



Oregon


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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Oregon Water Resources Commission

FROM: Phillip C. Ward, Director 

SUBJECT: Agenda Item D, March 6, 2014
Water Resources Commission Meeting

Creation of a Liaison with the Environmental Quality Commission

I. Introduction

At the November 2013 Commission meeting, the Department was asked to explore the opportunity to create a Commission liaison position with the Environmental Quality Commission (EQC).

Dick Pederson, Director of the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), will provide information to the Commission about the liaison roles established between the EQC and other state agencies.

II. Background

Early in 2013, the EQC and Board of Forestry (BOF), in conjunction with agency leadership, established liaison roles to strengthen communication and coordination among DEQ and the Department of Forestry, as well as the policy-making EQC and BOF. The designated EQC/BOF liaisons attend meetings when agenda items include topics of overlapping interests and authorities. The liaison provides periodic updates to both EQC and BOF as necessary. A primary goal of establishing the liaison role is to develop potential areas of collaboration and cooperation, as well as develop a better understanding among the two agencies and boards.

III. Discussion

Oregon's first Integrated Water Resources Strategy (Strategy) was developed through the coordinated efforts and participation of many state agencies. A number of state Boards and Commissions provided letters in support of its adoption. As enumerated in the guiding principles, effective implementation of the Strategy requires collaborating to work "in ways that help agencies cut across silos," and recognizing interconnections between various state agency actions and water quantity and quality.

IV. Conclusion

Coordination between other state agency Boards and Commissions through a Commission liaison could provide an opportunity to support implementation of the Strategy, as well as increase collaboration and integration between state agencies and the policy-making bodies that

affect water resources. Upon Commission approval, the Department will work with EQC to finalize the liaison job description and identify the Commission liaisons.

V. Alternatives

The Commission may consider the following alternatives:

1. Approve establishment of a WRC Commission Liaison role with EQC.
2. Ask the Department to come back with more information.
3. Recommend that a WRC Commission Liaison role not be established.

VI. Recommendations

The Director recommends Alternative 1, that the Commission approve establishment of a WRC Commission Liaison role with EQC.

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Attachment 1: Draft job description for EQC/WRC Liaison positions

Draft Job Description

Environmental Quality Commission (EQC)/ Water Resources Commission (WRC) Liaisons

Background

Commission and agency leadership has expressed a desire to strengthen communication and coordination activities between the Department of Environmental Quality, the Water Resources Department and the policy-making commissions. A unique statutory relationship links the agencies and commissions, and they share multiple responsibilities related to implementation of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy.

Establish Liaison Function: Establish a recognized liaison role that places designated WRC/EQC members at each other's meetings when potential topics of overlapping interests and authorities are on meeting agendas. Included in this liaison function would be periodic updates to both EQC and WRC Commissioners. A primary goal of this liaison relationship is to develop a better understanding between the two agencies and commissions and facilitate collaboration and cooperation.

Liaison Responsibilities

1. Attend WRC/EQC meetings on a regular basis. This attendance may be determined by agenda items and need for updates from the EQC/WRC members.
2. Liaisons will meet on a periodic basis with the DEQ and WRC Directors to review potential areas of collaboration and cooperation.
3. Provide written or oral updates to EQC and WRC Commissioners on topics that have potential impact on the two agencies and their commissions.
4. Liaisons must be able to commit to at least a year of service.
5. Liaisons will be selected by processes defined by EQC and WRC Commissioners. Liaison members will meet with both the DEQ and WRC directors prior to starting their term of service.
6. Liaisons will provide materials/or oral communication to the DEQ and WRC Directors for review prior to commission meetings.
7. Liaisons will provide accurate information on topics discussed to the best of their knowledge, using materials such as meeting minutes, director reports, and staff information.
8. Liaisons will report back to their respective commission members on any topics that are of potential interest or impact at their commission meetings.
9. Liaisons should look for opportunities for the EQC and WRC to develop compatible goals or policies.

Length of Service:

1. Determined by WRC/EQC.
2. Service should be of sufficient length that allows liaisons to gain a significant understanding of the issues and policies that the EQC and WRC are implementing in their agencies and across the state of Oregon.