



Update on Implementation of Projects

Oregon Water Resources Commission

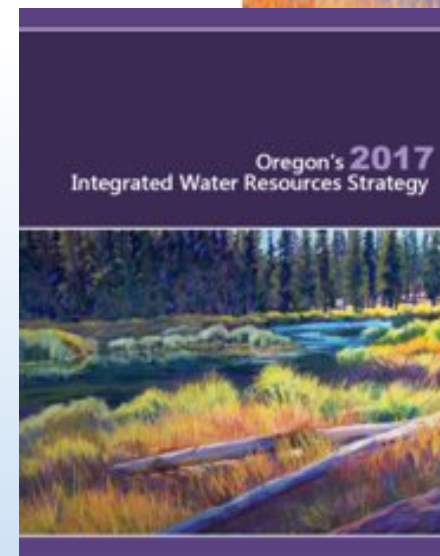
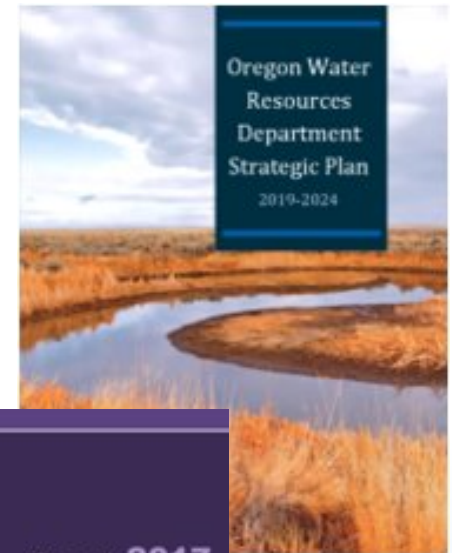
December 3, 2021

Tom Byler, Director

Racquel Rancier, Deputy Director

Post 2021 Legislative Session

- Not business as usual
- Significant investment and significant new workloads
- Refocus on implementing Strategic Plan and IWRS
- Transitioning our workforce
- Maximize existing staff capacity while recruiting

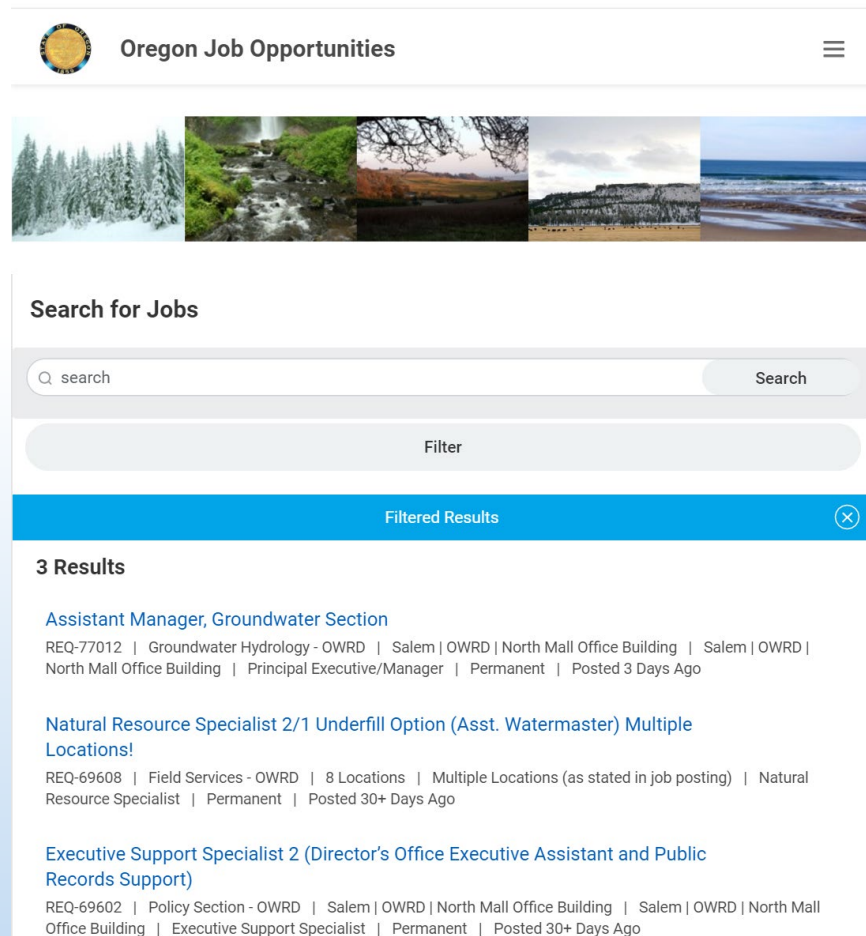


Initial Considerations

- Review and discussion of all the new work to be done
- Administrative adjustments for implementation
- Priorities vs opportunities
- Focus on recruitments to stand up new programs and workload

Recruitments

- 2019-2021 required pandemic budget reduction vacancies
- 2021 Legislative Session – 38 new positions
- July - Between existing vacancies and new positions, 70+ positions to fill
- Takes time to: Interview, Hire, Train



The screenshot shows the Oregon Job Opportunities website interface. At the top, there is a header with the Oregon state seal and the text "Oregon Job Opportunities". Below the header is a row of five landscape images: a snowy forest, a waterfall, a field with trees, a rocky coastline, and a beach. The main content area is titled "Search for Jobs" and features a search bar with a magnifying glass icon and the word "search", and a "Search" button. Below the search bar is a "Filter" button. A blue banner indicates "Filtered Results" with a close icon. Underneath, it shows "3 Results". The first result is for an "Assistant Manager, Groundwater Section" (REQ-77012) located in Salem, OWRD, North Mall Office Building, with a posting date of 3 days ago. The second result is for a "Natural Resource Specialist 2/1 Underfill Option (Asst. Watermaster) Multiple Locations!" (REQ-69608) with 8 locations, posted 30+ days ago. The third result is for an "Executive Support Specialist 2 (Director's Office Executive Assistant and Public Records Support)" (REQ-69602) located in Salem, OWRD, North Mall Office Building, with a posting date of 30+ days ago.

Recruitments

- Vacancy #'s changing: staff move into new positions, leave agency, or retire
 - 5 vacancies created from filling positions
 - 2 new vacancies due to staff leaving
 - 22 positions filled to date
 - 10 recruitments open in November
 - ~60 vacancies remaining
- Hired a new human resources position to help with recruiting

Project Implementation



- In addition to other projects, over 40 new tasks from the 2021 legislative session
- Workgroups, new funding programs, data, legislation and associated rulemakings
- Must recruit to work on many of the projects
- Doing the best we can to get projects started

- See attachment 1



Project Highlights

- Contested case backlog – Referred 30 cases / protests withdrawn (Prior average: 2-3 cases in a biennium)
- Implementation of House Bill 2145 – draft communications plan; form and electronic filing system updates in process
- Dam safety contracts – 14 contracts are in development for \$1 million in general funds
- Business Case Assessment – Draft of Request of Proposals
- Open ET – Scope of work drafted
- Regional Water Planning and Management – Assessment Underway
- Harney CREP Proposal Submitted to USDA-FSA

Project Challenges

- Recruitments require a lot of dedicated manager and staff time to complete; limits time to work on projects
- Lack of staff time to work on projects
- ARPA funded projects - Awaiting to hear from Federal Government and DAS about how the funds can be used and timeframes for expenditure
- Rulemakings slowed down by the need to fill gaps in public records staffing
- Takes time to navigate complex water issues, to be inclusive, and hold a good process
- Other issues that take time: vaccine requirement, drought, cannabis, and others

Closing Thoughts

- Excited about investments in the Department and water
- Work will take several biennia to implement and to demonstrate success
- Near-term progress will be slow due to need to staff up
- Committed to providing updates on progress
- Look forward to continuing this work and building momentum around investing in Oregon's water future

OREGON



WATER RESOURCES
DEPARTMENT

Integrated Water Resources Strategy

(1) Understand Water Resources Today

Further Understand Limited Water Supplies & Systems
(groundwater, surface water, and their interaction)

Improve Water Quality & Quantity Information

Further Understand Our Water Management Institutions

Understanding Water Resources / Supplies / Institutions

- 1.A Conduct additional groundwater investigations
- 1.B Improve water resource data collection and monitoring
- 1.C Coordinate inter-agency data collection, processing, and use in decision-making

← OBJECTIVES →

← CRITICAL ISSUES →

RECOMMENDED
← ACTIONS →

(2) Understand Instream and Out-of-Stream Needs

Further Define Out-of-Stream Needs / Demands
(i.e., diverted water)

Further Define Instream Needs / Demands
(i.e., left-in-place water)

Understanding Oregon's Out-of-Stream Needs/Demands

- 2.A Regularly update long-term water demand forecasts
- 2.B Improve water-use measurement and reporting
- 2.C Determine unadjudicated water right claims
- 2.D Authorize the update of water right records with contact information
- 2.E Regularly update Oregon's water-related permitting guide

Understanding Oregon's Instream Needs/Demands

- 3.A Determine flows needed (quality and quantity) to support instream needs
- 3.B Determine needs of groundwater dependent ecosystems

← OBJECTIVES →

← CRITICAL ISSUES →

RECOMMENDED
← ACTIONS →

(3) Understand the Coming Pressures That Affect Our Needs and Supplies

Economic Development

Water & Energy

Climate Change

Extreme Events

Population Growth

Water & Land Use

Water-Related Infrastructure

Education & Outreach

Water & Energy

- 4.A Analyze the effects on water from energy development projects and policies
- 4.B Take advantage of existing infrastructure to develop non-traditional hydroelectric power
- 4.C Promote strategies that increase/integrate energy and water savings

Climate Change

- 5.A Support continued basin-scale climate change research efforts
- 5.B Assist with climate change adaptation and resiliency strategies

Extreme Events

- 5.5A Plan and prepare for drought resiliency
- 5.5B Plan and prepare for flood events
- 5.5C Plan and prepare for a Cascadia subduction earthquake event

Economic Development & Population Growth
(See Actions 2A and 3A)

Water & Land Use

- 6.A Improve integration of water information into land use planning (and vice versa)
- 6.B Improve state agency coordination
- 6.C Encourage low-impact development practices and green infrastructure

Water-Related Infrastructure

- 7.A Develop and upgrade water and wastewater infrastructure
- 7.B Encourage regional (sub-basin) approaches to water and wastewater systems
- 7.C Ensure public safety/dam safety

Education & Outreach

- 8.A Support Oregon's K-12 environmental literacy plan
- 8.B Provide education and training for Oregon's next generation of water experts
- 8.C Promote community education and training opportunities
- 8.D Identify ongoing water-related research needs

(4) Meet Oregon's Instream and Out-of-Stream Needs

Place-Based Efforts

Water Management & Development

Healthy Ecosystems

Public Health

Funding

Place-Based Efforts

- 9.A Continue to undertake place-based integrated, water resources planning
- 9.B Coordinate implementation of existing natural resource plans
- 9.C Partner with federal agencies, tribes, and neighboring states in long-term water resources management

Water Management & Development

- 10.A Improve water-use efficiency and water conservation
- 10.B Improve access to built storage
- 10.C Encourage additional water reuse projects
- 10.D Reach environmental outcomes with non-regulatory alternatives
- 10.E Continue the water resources development program
- 10.F Provide an adequate presence in the field
- 10.G Strengthen water quantity and water quality permitting programs

Healthy Ecosystems

- 11.A Improve watershed health, resiliency, and capacity for natural storage
- 11.B Develop additional instream protections
- 11.C Prevent and eradicate invasive species
- 11.D Protect and restore instream habitat and habitat access for fish and wildlife
- 11.E Develop additional groundwater protections

Public Health

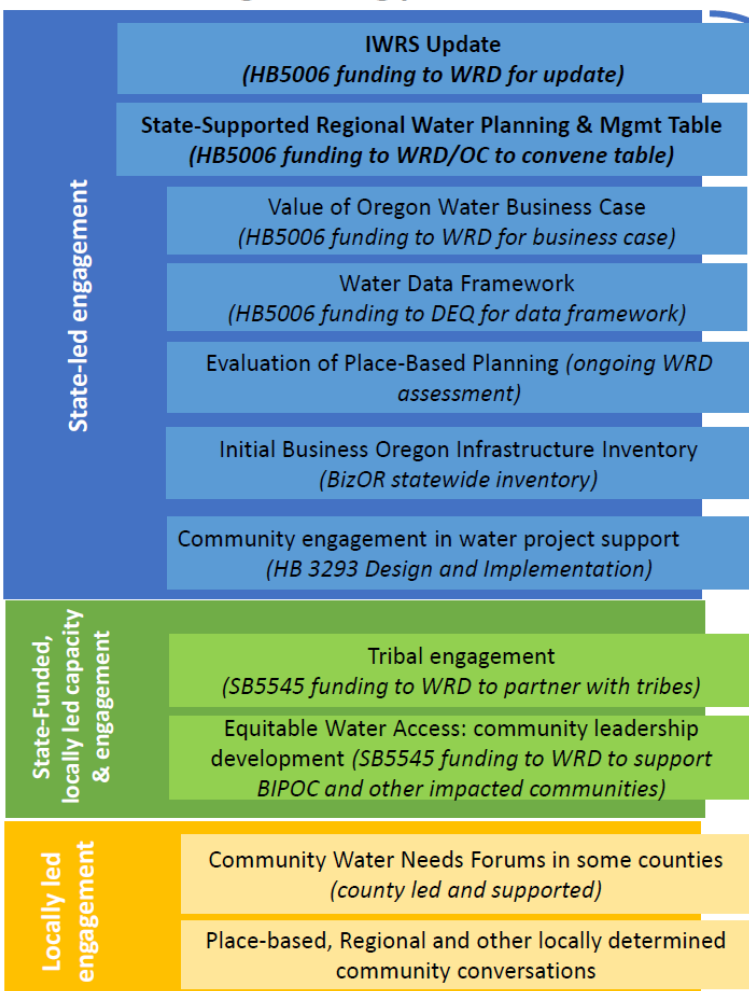
- 12.A Ensure the safety of Oregon's drinking water
- 12.B Reduce the use of and exposure to toxics and other pollutants
- 12.C Implement water quality pollution control plans

Funding

- 13.A Fund development and implementation of Oregon's IWRS
- 13.B Fund water resources management activities at state agencies
- 13.C Invest in local or regional water planning efforts
- 13.D Invest in feasibility studies for water resources projects
- 13.E Invest in implementation of water resources projects

Water Conversations Framework

These inter-related engagement and information-gathering processes...



...support these objectives...



... and inform

- 2023 Legislative Session
- 2022-2027 Integrated Water Resources Strategy
- Priorities for Oregon's leaders

2021 Session – Budget Summary

	2019-21 Legislatively Approved 1/21	2021-23 Governor's Recommended	2021-23 Legislatively Adopted
General Fund (GF)	\$35,217,838	\$40,104,341	\$58,566,215
Other Funds (OF) including Fees	\$14,413,830	\$12,365,697	\$35,741,255
Other Funds - Grants/Loans	\$85,849,252	\$80,997,925	\$86,142,041
Lottery Funds - Debt Service	\$7,563,194	\$14,289,736	\$9,499,510
Federal Funds	\$1,148,011	\$716,840	\$725,000
Total Funds	\$144,192,125	\$148,474,539	\$190,674,021
Positions / Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	178/172.67	170/165.44	209/196.81

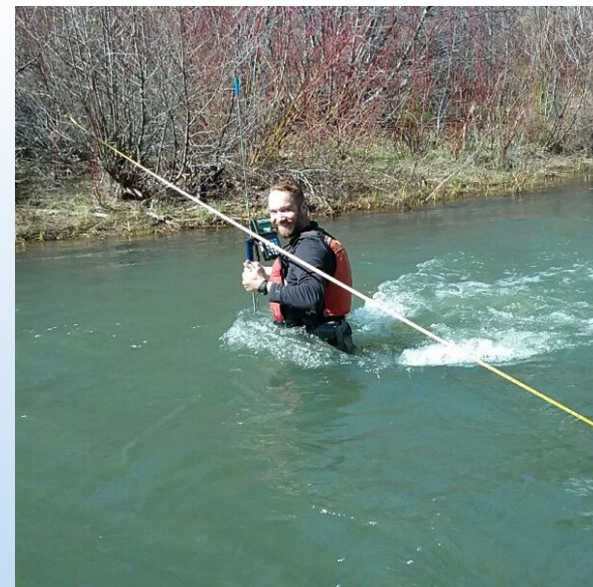


\$538 Million Investment in Water

- **\$282.2 million:** improvements to drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure; increased safety and resiliency
- **\$135.7 million:** public works funds and financial assistance to repair and replace water infrastructure
- **\$86.4 million:** regional and basin-specific and water supply projects
- **\$11.2 million:** data collection and technology modernization
- **\$17.7 million:** water quality improvements
- **\$5 million:** Oregon's 100-Year Water Vision, equitable water access, and state, local, and regional water planning

Budget and Legislation

- Funding for Legal Expenses and Protest Backlog
- Maintaining Water Right and Dam Safety Services – HB 2142
- Modernization of IT Systems and Tools
- Hydroelectric Annual Fees – HB 2143
- Timely Water Management and Distribution



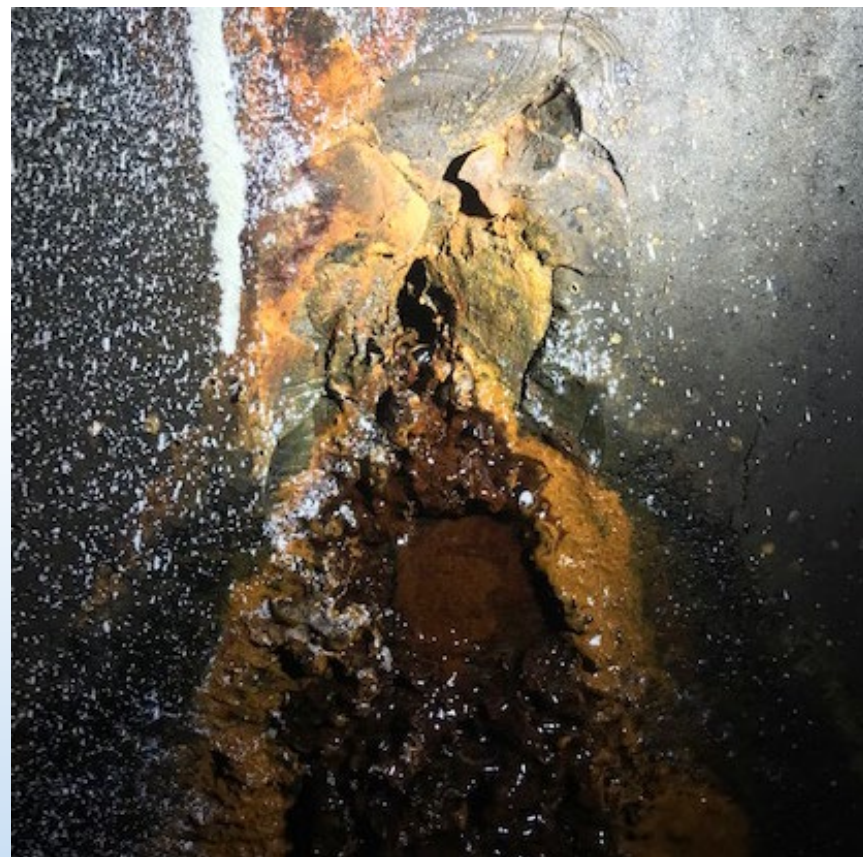
Grants and Funding

- Grant program for Water Well Repair, Replacement and Abandonment – HB 2145
- Grant program for Harney Water Well Remediation - HB 3092
- Harney CREP Program
- Water project support for community engagement – HB 3293



Grants and Funding

- Equitable water access and indigenous water resiliency
- Water infrastructure projects and fish passage upgrades
- Place-based planning
- Water Measurement
- Columbia River - Umatilla Solutions Task Force
- Water projects grants and loans and feasibility studies



Data

- HB 2018
 - Groundwater budgets and basin studies
 - Statewide consumptive water use and evaporation from all major reservoirs
 - Expansion of groundwater level monitoring network
- Surface and groundwater data collection equipment
- Report on Water Use Measurement



Data

- Business Case for Water
- Dam safety flood methodology, inundation and dam analyses



Policy Work

- Complex Water Issues including Willamette and Deschutes Basins
- 2022 IWRS update
- HB 3103: Workgroup on transfers of stored water
- Regional water planning workgroup
- Sustainable funding model for fee-based programs workgroup

