



Oregon

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Water Resources Commission

FROM: Brenda Bateman, Senior Policy Coordinator and
Alyssa Mucken, IWRS Policy Coordinator

SUBJECT: Agenda Item D, January 26, 2012
Water Resources Commission Work Session

Integrated Water Resources Strategy Work Session

I. Introduction

During this agenda item, Commission members will receive a briefing from the Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) Project Team, and will have an opportunity to review and discuss the 2011 Discussion Draft in a work session.

Topics to be covered during this work session include:

- a. Results from the Nov. 8, 2011 Policy Advisory Group Meeting
- b. Next Steps Toward Implementation
- c. Review of the 2011 IWRS Discussion Draft –
Background, Guest Essays, and Recommended Actions

Project Team members from partner agencies will participate in this afternoon's discussion: Karen Tarnow from the Department of Environmental Quality and Bruce McIntosh from the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

II. Results from the November 8, 2011 Policy Advisory Group Meeting

The Policy Advisory Group met in Salem on November 8, 2011 to continue its review of Recommended Actions. The focus of the meeting was on Recommended Actions #9 (Funding), #10 (Place-Based Approaches), #11 (Water Resource Development), and #12 (Public Health and Ecosystem Health), continuing the discussion where it left off from previous meetings. Policy Advisory Group members asked clarifying questions and shared their concerns about wording choices and policy direction, as in previous meetings. Members provided valuable guidance in terms of scaling back or re-wording Recommended Actions in order to alleviate specific member concerns.

As in the previous meeting, the facilitator asked members to provide a “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” on regarding each concept, in order to get a sense of the group. Members agreed to a “thumbs up” on topics, provided that staff incorporate wording changes suggested by the group. Support was fully expressed for each Recommended Action except for #10 (Place-Based Approaches), where one member asked to see the concept fleshed out more fully first.

The Policy Advisory Group plans to meet one more time during the development phase of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy. During its March 8, 2012 meeting the PAG will review and discuss in more detail the Recommended Actions contained in December 2011 Discussion Draft.

III. Next Steps toward Implementation

Notification. The first iteration of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy is scheduled to come before the Water Resources Commission in June 2012 for consideration for adoption. Before that can occur, House Bill 3369 requires the Commission to give notice to the Environmental Quality Commission, the Board of Agriculture, and the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission.

The Water Resources Commission Chair met with each early in the process to describe goals, objectives, and the process moving forward. Having received strong support during the early stages, both staff members and commissioners have committed to returning near the completion of the process for another face-to-face discussion. This approach has been strongly supported by members of the Policy Advisory Group, who noted in their July meeting that seeking and receiving a statement of “endorsement” from the other boards and commissions would provide the Strategy a strong foundation for the implementation phase.

The following boards and commissions have extended invitations to Chair Jackson and Director Ward to visit:

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board	January 19
Environmental Quality Commission.....	February 16 or 17
Board of Agriculture	March 7
Board of Forestry	March 7
Fish and Wildlife Commission	March 9

The Project Team plans to send letters and materials to the other boards and commissions that are currently represented by the IWRS Agency Advisory Group. These letters will include a request to endorse the Strategy and an offer to appear in person before the board or commission if members are interested.

Final Round of Public Comment. The Project Team will accept public comment on the 2011 December Discussion Draft until March 15, 2012. The public may participate by submitting written comments via email (waterstrategy@wrd.state.or.us).

Commission Process. The Project Team will bring input from the public and boards and commissions to the next Water Resources Commission meeting, scheduled for April 19-20. Commissioners will have an opportunity to clarify any questions they may have, offer suggestions, and prepare to consider the document for adoption in August 2012.

IV. Review of 2011 IWRS Discussion Draft: Background, Guest Essays, and Recommended Actions

Background. For the first time, the December 2011 Discussion Draft pulls together into one place all the documents readers need to view Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy in context. It contains the legislative mandate from 2009, the overarching vision, goals and objectives developed at the outset of the project, and a description of the public process used to identify and develop critical issues and recommended actions. The document also contains background information about each critical issue, drawing heavily on the issue papers developed early in the process.

Guest Essays. Oregon is a national leader in many of the techniques and technologies discussed in the background sections, including underground water storage, riparian restoration, canal piping and lining, LIDAR remote sensing, ecosystem services markets, and more. Private sector consulting firms, non-profit organizations, tribes and other partners have contributed 17 essays describing how these techniques and technologies are adding value in Oregon, and how they are likely to evolve into the future.

Recommended Actions have emerged from more than 24 months of public discourse, and reflect emerging themes in 12 issue areas that have appeared time and again. The Project Team crafted Recommended Actions based on input from three Advisory Groups, stakeholder workshops, the general public, and key legislators.

V. Conclusion

This afternoon's work session will provide an opportunity for Water Resources Commissioners to familiarize themselves with the document, ask questions of agency representatives from the Project Team, and suggest edits that help to clarify issues and address any concerns.

Attachment 1: December 2011 IWRS Discussion Draft

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