, clean & reliable water supplies and infrastructure

Recommended Action: _____

} Meeting
Water
Resource
Needs

IX. Conclusion

In Phase II, Advisory Groups will continue to meet, and the Project Team will hold a series of open houses in Oregon communities. A number of stakeholder organizations have extended invitations to the Project Team to hold briefings and workshops. Updates on these and other efforts will be included during the Water Resources Commission's June 2010 meeting.

Attachment 1: Agency Advisory Group Briefer (dated January 29, 2010)

Attachment 2: Revised Preliminary Workplan (dated January 19, 2010)

Attachment 3: New comments received between November 1, 2009 and January 30, 2010

Attachment 4: Draft Open House Schedule

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