

Oregon Water Resources Commission
Work Session
November 21, 2003
Salem

WRC Members

Dan Thorndike
Tyler Hansell
Jim Nakano
Jay Rasmussen
Susie Smith

WRD Staff

Paul Cleary
Phil Ward
Debbie Colbert
Cindy Smith
Adam Sussman
Diane Addicott
Barry Norris
Tom Paul
Doug Woodcock
Dave Jarrett
Kyle Gorman
Donn Miller
Mike Auman
Bill Fujii
Rick Cooper
Bernadette Williams
Ken Lite

Others

Kimberley Priestley
John Rehm
Tammy Saylor
Scott Ashcom
Patrick Griffiths
Martha Pagel
Jan Lee

Written material submitted at this work session is part of the official record and on file at the Oregon Water Resources Department, 725 Summer St. NE, Salem, Oregon 97301-1271. Audiotapes of the work session are on file at the same address.

As this was our first meeting in our new location, the first agenda item was a Commission tour of the offices of the Department. Our agency recently moved to the newly constructed North Mall Office Building.

II. Legislative, Rulemaking, and Budget Update

Phil Ward, Deputy Director, briefed the Commissioners on the Department 2003-05 budget, reviewing a written report. The General Fund budget for the Department at the conclusion of the legislative session represents a 17.6 percent reduction from the 2001-03 budget. Staffing has been cut by 9 full-time positions, approximately a 6 percent reduction. Our current number of positions is 141 compared to 161 in 1997-99. On the bright side, the Department's fee adjustment bill and well driller bonding bill passed into law.

Cleary said that at one time the Department had some 40 county-funded positions; the number is now down to 25. Along with this decrease in staff we have experienced approximately a one-third increase in the number of water rights to administer.

Adam Sussman, Senior Policy Coordinator, reviewed with the Commissioners a written report summarizing water-related bills enacted by the 2003 Legislature, and a schedule of current and upcoming administrative rulemaking.

III. Water Resources Department Sustainability Plan

Phil Ward, Deputy Director, reviewed with the Commission the Department's draft Sustainability Plan. This plan is being developed as called for in Governor Kulongoski's Executive Order 03-03. In that Order the Governor has charged state government with identifying goals and strategies to move Oregon closer to being a "sustainable" state.

Public Comment on Item III

Kimberley Priestley, WaterWatch of Oregon, offered some suggestions on the resource management section of the draft plan. She suggested adding more measurable goals and program commitments. Under the Streamflow Restoration subheading she said it would be helpful to incorporate the conservation and efficient use policy, the instream flow protection policy, the ground water management policy, Oregon Plan commitments, and the economics of instream uses. She asked for more specific goals in the various subsections and urged the Department to look at some of the long-term issues such as climate change and growth. She asked that the Department open the draft plan to public comment.

IV. Deschutes Mitigation Program Annual Implementation and Evaluation Report

Laura Snedaker, Field Services Liaison, presented this annual evaluation of the Deschutes Mitigation Program to the Commissioners and responded to their comments and questions.

Kyle Gorman, South Central Region Manager, spoke on the 2003 irrigation season in the Deschutes Basin.

Rick Cooper, Hydrologist, described the development of a computer model that will monitor the effects of mitigation and ground water allocation on streamflow in the Basin.

Tammy Saylor, Deschutes Resource Conservancy, reported on the implementation and management of the mitigation credits system under the Deschutes Water Exchange Mitigation Bank.

There being no further discussion, the work session adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane K. Addicott
Commission Assistant