



# Staff Report

**TO:** Water Resources Commission  
**FROM:** Ivan Gall, Director  
**DATE:** December 11, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item C  
Water Resources Commission

## COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS TO THE GROUNDWATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### I. Introduction

During this agenda item the Commission will be asked to consider two candidates for re-appointment to the Groundwater Advisory Committee (GWAC). This is an Action Item.

### II. Integrated Water Resources Strategy Recommended Action

- 11.E - Develop Additional Groundwater Protections

### III. Background

The Commission appoints a nine-member Groundwater Advisory Committee pursuant to ORS 536.090 to provide advice on all matters relating to: (1) rules for the development, securing, use, and protection of groundwater, and (2) licensing and examination of well constructors. The Committee is also charged with reviewing the proposed expenditures of start card fee revenue.

The Commission's rules under OAR Chapter 690, Division 235 provide a process to identify GWAC candidates, prescribe a range of categories of expertise that may be represented on GWAC, and allow appointments for up to three years. The rules result in the expiration of three appointments each year, thus staggering membership. Any mid-term vacancy is filled for the remainder of the term. Each year, staff seeks Commission action on GWAC appointments. The Commission has previously directed that appointed members be limited to two terms (six years).

GWAC members represent a range of interests and expertise, including at least three members from the well drilling industry and the remainder representing interests in hydrogeology, irrigation, local government, Indian Tribes, environment, public health, industry, commerce, water project development, watershed enhancement, instream flow, agriculture, well pump installation, exempt ground water users, or any other category with a ground water interest (OAR 690-235-0005).

The current members of the committee are listed in the following table. The two expiring

positions are highlighted.

Name	City of Residence	Category Represented	Term
Brandon Brown	Umatilla	Monitoring/Water Well Industry	1st Term Expires 11/30/2025
Chuck Fobert	Hubbard	Monitoring/Water Well Industry	1st Term Expires 11/30/2026
Dave Noble	Bonanza	Groundwater Irrigator	1st Term Expires 11/30/2027
Eric Schneider	St. Paul	Monitoring/Water Well Industry	1st Term Expires 11/30/2027
Ken Bentz	Crane	Groundwater Irrigator	1st Term Expires 11/30/2025
Richard Smith	Hillsboro	Domestic Well Owner	2nd Term Expires 11/30/2026
Robyn Cook	Portland	Technical Hydrogeology	1st Term Expires 11/30/2027
Steven Patten	Milton-Freewater	Local Government	1st Term Expires 11/30/2027
Zach Freed	Bend	Hydrologist/Conservation	1st Term Expires 11/30/2026

#### IV. Discussion

The terms for Brandon Brown and Ken Bentz expire on November 30, 2025. Both members are finishing their first term and have expressed interest in being re-appointed for a second term.

#### V. Alternatives

The Commission may consider the following alternatives:

1. Appoint Brandon Brown and Ken Bentz to GWAC terms beginning December 12, 2025, through November 30, 2028.
2. Direct staff to return to the next Commission meeting with another slate of appointments that reflects a different set of interest categories and/or geographic locations.

#### VI. Recommendation

The Director recommends that the Commission select Alternative 1 and appoint the recommended candidates for the stated term.

Justin Iverson

503-302-9728