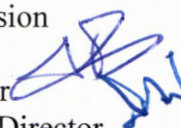





MEMORANDUM

TO: Water Resources Commission

FROM: Thomas M. Byler, Director 
Doug Woodcock, Deputy Director
Racquel Rancier, Senior Policy Coordinator 

SUBJECT: Agenda Item E, November 21, 2019
Water Resources Commission Meeting

100-Year Water Vision

I. Introduction

During this agenda item, staff will brief the Commission on efforts underway for the 100-Year Water Vision and engage the Commission in a discussion about the Vision's contents.

II. Background

In 2018, the Governor's office, with support from state agencies, announced efforts to develop a 100-Year Water Vision for Oregon's water future. The intent of the Water Vision is to raise awareness and catalyze action to address Oregon's pressing and critical need to invest in water resources, particularly natural and built infrastructure. Strategic investments will result in resilient natural and built water infrastructure across the state for our communities, economy, safety, and environment.

The 2017 Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) is the foundational strategy for this work. The IWRS charts the course for Oregon's in-stream and out-of-stream water resource needs, with the Water Vision taking steps to implement the actions identified in the IWRS.

III. Phase I

To provide feedback on the 100-Year Water Vision draft, this fall and winter, the Governor's Natural Resources Office and state agencies are listening, learning, and gathering information about the 100-Year Water Vision and its associated goals and problem statements. This effort also includes engaging leaders across the state to learn more about water in Oregon and working to increase understanding of data gaps, and funding coordination needs.

Opportunities to engage have included:

- *Online Feedback:* Visiting www.OregonWaterVision.org, which includes a place for individuals to share their thoughts about the 100-Year Vision.

- A *Technical Workshop*, held in November, to help state agencies better define what we know and gaps in knowledge around natural and built water infrastructure, current surface and groundwater condition, and funding.
- *Community Conversations*, held around the state in October and November, focused on the vision's four goals (Health, Safety, Environment, and Economy), and the history of water in Oregon.
- *Interviews* conducted by Oregon Consensus with a broad range of organizations, as well as tribes and local governments, who have an interest in Oregon's water future.

This is a public process, and the latest information is available at www.OregonWaterVision.org. Interested parties can also sign up to the list serve to stay apprised of the latest meetings and other information.

IV. Discussion

At the Commission meeting, staff will ask the Commission for feedback on the Vision's contents (Attachment 1). Staff will ask the following questions:

1. Do the goals represent your relationship to and usage of water? If not, what goals are missing, or what changes do you recommend?
2. Do the identified problems reflect the concerns you have surrounding the future of Oregon's water security? If not, what is missing, or what changes do you recommend?

V. Summary

As highlighted in Oregon's 2017 Integrated Water Resources Strategy, Oregon's water infrastructure has served us well, but is showing its age. Oregon's water future is already being shaped by climate and population changes. The Water Vision effort seeks to catalyze action to reshape our course. The information we gather this fall and winter will help to chart the best path forward. The Department will continue to provide periodic updates to the Commission on the Water Vision efforts.

Attachments:

1. Oregon's 100-Year Water Vision Handout

Tom Byler
503-986-0910

Doug Woodcock
503-986-0878

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503-986-0828



Oregon's 100-Year Water Vision

Preparing a Secure, Safe, and Resilient Water Future for All Oregonians

Vision

To address changes in climate and population dynamics, Oregon will steward its water resources to ensure clean and abundant water for our people, our economy and our environment, now and for future generations. Strategic investments will result in resilient natural and built water systems across the state to support safe and healthy communities, vibrant local economies and a healthy environment.

Premise

Many areas of Oregon are known for clean and reliable water. This is due to both favorable climate and the infrastructure we built in the 19th and 20th centuries to effectively move water from its source to where it is used.

As has been identified in Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy, three forces combine to place significant stress on Oregon's water:

- 1) Climate change and associated increases in fire, drought and flooding,
- 2) A half century of underinvestment in built and natural water infrastructure, and
- 3) Our changing population and associated development – growing in some areas, shrinking in others.

These factors impact the quality and quantity of water for our communities, including water in our rivers, lakes, reservoirs and aquifers. Simply put, if we are not willing to roll up our sleeves and work together to invest in our natural and built water systems, we place the safety of our communities, the health of our people and environment, and Oregon's economic future at risk.

Goals

◆ **Health**

Secure, safe, accessible, and healthy water for current and future Oregonians.

◆ **Economy**

Adequate and clean ground and surface water to support economic vitality for all Oregonians.

◆ **Environment**

Adequate cool, clean water for native fish and wildlife to thrive, and healthy watersheds that can store and filter water naturally.

◆ **Safety**

Resilient water supply and flood protection systems that can face natural hazards like earthquakes, floods and drought.

Problem Statement

Oregon's water infrastructure has served us well, but is showing its age. We have underinvested in natural and built infrastructure to meet current challenges and have not adapted systems to meet the needs of a vibrant Oregon for the next 100 years.

- ✓ Without modern water supply systems and water conservation approaches that combine to provide reliable access to water, including in emergencies, Oregonians risk not having water available when it's needed for healthy people and communities, food production, tribal treaty rights, and a thriving economy.
- ✓ Without resilient built and natural infrastructure that provides cool and clean water across all Oregon watersheds, our people – and our fish and wildlife – are increasingly vulnerable to the health risks associated with lack of access to adequate, clean water.
- ✓ Without upgraded levees, dams, stormwater systems, tide gates and the natural protection of wetlands and estuaries, our communities will be less safe and at increased risk of damage and economic hardship from localized and catastrophic flooding.
- ✓ Without access to relevant water data for effective decision-making, cross-agency coordination, and intentional approaches to test new ideas, built and natural water systems will perennially fall short of providing for Oregon's in-stream and out-of-stream water needs, including tribal treaty obligations.
- ✓ Without strong capacity across all Oregon communities to plan for their water future, and effective ways to ensure strategic water investment decisions are coordinated across and between local, regional, state, tribal and federal agencies, communities will not be prepared to take advantage of large-scale water infrastructure funding opportunities or collaborative and innovative partnerships.
- ✓ Without coordinated built and natural water infrastructure investments, Oregonians - including Oregon's federally recognized tribes and those in disproportionately impacted and rural communities – may be unable to access adequate clean water and return it to our rivers for downstream users, fish, and wildlife.

Our Shared Water Future

Oregon's water future is already being shaped by climate and population changes. How we choose to steward our water resources now will determine if we pass a legacy of clean and abundant water to future generations of Oregonians so they can enjoy a vibrant economy and live in a quality environment. The investments we make now in natural and built water infrastructure will support a prosperous Oregon in the 21st century and beyond.