



Updating Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy

**Water Resources Commission Meeting
August 18, 2016**



Outline

- **Overview of open house events, online survey, and individual comments**
- **General themes resulting from public input**
- **Update on Policy Advisory Group Meeting**
- **Conclusion and next steps**



Open House Events

- **Purpose was to inform public of recent accomplishments and gather input to inform the 2017 Strategy**
- **Events were advertised through IWRS mailing list**
- **Press releases were issued**
- **Reporters from East Oregonian, Argus Observer, and the Bend Bulletin attended the events**



Open House Events

Event	Date	Attendees
Pendleton	June 13	38
Ontario	June 14	14
Salem	June 16	22
Newport	June 20	14
Medford	June 22	30
Bend	June 23	51
Beaverton	June 30	27





Poster Gallery

Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy

Understand Water Resources Today

Further understand local water supplies & systems. Gather additional water quantity information.

Improve water quality & further understand our water quantity information.

Understand the Contingency Factors that Affect Our Needs and Supplies

Economic Development, Water & Energy Needs, Water & Land Use Needs

Population Growth, Climate Change, Infrastructure, Education & Outreach

Scan the QR code for more information.

Statewide Long-Term Water Demand Forecast

Background

In 2014, the Oregon Water Resources Department partnered with MWH Global to update statewide water demand values for major water use sectors, which were first developed in 2008 as part of the Oregon Water Supply and Conservation Initiative.

Possible Trends for Oregon (2015 to 2050)

The 2015 Statewide Long-Term Water Demand Forecast is a conversation starter, describing potential long-term water needs in an Oregon that may not be able to rely on historic patterns to predict future rainfall and snowpack. The same change in water demand rates can mean different assumptions about the future, factors that communities, governments and private partners can address together.

Changes in Agricultural Demands (AG)

Changes in Industrial Demands

Scan the QR code for more information.

Building Drought Resiliency

Drought in Oregon

Drought is a common and frequent occurrence in Oregon. The driest of 1970-1977, 1992, 2001, 2002, and 2012 were full statewide. The drought of 2012 was especially challenging. By September, 25 counties were under a state drought declaration. This was particularly difficult for areas that had experienced drought conditions during the previous two years.

Changes in Snowpack

With a predicted increase in regional mean temperature of 3 to 8.7 degrees Fahrenheit by the end of this century, Oregon can expect to see the percentage of precipitation that falls as rain, instead of snow, increase significantly (Mote, et al., 2014).

Precipitation arriving as rain instead of snow may contribute to increased streamflow and increase high flow events, decreased summertime snowmelt-run-off, and reduced recharge to groundwater aquifers.

Statewide Groundwater Quality Monitoring

Background

Groundwater contamination can come from many sources including failed septic systems, improper agricultural practices, improper hazardous waste storage or disposal, abandoned wells and other factors. Protecting groundwater is essential because mitigating contamination is extremely difficult, costly, and can pose a threat to human health. Over 700,000 rural Oregonians are almost completely dependent on groundwater.

Partnership Objectives

Oregon Pesticide Stewardship Partnership (OPSP), initiated in the early 2000s, uses local expertise and water quality sampling results to encourage voluntary changes in pesticide use and management practices to reduce potential pesticide contamination of groundwater.

Monitoring

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and its partners monitor for over 120 pesticides and organophosphates at 40 stream sampling locations across the state, in order to ensure the collection of quality and consistent data, DEQ provides each partner with the necessary resources with sample collections, and data interpretation.

Drought in Oregon

Record warm temperatures during 2013 contributed significantly to water supply shortages throughout the state. Warm temperatures led to a winter with record-low or near record-low snowpack, contributing to dry soils and vegetation, as well as lower than normal streamflows and peak runoff occurring earlier in the year.

Documenting and reviewing the conditions, impacts, and responses to the drought is an important component of understanding and preparing for the potential implications of future droughts so critical, especially as climate projections indicate that the Pacific Northwest will more frequently experience warmer and wetter winters and warmer summers.

For questions or more information, contact groundwater.monitoring@deq.state.or.us

Securing Additional Instream Protections

Background

Instream Water Rights Act: In 1987, the State of Oregon passed the Instream Water Rights Act, recognizing water instream as a beneficial use and authorizing state agencies to establish instream water rights. Currently, Oregon has over 500 state-agency held instream water rights. As of 2014, the Oregon Water Resources Department has processed more than 1,100 individual instream leases, instream transfers, and allocations of conserved water, restoring about 1.792 cubic feet per second of streamflow for fish and wildlife, recreation, and pollution abatement.

Two Rivers Designated as State Scenic Waterways

Oregon just received two new designations for scenic waterways. The Upper Klamath River and the Rogue River were designated as State Scenic Waterways. This designation provides additional protection for these rivers, ensuring their scenic, cultural, and recreational values are preserved for future generations.

Collaborative Water Planning in Oregon

Water is important to all Oregonians. It is vital to community well-being, economic development and a healthy environment. Across Oregon, every place has its unique water challenges that, if left unaddressed, may increase in the future. Collaborative water planning can help Oregonians understand and meet current and future water needs for people, the economy, and the environment.

Place-Based Planning

Place-based planning provides an opportunity for communities to better understand local water resources and their needs, and identify strategies to help basin partners collaboratively manage water supplies and demands, and identify strategies to help basin partners collaboratively manage water supplies and demands, and identify strategies to help basin partners collaboratively manage water supplies and demands.

Basin Studies

Basin studies are collaborative studies between local, state, and federal entities to evaluate water resources and demands, and identify strategies to help basin partners collaboratively manage water supplies and demands, and identify strategies to help basin partners collaboratively manage water supplies and demands.

Pesticide Stewardship Partnerships

Monitoring Data Helps Focus

Partnerships are ongoing in nine watersheds. Additional funding provided by the Oregon Legislature in 2013 provides for the expansion of the program through three major components: (1) expansion of PSP monitoring to additional water sheds and water sources, (2) technical assistance based on monitoring results, and (3) free waste pesticide collection events for growers and other commercial applicators.

Current Partnerships in Action

Currently there are nine partnerships located in seven sub-basins (see map). The watersheds include agricultural, urban, rural, and forested areas. The most recent partnership started in the Malheur Basin watershed in 2015. An inter-agency state team coordinates partnerships with local watershed partners.

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Oregon's Monitoring Strategy

Measuring Flows in Rivers and Streams

The Oregon Water Resources Department operates more than 250 stream gauges, of which 80 percent are near real-time. The entire network, shown on the map below, includes 343 additional gauges operated by cooperators, such as the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The Department includes cooperators' gauges as part of its network and utilizes the collected water resources data in day-to-day operations and scientific studies.

Conducting Groundwater Investigations

Groundwater investigations are a priority for the state, which typically evaluates groundwater resources on the basin scale through a cooperative, cost-share science program with the U.S. Geological Survey. This allows the Water Resources Department to develop a broad understanding of the groundwater system and to assist state and local planning efforts.

Expanding the Observation Well Network

The Department, in cooperation with the USGS, has completed basin studies in the Deschutes Basin, the sedimentary aquifers of the Willamette Basin, and the Upper Klamath Basin over the past 20 years. A new system study was initiated in the Malheur Lake Basin in 2016. The State has also funded additional basin for subsequent groundwater studies. These include the Umatilla and the Willapa sub-basin, and the Hood, Grand Ronde, and Foster Basins.



Kids Activity Table

Donations:

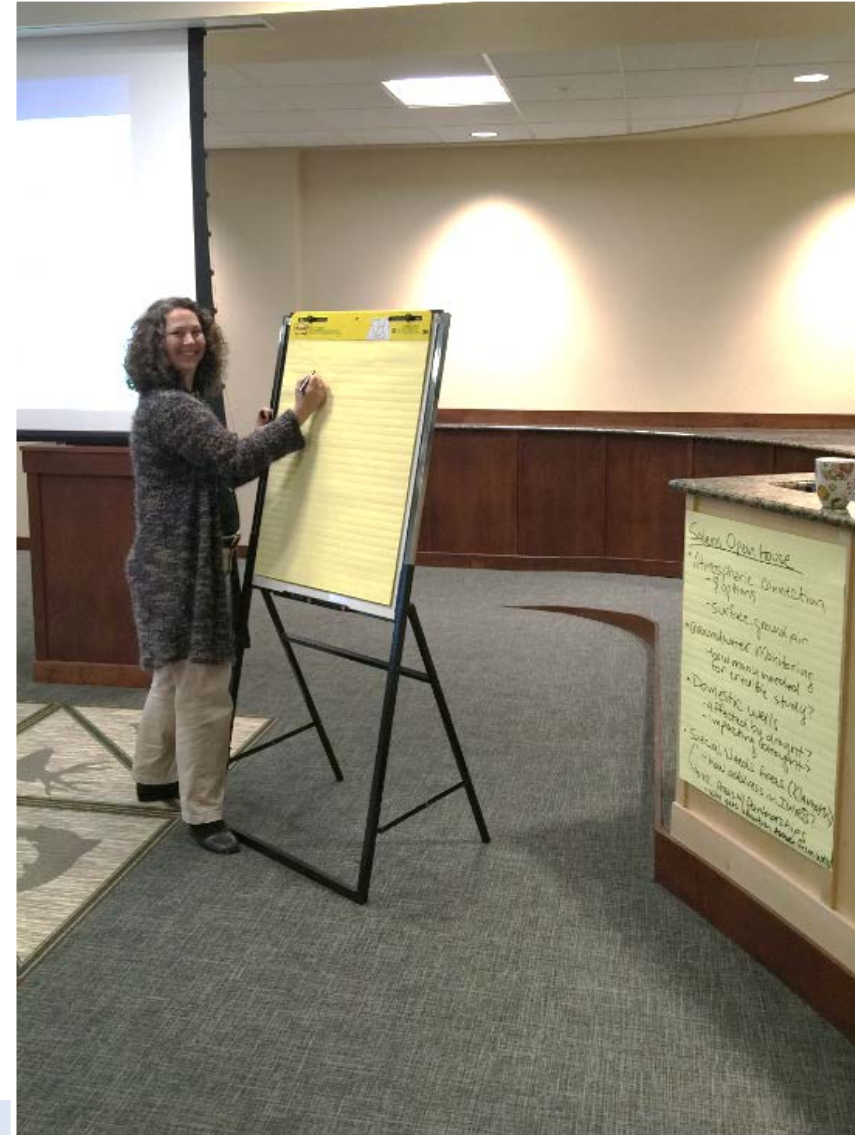
- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Umatilla Basin Watershed Council
- Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation
- Marion Soil and Water Conservation District
- Surfrider Foundation
- Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District
- City of Bend
- Portland Water Bureau
- Tualatin River Watershed Council





Support from Project Partners

- Agency partners assisted with note-taking, securing venues, materials, and advertising the events
- Department's field staff also participated
- Stakeholder organizations helped advertise
- Local partners helped with the welcome table and facilitation





Presentation

- **Provided overview of goals and objectives**
- **Summary of critical issues**
- **Highlighted key accomplishments**
 - **Place-based planning**
 - **Scenic waterways**
 - **New monitoring sites**
 - **Groundwater efforts**
 - **2015 demand forecast study**
- **Discussed drought and its place in the 2017 Strategy**



Discussion Questions

Questions Posed to the Audience:

- 1. How has the recent drought affected you?**
- 2. In what ways did the drought affect your community?**
- 3. How did you respond to drought? Please share any successes or strategies.**
- 4. What actions should be pursued to better prepare for future droughts?**
- 5. What most concerns you about the future with regard to water?**
- 6. Any other thoughts or comments you would like to share with the IWRS Project Team?**



Online Survey

- Another way to submit comments
- Same set of discussion questions
- Opened from June 13 through July 15
- Over 66 individuals participated

See Attachment 4

Q2: In what ways did the drought affect your community?

1. Concern for current and future availability of enough and quality water resources in Oregon.
2. Significant reduction in water available for irrigation primarily due to reallocation of irrigation water for other purposes.
3. I live in the county, where a very large number of people ended up having to purchase water, delivered by tank trucks. Many more problems than ever before, according to these delivery companies.
4. Our community depends on recreation - floating and fishing - as core parts of its tourism economy. Also, a healthy river is an important part of the community's identity. When instream flows are reduced, these suffer.
5. With publicity about other places our system demand has decreased naturally.
6. See above. Everyone who uses the rivers, reservoirs and other water-centric facilities has been impacted. From farmers to frogs everyone has felt the neqative effects.
7. Some reduced recreation income because of less snow, although Mt. Bachelor did relatively well.
8. Reduced water for residential irrigation.
9. Limited all of our ability to enjoy our rivers.
10. In visiting Bend while drought was in place, I was amazed at the sprinkler systems working away on what are community property in the various Estate systems... River Rim, River Canyon etc.
11. Created opportunities for news stories but no real changes in behaviors in the town of Madras at least.
12. We have poisoned the well. Rather than prioritize in-stream flows for habitat protection, we draw down river flow and warm up the water, all to the detriment of fish, birds, and insects dependent on the river systems. In the end the resources and values that make central Oregon popular are destroyed. We end up with too many people, damaged ecosystems, and irrigated specialty crops.
13. Ashland ran low on water from our watershed and added water from the irrigation district; this is low quality water and additionally, some folks lost their irrigation water because there wasn't enough to go around. Wildfire caused a lot of damage to our tourist industry, crops and health. Emigrant Lake, where many go for recreation was completely empty down to a small stream in the middle.
14. Trees died, several neighbors also have to purchase water due to wells nor producing enough water, etc.
15. With Detroit Reservoir at an all-time low last year, a tremendous amount of recreational use shifted to Suttle Lake and surrounding waters pushing usage over the top.
16. Fishing and recreation have been impacted by lower streamflows. The fishing season on the upper Deschutes has been shortened by a month.
17. Not sure.
18. Lost revenue for tourism.
19. Bend so far has been fortunate with adequate water supplies although the debate continues is this at



Individual Comments

- **Cyndi Karp**
- **Fran Recht**
- **Mark Henjum**
- **Oregon Environmental Council**
- **Rogue Basin Partnership**
- **Tualatin River Watershed Council**
- **Tualatin Riverkeeper**

See Attachment 5



Themes resulting from public input

- **Groundwater**
- **Place-based planning**
- **Monitoring**
- **Education**
- **Conservation**
- **Instream demands**



Policy Advisory Group Meeting

- **Held the second meeting on June 28, 2016**
- **Spent meeting building upon the brainstorming exercise from the first meeting**
- **Prioritized list of new actions or revised actions will continue at future meetings**
- **Some emerging topics:**
 - **Ensure adequate field and permitting staff, data and monitoring, public safety, infrastructure funding**
- **Online resource library available**



Next Steps

- **Next PAG meeting set for September 14 in Salem**
- **The Agency Advisory Group will meet in late September, following the PAG meeting**
- **PAG Meeting 4 has been set for December 7**
- **Staff will share the results of public input online**