



Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy

February 1, 2011 Progress Report to the Oregon Legislature

Executive Summary

Purpose

During 2009, the 75th Legislative Assembly passed House Bill 3369, directing the Oregon Water Resources Department to develop a state-wide, Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) to better understand and meet Oregon's water quantity, water quality, and ecosystem needs, while taking into account important factors such as population growth and changes in land-use and climate conditions.

This document fulfills the reporting obligations under House Bill 3369, describing progress made thus far and evaluating whether Oregon's first Integrated Water Resources Strategy will be completed during 2012. As set forth in ORS 192.245, this Executive Summary is provided to all members of the 76th Legislative Assembly. The full progress report is available on-line, http://www.wrd.state.or.us/OWRD/LAW/docs/IWRS/2011_Progress_Report.pdf. Hardcopies are available, upon request, from the Water Resources Department.

Timeline

During the latter half of 2011, the Project Team plans to release a draft set of recommended actions for public review and input. The Water Resources Commission plans to adopt the IWRS during 2012, after notifying and consulting with other boards and commissions, as required by statute. The Strategy is due to the Oregon Legislature by December 31, 2012, with five-year updates occurring thereafter.

Institutional Structure

The Oregon Water Resources Department, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Oregon Department of Agriculture are key partners in these efforts. Tribes, along with public and private sector stakeholders, also have an important voice in this process, as do other state agencies. The Directors of the four departments have convened a "Project Team" of senior staff members, and three advisory groups—an 18-citizen member Policy Advisory Group (PAG), a 15-member Agency Advisory Group (AAG) comprised of state agency staff members, and a Federal Liaison Group (FLG) – to help with various technical and policy components.

Public Involvement

The public has already provided key input into this process, through face-to-face and electronic means. The Project Team hosted eleven open house events during Spring 2010, and posted an on-line version with presentation materials, maps, and an electronic survey. The open houses events were held at the following locations:

- Gresham, March 31
- Ontario, April 7
- Umatilla, April 8
- Bandon, April 22
- Tillamook, April 28
- Medford, May 11
- Klamath Falls, May 12
- Redmond, May 13
- Burns, May 25
- Salem, June 8
- Eugene, June 10

Commission/Board members and staff from the four key agencies presented materials and highlighted projects that demonstrate local, state, tribal, and federal water management practices currently underway in Oregon. At every event, facilitators from the local community led the brainstorming sessions and helped gather public input. Dozens of public and private organizations donated materials, facilities, refreshments, and countless hours to ensure the success of these outreach events. During these events, participants were asked to identify the key water issues facing their communities and the solutions they would like to see the state develop as part of the Strategy.

In addition, the Project Team conducted more than 30 stakeholder workshops around the state to solicit input. An on-line survey yielded another 80 individual responses. Additional input opportunities included public comments collected through traditional means and direct email access (waterstrategy@wrd.state.or.us) to the Project Team. All of these venues served as a great opportunity to understand and address public concerns and questions. The

Project Team received very positive feedback from participants who appreciated the time and energy invested in gathering public input. This input is summarized in a 40-page [Results](#) document, which includes more than 20 categories of suggested public policy solutions, currently available on the project website.

Components of the Strategy

The focus during the remaining two years is on the development of a statewide framework and recommended actions that help the state better understand and meet its water needs. A draft framework, containing goals and objectives, will help the Project Team and advisory groups determine the best approach to take for better understanding and meeting the State's water resource needs. This framework also identifies several potential issues that could be addressed during the first iteration of the Strategy (2012-2017). The issues, as described herein, are in draft form.

- Further Define In-stream Needs / Demands
- Further Define Out-of-Stream Needs / Demands
- Further Understand Limited Water Supplies & Systems
- Improve Water Quality & Quantity Information
- Further Understand our Water Management Institutions
- Water and Energy Nexus
- Water and Land-Use Nexus
- Climate Change
- Infrastructure Challenges
- Population Growth
- Pollutants
- Economic Development
- Institutional Structure & Capacity at All Levels
- Education & Outreach
- Funding
- Regionalization / Basin Efforts
- Water Management Practices
- Ecosystem Health & Public Health
- Natural & Built Storage

A set of recommended actions will be developed to address the issues. Based on input gathered to date, such actions would presumably focus on addressing data and information gaps, integrating decision-making and planning efforts, supporting basin planning, strengthening water conservation and water management approaches, developing above and below-ground storage systems, improving instream flow protection and restoration work, and more.

Work Products and Informational Resources

For more information, please visit www.wrd.state.or.us and click the "Project Page" link under the section titled "Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy." The supporting materials online describe in more detail why the state is planning for Oregon's water future. The website serves as an avenue for public input, as well as a repository for IWRS documents, including:

- [water resource issue papers](#) (public comments on the 11/18/10 version are due March 1, 2011);
- a [workplan](#) that includes the project timeline and meeting calendar;
- public comments received;
- and other [background documents](#), including a [map gallery](#), meeting notes, staff reports, [video](#) and [audio](#) files.

Joining the IWRS Listserv is another easy way to stay informed. The Project Team uses this electronic mailing list to distribute information regarding upcoming meetings, recent activity, and new developments. Currently, the mailing list has nearly 950 subscribers. To join, visit <http://listsmart.osl.state.or.us/mailman/listinfo/iwrs/>.

Funding

The 75th Legislative Assembly provided funding for two limited-duration positions —a policy coordinator and a science coordinator. The Strategy itself is due to the Legislature on December 31, 2012 and the Governor's Balanced Budget includes continued funding during the 2011-13 biennium to complete this project. Having adequate funding in place is critical for completing this first iteration of Integrated Water Resources Strategy in accordance with the requirements set forth in HB 3369. The Water Resources Department, Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Department of Agriculture anticipate completion of Oregon's first Integrated Water Resources Strategy, with continued funding, by the December 31, 2012 statutory deadline.

*To learn more, please feel free to contact Project Manager,
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