



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Water Resources Commission

FROM: Thomas M. Byler, Director

SUBJECT: Agenda Item M, August 19, 2016  
Water Resources Commission Meeting

### **Authorization for Expending Remaining Place-Based Planning Funds**

#### **I. Introduction**

Place-based planning is a voluntary, locally initiated and led effort in which a balanced representation of interests within a hydrologic area, work in partnership with the state to understand their instream and out-of-stream water resources needs and identify solutions to meet those needs. Recommended Action 9A of the 2012 Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) calls for undertaking a place-based approach to integrated water resources planning.

This action item requests that the Commission authorize the Department to expend the remaining \$93,000 of place-based planning funds.

#### **II. Background**

In 2015, the Legislature provided the Department with \$750,000 to pilot place-based integrated water resources planning. In February 2016, the Commission approved funding for four pilots: full funding for the Upper Grande Ronde and Lower John Day efforts, as well as partial funding for the Mid-Coast and Malheur Lake planning groups. Grant awards, outlined in Table 1, totaled \$657,000. The remaining \$93,000 was held in reserve for future consideration by the Commission in order to determine the best use of those funds to support place-based planning efforts.

**Table 1. Place-Based Planning Pilot Funding Awards**

<b>Pilot Area</b>	<b>Funding Requested</b>	<b>Funding Authorized</b>
Upper Grande Ronde	\$197,000	\$197,000 (Full)
Lower John Day	\$190,000	\$190,000 (Full)
Mid-Coast	\$330,300	\$135,000 (Partial)
Malheur Lake	\$205,500	\$135,000 (Partial)
Totals	\$892,500	<b>\$657,000</b>

### III. Recommendation for Use of the Reserve Funds

Since the February Commission meeting, the Department has worked with the four pilots, as well as engaged potential private funders and collaboration experts, to consider how best to use the remaining funds. Based on those efforts, the Department requests that the Commission authorize the Department to spend up to \$93,000 for the following purposes:

1. *Providing additional support to partially funded pilots as needs are identified* – The Mid-Coast and Malheur Lake pilots received partial funding (\$135,000 each) with the expectation that pilots would get through Planning Steps 2 or 3. Additional funds could be used to help these pilots sustain the planning process and proceed further along in the planning steps.
2. *Engaging statewide collaboration and conflict resolution experts and other resources to assist all four pilot areas* – The Department could enter into contracts with experts to do one or more of the following:
  - a. *Develop and deliver targeted training to each pilot* – This would help pilots further develop their capacity to build and sustain a successful collaborative process, and would draw on lessons learned from other efforts across the state.
  - b. *Consult with conveners and partners to proactively identify and manage potential challenges* – This upfront and proactive investment will prepare partners to handle challenges, like conflict, appropriately and minimize the resources spent repairing problems.
  - c. *Consult with conveners and partners to develop strategies for documenting and communicating lessons learned* – This will benefit both the four pilots as well as other places across the state that may wish to undertake collaborative planning.
3. *Assisting in funding a workshop in spring 2017* – The pilots and external funders are developing a proposal for a workshop that would allow the pilots, the Department, and IWRS partners to share and document lessons learned during Planning Step 1, gather feedback on the Draft Place-Based Planning Guidelines, and prepare for the next planning steps.

The Department anticipates needing to make decisions on these possible expenditures in the early fall prior to the October Commission meeting, but is not ready to recommend specific dollar amounts. Therefore, the Department requests the Commission authorize the Department to expend the reserve funds on the items listed above at its discretion, with reporting on expenditures at future meetings to ensure accountability. This authorization will ensure that these actions can take place during Planning Steps 1 and 2, enabling the Department to be adaptive and responsive to pilot needs and opportunities as they arise.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

To support the Place-Based Planning Pilots, the Department recommends the Commission authorize the Department to use up to \$93,000 of the place-based planning funds for contracts, grants or other agreements for the following purposes:

1. Provide additional financial assistance to the partially funded pilots (Mid-Coast and Malheur Lake) as needs are identified.
2. Engage statewide collaboration and conflict resolution experts and other resources that assist all four pilot areas.
3. Assist in funding a workshop in spring 2017.

#### **V. Alternatives**

The Commission may consider the following alternatives:

1. Authorize the Department to spend up to \$93,000 on the purposes identified in Section IV.
2. Modify the Department's expenditure proposal and adopt the modified authorization.
3. Direct the Department to further consider options and return with a revised proposal.

#### **VI. Director's Recommendation**

The Director recommends Alternative 1, to authorize the Department to expend up to \$93,000 on the purposes identified in Section IV.

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