



Oregon

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Water Resources Commission

FROM: Brenda Bateman, Senior Policy Coordinator

SUBJECT: Agenda Item A, November 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 and provide input on recent events, accomplishments and public policy issues. This is an informational item only.

Topics for this session include:

- OSU's Public Attitudes Survey
- Policy Advisory Group (PAG) Updates
- Public Policy Discussion: Workshop and Feedback Loop

II. OSU's Public Attitudes Survey

During May and June 2010, graduate students at Oregon State University conducted two telephone surveys of the general public. One was focused on "Public Attitudes Toward Water Use in Oregon" and the other focused on "Oregon Water Policy." Attachment #1 contains survey results.

The purpose in both cases was to assess citizen attitudes and opinions toward water issues in Oregon. Both surveys enjoyed more than a fifty percent response rate. Responses to the survey will be used for a variety of research projects—such as doctoral dissertations, published articles, and conference presentations—and to assist the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) in the Integrated Water Resources Strategy.

The graduate students who managed the surveys, Erika Allen Wolters and Monica Hubbard, will present their findings to the Water Resources Commission.

III. Policy Advisory Group (PAG) Updates

The IWRS Policy Advisory Group (PAG) met for the fourth time on October 6, 2010 at the Water Resources Department. The Group spent the bulk of its meeting working with input gathered from the 12 IWRS Open Houses, 30+ Stakeholder Workshops, public comments, and Agency and Policy Advisory Groups. Policy Advisory Group members had already completed some preliminary work, putting individual thought into which of the more than 80 issues identified during the input process were critical for inclusion in the first iteration of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy (2012-2017).

By the end of their October meeting, the Group had identified a number of issues that they believed needed to be addressed in the Strategy. They did this using a consensus approach, and reserving the right to add or subtract from this list in subsequent meetings. With these issues identified, however, the Group was then able to spend a couple of hours scoping these issues. This involved asking for better clarification and definition of each issue. It also involved developing a set of questions to guide the Project Team as it pulls together materials for the next meeting, such as “What is the status of this issue today?” “How are other states handling this issue?” And, “How can we make use of modern technologies or collaborative partnerships to address this issue?”

Policy Advisory Group members asked how their work to identify critical issues would fit into previous efforts, including the authorizing legislation, the resulting goals and objectives, and the visioning and other exercises of the PAG and Water Resources Commission. See Attachment 2 for a schematic of the overall framework. At the top is the Water Resources Commission’s vision for the overall process. Following that is the Policy Advisory Group’s vision for the physical water resources of Oregon. Next are the goals and objectives, the language of HB 3369 placed into an outline form. The critical issues will go into the subsequent layer and will be addressed in the first iteration of the Strategy.

The Project Team will use the PAG’s scoping questions to flesh out these issues and draft some recommended actions. Fortunately, much of this work has already begun, as we have already received creative and thoughtful suggestions from the 2010 Open Houses, Stakeholder Workshops, Public Comments, and IWRS advisory meetings.

IV. Public Policy Discussion: Workshop and Feedback Loop to the PAG

The Water Resources Commission, during its August 2010 meeting, requested an opportunity to discuss recent IWRS issues and provide feedback to the Policy Advisory Group. The following questions will help frame the day’s discussion:

- 1) Are there critical issues that Commissioners feel must be addressed in this first iteration?
- 2) Are there consistent or standardized scoping questions that the Project Team should consider in describing these issues and drafting recommended actions?

V. Conclusion

The Integrated Water Resources Strategy continues through the work of partners, advisory groups, and staff. Recent work products have filled in more detail to the framework crafted by the Water Resources Commission and Department more than a year ago. Next steps will include providing feedback from this meeting to the Policy Advisory Group, as well as filling in detail and drafting recommended actions to respond to Oregon's most critical water resource issues.

Attachment 1: OSU Public Attitude Surveys

Attachment 2: Draft IWRS Framework

Brenda Bateman

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