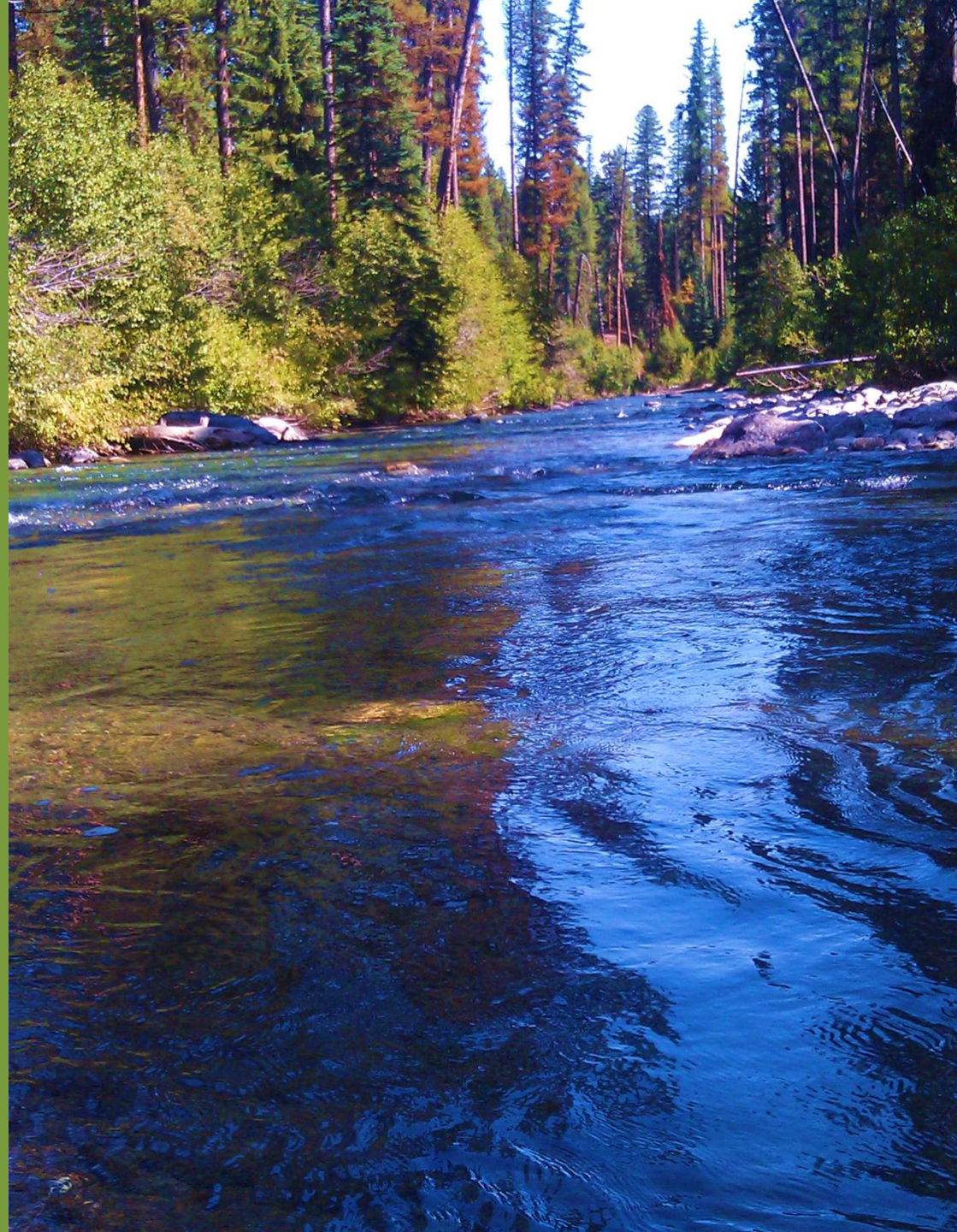
Feasibility Study Grants - Funding Recommendations & Program Updates

Agenda Item C

Adair Muth, Grants Manager

Louisa Mariki, Grants Analyst

September 11, 2025



Integrated Water Resources Strategy

Flow Restoration

Pivots

Piping

New Wells

Recommended Action:

13. D – Invest in Feasibility Studies for Water Resources Projects

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Planning, Collaboration, & Investments

Builds partnerships and incentivizes Oregonians to pursue integrated and innovative solutions for complex water challenges and an uncertain water future

Strategic Investments

Adaptive Planning

Cooperative Partnerships

Accessible Information

Effective Coordination

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Planning, Collaboration, & Investments

Placed-Based Planning

Plan & identify actions

Feasibility Study Grants

Investigate feasibility

Water Project Grants & Loans

Implement

- Well Abandonment, Repair, and Replacement Fund
- Harney Domestic Well Remediation Fund
- Water Measurement Cost Share Program
- Direct Appropriations

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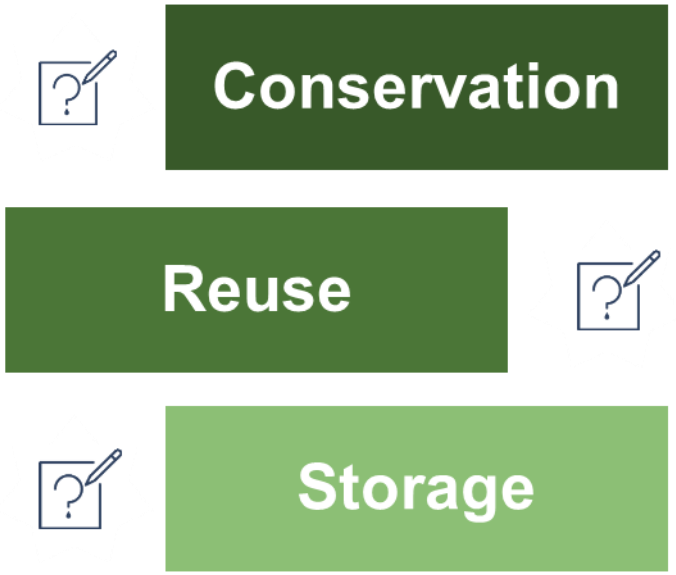
Funding Purpose

- Purpose – Provide funding to evaluate feasibility of a water conservation, reuse, or storage project
- Deadline – Spring each year (March 12, 2025)
- Funding Decision – Fall each year (September 2025)



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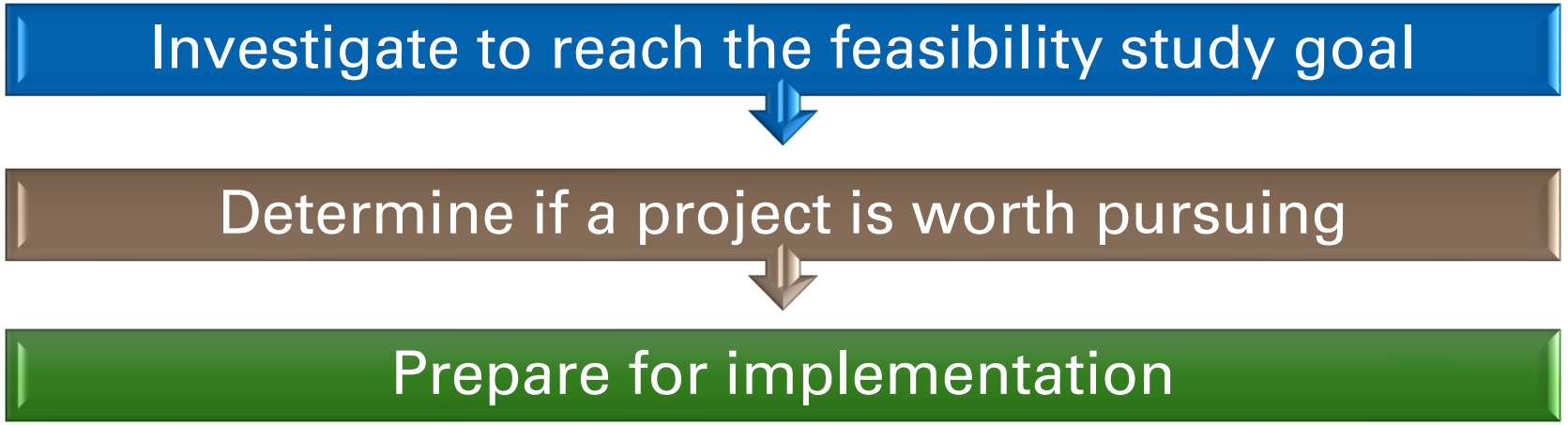
Purpose of Feasibility Studies



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Program Updates:

Division 601 Rules
House Bill 3364

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Division 601: Best Practices in Community Engagement for Funded Water Projects

Rules Adopted March & June 2025

Funding available through Feasibility Study Grants (FSG):

- Supports Community Engagement Plans
- Focus: Feasibility of water conservation, reuse, or storage projects

If Requesting Community Engagement Funds:

- Complete additional section of FSG application

In development:

- Application questions
- Review criteria
- Application guidance for applicants

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House Bill 3364: FSG Changes

2025 Legislative Session, Takes Effect Sept 26, 2025

Expanded Project Types:

- Aquifer recharge
- Aquifer storage and recovery
- Streamflow protection or restoration
- Other activities as identified by rule of the Water Resources Commission

Funding & Match Adjustments:

- Removes the **$500,000 cap** on funding
- Reduces **match requirement** from 50% to 25%

Fund Name Change:

- Fund Renamed to **Water Project Feasibility Fund**

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House Bill 3364: FSG Changes *(continued)*

2025 Legislative Session, Takes Effect Sept 26, 2025

Eligibility Updates:

- Aligns eligible entities with the Water Project Grant and Loan program
- *Note:* No change to who is eligible—only consistency in language

New Eligible Activities:

- Development of water management and conservation plans
- Data collection and analysis for seasonally varying flows
- Safety analyses of existing dams
- Environmental justice and community impact analyses

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Rulemaking needed to implement HB 3364 changes. ***Timeline TBD.***

Next Steps

 **Funding Cycle Opens:** Fall 2025

 **Applications Due:** March 2026

 * *New Online Grants Platform Launching!*

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2025 Funding Cycle and Recommendations

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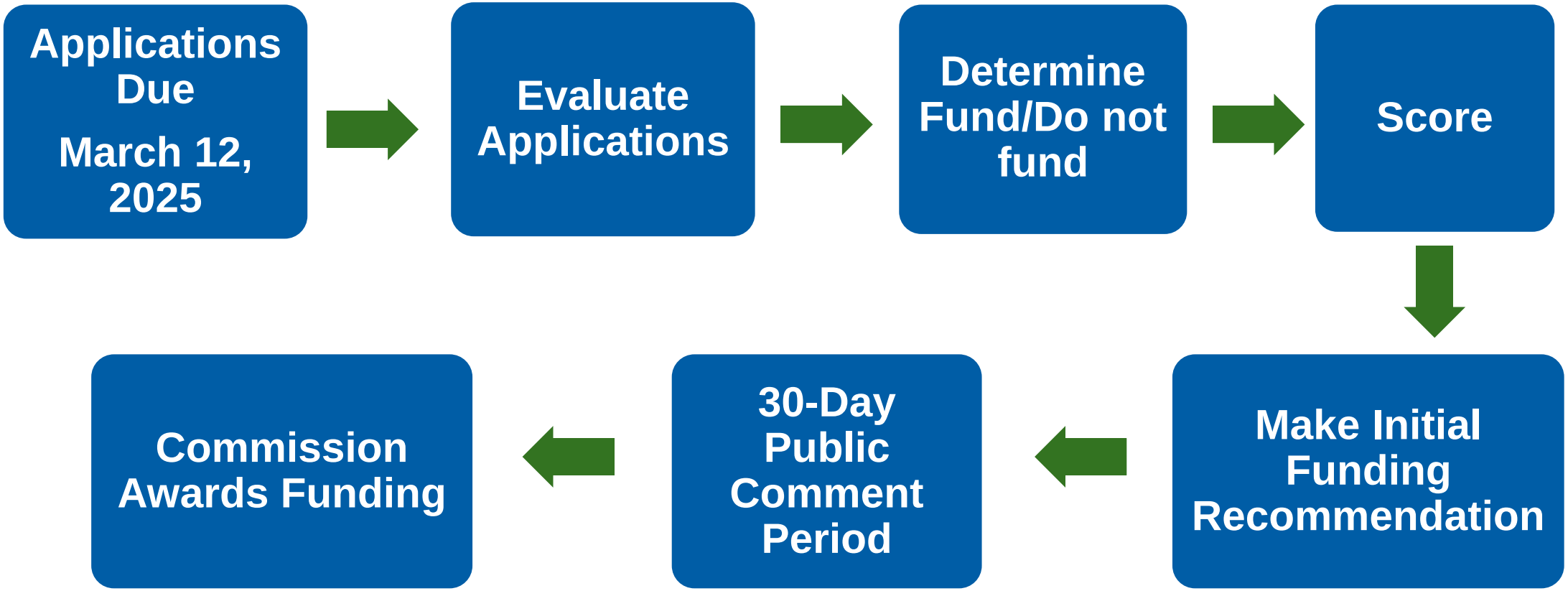
Application Review Process



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Application Evaluation

Application Review Team makes a fund/do not fund vote, considering:

Is the proposal a feasibility study?

Is the proposal ready for funding?

- Missing elements
- Insufficient details

Is water available? (Or, will this question be evaluated in the study?)

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Application Evaluation

- Projects that receive a “fund” vote are scored on:
  - Study goal
  - Water need
  - Community benefit
  - Technical planning and preparedness
- Projects are ranked by score and recommended for funding based on funding availability

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2025 Funding Cycle

Application deadline: March 12, 2025

Applications Received	5
Funding Requested	$1,039,504
Funding Available	$1,512,009

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Applications Received

Study Name	Project Type	Funding
Corbett Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility Reassessment	Below ground storage	$157,154
Lacomb Irrigation District Water Conservation Study	Conservation	$248,423
Molalla Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility Study	Below ground storage	$203,927
Natural Aquifer Recharge in the Upper Klamath and Coos/Coquille Basins	Below ground storage	$100,000
Deschutes Basin Water Bank Feasibility Study	Conservation	$330,000
Total		**$1,039,504**

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ART Funding Recommendation

Study Name	Project Type	Funding
Corbett Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility Reassessment	Below ground storage	$157,154
Lacomb Irrigation District Water Conservation Study	Conservation	$248,423
Molalla Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility Study	Below ground storage	$203,927
Natural Aquifer Recharge in the Upper Klamath and Coos/Coquille Basins	Below ground storage	$100,000
Total		**$709,504**

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Comments on Funding Recommendations

- OWRD hosted public comment period July 1-30, 2025
  - Two public comments received
- Tribes notified of funding recommendation and invited to provide comments for Commission consideration
  - No comments received

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Comments on Funding Recommendations

Comment	Submitted by
Support for Corbett Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility Reassessment	Biogen Lab Developments, Corbett Firewise, Menucha Retreat Center, Friends of Corbett Water
Recommend all applications address feasibility of legally protecting water instream if claiming instream benefit	Trout Unlimited

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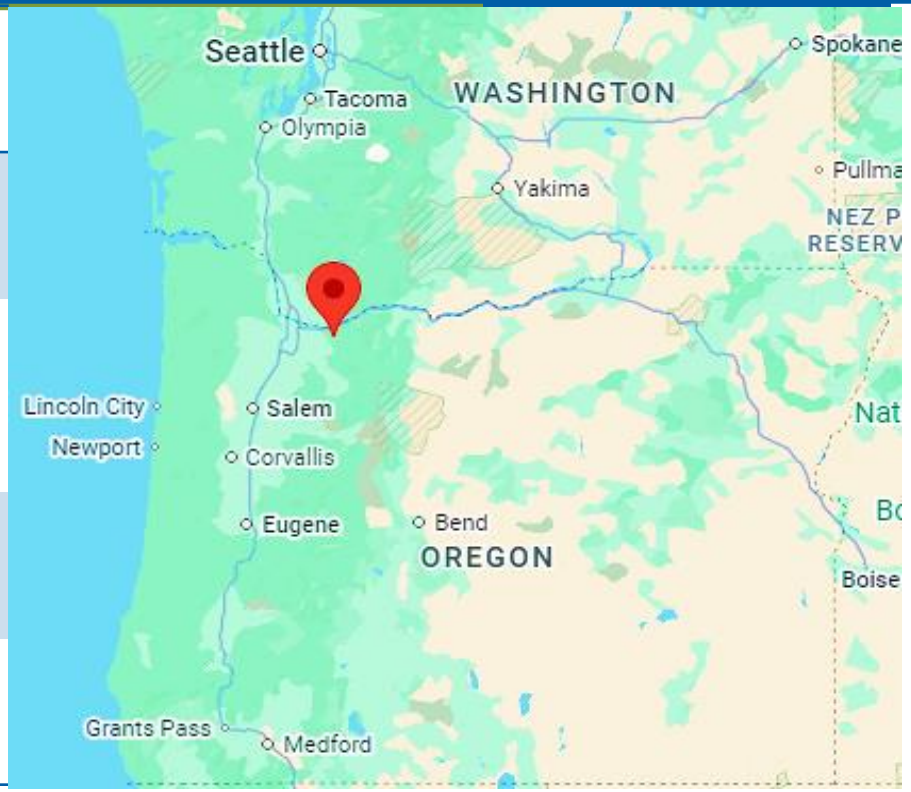
Corbett Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility Reassessment

Study Type	Below Ground Storage
Applicant	Corbett Water District
Funding Request	$157,154
Total Cost	$314,308
County	Multnomah



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Lacomb Irrigation District Water Conservation Study

Study Type	**Conservation**
Applicant	**Farmers Conservation Alliance**
Funding Request	$248,423
Total Cost	$496,846
County	Linn

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Molalla Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility Study

Study Type	Below Ground Storage
Applicant	City of Molalla
Funding Request	$203,927
Total Cost	$407,854
County	Clackamas

Map Data © 2025 Google

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Natural Aquifer Recharge in the Upper Klamath and Coos/Coquille Basins Feasibility Study

Study Type	**Below Ground Storage**
Applicant	**The Nature Conservancy**
Funding Request	$100,000
Total Cost	$200,000
County	Coos, Curry, Douglas, Klamath, Lake

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Deschutes Basin Water Bank Feasibility Study – *Not Recommended for Funding*

Study Type	**Conservation**
Applicant	**Deschutes River Conservancy**
Funding Request	$330,000
Total Cost	$660,000
County	Deschutes

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Fund/Do Not Fund Vote:

Alternatives

The Commission may consider the following:

1. Adopt the ART funding recommendation contained in, Table 2 of the staff report to fund four applications for a total award of $709,504.
2. Adopt a modified funding recommendation.
3. Direct the Department to further evaluate the applications and return with a revised recommendation.

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Recommendation

The Director recommends Alternative #1

1. **Adopt the ART funding recommendation contained in Table 2 of the staff report to fund four applications for a total award of $709,504.**
2. Adopt a modified funding recommendation.
3. Direct the Department to further evaluate the applications and return with a revised recommendation.

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Thank you!

Louisa Mariki
Grants Analyst
503-979-9160

Adair Muth
Grants Manager
971-307-0718

Oregon.gov/owrd

@OregonGovWRD

Linkedin.com/company/owrd

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Additional slides if needed

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Deschutes Basin Water Bank Feasibility Study

Study Type	Conservation
Applicant	Deschutes River Conservancy
Funding Request	$330,000
Total Cost	$660,000
County	Deschutes

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Comments on Funding Recommendations

Comment	Submitted by
Commission consider funding the Deschutes Basin Water Bank Feasibility Study.	Representative Mark Owens, Representative Ken Helm, Senator Kathleen Taylor, Senator Todd Nash, Senator Anthony Broadman
Reconsider the recommendation for the Deschutes Basin Water Bank Feasibility Study.	Deschutes River Conservancy

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