



Oregon

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Water Resources Commission

FROM: Brenda Bateman, Senior Policy Coordinator

SUBJECT: Agenda Item G, February 18, 2011
Water Resources Commission Meeting

February 2011 Legislative Update

I. Introduction

Oregon's 76th Legislative Assembly has convened in Salem, with budget as the primary, but not the only topic, under consideration. The composition of the Oregon Senate is 14 Republicans and 16 Democrats, with numbers in the House totaling 30 Republicans and 30 Democrats. As a result, designing a governance structure has proven complicated, with the House chamber and all of its committees sharing leadership equally between both parties.

This is an informational report, laying out committee assignments, a general overview of water-related bills that have emerged so far, and a rough timeline of the budget and policy discussions expected to take place during the 76th Legislative Assembly.

II. Committee Assignments

The Oregon Legislature convened briefly during mid January to form committees and adopt committee rules.

Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee

The Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee will again be chaired by Senator Jackie Dingfelder (D-Portland). Her committee is comprised of:

- Jackie Dingfelder (D-Portland), Chair
- Alan Olsen (R-Canby), Vice Chair
- Mark Hass (D-Beaverton)
- Floyd Prozanski (D-Eugene)
- Chuck Thomsen (R-Welches)

Three of the Department's bills will begin in this committee:

Senate Bill 126, "Certified Water Right Examiner Training"
Senate Bill 127, "Department Ability to Enter into MOUs" and
Senate Bill 168, "Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement Fund."

House Energy Environment and Water Committee

In the House, the environment and water-related committee has been broadened to include energy issues as well. As previously mentioned, the fifty-fifty composition of the entire chamber affects the leadership structure of each House committee. The House Energy Environment and Water Committee has two co-chairs, and two vice co-chairs. Membership is as follows:

- Ben Cannon (D-Portland), Co-Chair
- Jules Bailey (D-Portland)
- Vic Gilliam (R-Molalla, Silverton), Co-Chair
- Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario)
- Debbie Boone (D-Cannon Beach), Co-Vice Chair
- Brad Witt (D-Clatskanie)
- Wayne Krieger (R-Gold Beach), Co-Vice Chair
- Jim Thompson (R-Dallas)

The remaining three Department bills will begin in this committee:

House Bill 2133, “Electronic Transactions at WRD”

House Bill 2134, “Broadens the Category of Permits Involved in an Exchange”

House Bill 2135, “Newspaper Notices.”

The Legislature has also announced a number of joint committees. The two natural resource committees described above will comprise a “Joint Natural Resources Committee,” for the purpose of hosting simultaneous hearings.

The Joint Ways and Means Committee, which builds the state’s budget, is chaired by Sen. Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin), Rep. Peter Buckley (D-Ashland), and Rep. Dennis Richardson (R-Central Point). Ways and Means also has a number of Joint Subcommittees.

The Joint Ways and Means Natural Resources Subcommittee is comprised of the following members:

- Sen. Chris Edwards (D-Eugene), Co-Chair
- Rep. Jean Cowan (D-Newport), Co-Chair
- Sen. Jackie Dingfelder (D-Portland)
- Rep. Bob Jenson (R-Pendleton), Co-Chair
- Sen. Chuck Thomsen (R-Welches)
- Rep. Jules Bailey (D-Portland), Co-Vice Chair
- Rep. Mike McLane (R-Medford), Co-Vice Chair

III. Water-Related Bills Thus Far

During the first week of Session, more than 1,600 bills were introduced in the 76th Legislative Assembly. The Department is tracking a number of water-specific bills, as well as those more broadly related to natural resource consolidation, energy, land-use, economic development, ethics, boards and commissions, and other topics.

Water-specific bills cover a wide range of issues from Columbia River water, to the Deschutes Mitigation Program. Water and Energy bills include: in-conduit hydroelectric systems, wave energy, and LNG pipelines. Water right bills touch on water measurement, instream leasing, and water right transfers. Hundreds more bills will emerge over the next several weeks. Some will get scheduled for hearings and work sessions. Some will not.

IV. Timeline of Budget and Policy Discussions

The formal Legislative Session convened on February 1.

The Department's budget will likely be considered by the Ways and Means Natural Resources Subcommittee in early April.

Measures will work their way through their first chamber from February through April. Policy committee chairs must hold work sessions by April 21 to keep bills alive. This deadline does not apply to Way & Means, Rules, and Redistricting Committees. Both chambers will host extra floor sessions from April 30 to May 4, in order to vote on bills and move them to the next chamber.

Measures will work their way through their second chamber during April and May. Policy committee chairs must hold work sessions by June 1 to keep bills alive.

The Legislature plans to adjourn SINE DIE by June 30, 2011.

V. Panel Presentation

This morning, lobbyists from the water industry will engage in a panel discussion sharing their priorities and predictions for the 2011 Legislative Session. Guests include: Katie Fast, representing Oregon Farm Bureau; Chris Fick, representing the League of Oregon Cities; John DeVoe, representing WaterWatch of Oregon; Mark Landauer, representing the Special Districts Association of Oregon; and Anita Winkler, representing the Oregon Water Resources Congress.

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