



WATERWATCH

Protecting Natural Flows in Oregon Rivers

INSTREAM

October 2021



WATER FLOWS THROUGH ALL OF US

Inside: Stream of Consciousness, pp.4-5 • Water Temperature Plan, pp.6-7

Outlaw Dam, p.8 • Disaster on the Crooked River, p.9 • Groundwater, p.10 • Legislature Session Wrap up, p.11



Staff



John DeVoe
Executive Director



Neil Brandt
Development Director



Lisa Brown
Staff Attorney



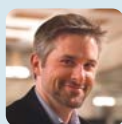
Jack Dempsey
Contract Lobbyist



Nancy Drinnon
Comptroller



Monet Hampson
Admin & Development Assistant



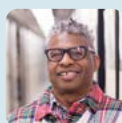
Jim McCarthy
Southern Oregon Program Director



Brian Posewitz
Staff Attorney



Kimberley Priestley
Senior Policy Analyst



Wade Nkrumah
Communications Manager

Board of Directors

Karl Anuta
President

Bryan Sohl
Vice President

Matt Deniston
Secretary

Dave Kilhefner
Treasurer

Leslie Bach
Jean Edwards

Val Gonzales

Bob Hunter

Yancy Lind

Lynn Palensky

Jeff Perin

Dean Runyan

Kathryn Wyllie



FOLLOW • LIKE • CONNECT



@WaterWatchofOR



WaterWatch of Oregon



WaterWatch of Oregon

Learn more about our work,
become a member,
or sign up for
RiverAction Alerts at:
waterwatch.org
Email: info@waterwatch.org

*WaterWatch's mission
is to protect and restore
streamflows in
Oregon's rivers for fish,
wildlife, and the people
who depend on
healthy rivers.*



Portland Office
213 SW Ash St., Suite 208
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 295-4039

Southern Oregon Office
P.O. Box 261
Ashland, OR 97520
(541) 708-0731

WaterWatch of Oregon publishes
Instream three times annually.
Monet Hampson, Design and Layout
Staff, editing

Cover Photo taken at Crown Point,
Columbia River Gorge, on the Autumnal Equinox
Monet Hampson, face paint
Wade Nkrumah, model

Please Support WaterWatch and invest
in the health of Oregon's rivers, lakes,
aquifers and wetlands!

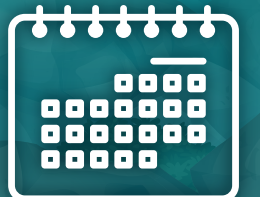
Ways to support!



MAIL

Donations may be sent to:
WaterWatch
213 SW Ash Street, Suite 208
Portland, OR 97204

ONLINE
Make a one-time or
recurring monthly
donation at
waterwatch.org/donate



BECOME A MONTHLY MEMBER

Giving monthly is a simple way
to provide us with consistent and
reliable support throughout the year.
Sign up to become a monthly sustaining
member at waterwatch.org/donate or
via phone at (503) 295-4039 ext. 0



OTHER WAYS TO GIVE



Donate Securities
Donating appreciated securities such as stocks, bonds
or mutual funds is an effective tax-friendly way to
support WaterWatch

Estate Planning
You can help secure a legacy of healthy rivers in
Oregon by including WaterWatch in your estate plans.
We can help you find a plan that meets your needs
and benefits Oregon's rivers long into the future.

Workplace Giving
Many employers make it easy
to support by offering matching
payroll contribution programs. Ask your employer if
your workplace is able to help you support WaterWatch

Donate your Vehicle
WaterWatch accepts vehicle donations with Charity
Connections, a non-profit vehicle donations program.

WaterWatch is proud to participate in the following programs:





By John DeVoe

"Action is the antidote for hopelessness and for drought, climate change and a host of other ills."

As I write this, it's almost fall. Tomorrow there is rain in the forecast for the first time in three solid months. The last measurable precipitation where I live was over 90 days ago. That gets one to thinking. Maybe it will rain soon. Maybe it will snow again someday. Hard to get too invested in rain and snow as the desiccated plants crackle underfoot. Hard to believe in rain or snow while kicking a clod of dry dirt in a hot dusty wind that carries the scent of smoke. But it is a time of transition, season wise and otherwise. But transition to what? It seems pretty clear that the climate is changing, perhaps faster than expected – or perhaps in line with the more aggressive climate model predictions. Glaciers are shrinking and disappearing. Forests are burning. Extinction is at levels not seen in millions of years. Meanwhile, multiple pandemics – virus, racism, violence and deliberate misinformation – rage on in our country and across the world.

Yes, hope is sometimes in short supply. But hope, while valuable and helpful, doesn't by itself make it rain and isn't enough to cause reform and change. For that, we need action. If you want to feel hopeful, take action. Action is the antidote – for hopelessness and for drought, climate change and a host of other ills. Action is the path forward for the reforms needed if we want a future that includes cold water habitat, healthy rivers, wild fish and everything beneficial they bring to the world. It is time for all of us to participate and make our voices and desires for the future heard by the people who make decisions about water.

This newsletter has several actions that you can take right now to make Oregon's rivers and waters more resilient to a changing climate – to help ensure that we have cold water habitat in our state and across the West in the future. Rather than wallow in hopelessness, let's participate. Let's all demand more from our elected – and appointed – leaders. Let's let them know that the status quo isn't working for rivers and salmon, wetlands and waterfowl, for farmers and people who rely on wells for drinking water.

Let's remind the decisionmakers and administrators, over and over, in no uncertain terms, that we sure give a damn and find it absolutely unacceptable to lose wild salmon and steelhead runs or streams, or the aquifers that give life to streams and wetlands. If those leaders can't produce the needed reforms, then we'll find other leaders. Enough is enough. Extinction is not an option for these fish, for lamprey, for other cold water aquatic species or migratory birds. And let's remember the plight of many farmers but also remind them that if we do not permit the earth to produce beauty and joy, it will in the end not produce food either^[1]

When the electeds and appointees do right, let's let them know that too. For example, we can thank Oregon legislators (and, of course, WaterWatch) for securing about half a billion dollars in new investments in smarter water management for the state in the last legislative session. And we can thank state agencies for moving forward with new instream water rights – a potent form of natural insurance against a changing climate. But let's also let those legislators and agencies know that with the money, we expect better government and much greater accountability, sustainability and science-based decision making in the management of our surface and ground waters. No more Klamath, Umatilla and Harney type crises manufactured by poor agency decisions will be acceptable.

Remember, when you get a break from the smoke and can look into a cloudless night sky, across the Milky Way, and into distant galaxies, the only Metolius and Deschutes and John Day and Umpqua and Rogue rivers that we know of are right here, right now, in our state. These are the rivers we have, the rivers we still could lose. So hope for rain and snow but please take action. Let those who decide know your opinion. And take action to support WaterWatch so we can continue to advocate for smarter water management to protect Oregon's waters for fish, wildlife and the people who depend on healthy rivers. Thank you for your support. ■ [1] Joseph Wood Krutch

TO DONATE: [WATERWATCH.ORG/DONATIONPAGE](https://www.waterwatch.org/donationpage)



Rogue River, Southern Oregon



WATERWATCH CHALLENGES WILLAMETTE WATER TEMPERATURE PLAN

WaterWatch of Oregon is challenging state approval of a plan to dampen the water-temperature impact of a \$1.3 billion municipal water withdrawal project on the Willamette River.

WaterWatch is asking the Multnomah County Circuit Court to overturn or re-evaluate a decision by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality approving a **“Thermal Trading Plan”** to offset the water-temperature impact of withdrawing 150 million gallons of water a day from the Willamette River near Wilsonville. Staff attorney Brian Posewitz says the plan underestimates the temperature impact and that proposed offsets of those impacts are too uncertain or illusory. The issues are important because the Willamette River is already too warm for much of its fish and wildlife, including steelhead and salmon threatened with extinction.

The water will be withdrawn by the Willamette Water Supply Systems – an intergovernmental entity of the Tualatin Valley Water District and the cities of Beaverton and Hillsboro. The Portland Tribune reported in 2014 that cities served by Tualatin

Valley Water District – including parts of Beaverton, Hillsboro, Tigard – have for years been coveting water from the Willamette for their municipal water supply as a cheaper alternative to buying water from Portland. The search for other water sources was driven by the need to supply Washington County’s growing businesses and population.

The Willamette Water Supply System has a federal Clean Water Act permit that requires it to address the temperature impact of its water withdrawals.

“Various things tend to make water temperature problems – usually water being too warm - better or worse,” Brian says. “But certainly, one of the ways you make a warm-water problem worse is by reducing flows, because less water warms faster than more water.”

As Oregon and the West are increasingly mired in drought, the water withdrawals of city and municipal water agencies will have even greater temperature impacts on rivers and streams, whether in the Willamette Valley or east of the Cascades.

WaterWatch’s challenge to the Willamette Water Supply System’s Thermal Trading Plan will focus in part on how the plan treats 30 million gallons of water to be withdrawn under a permit that the city of Hillsboro bought from the city of Salem. The plan assumes that, had Salem kept the rights for that water, it would have withdrawn that much more water from the Willamette River at Salem, thus reducing flows and raising river temperatures between Salem and Wilsonville. Willamette Water Supply system is taking credit for keeping that water in the river. WaterWatch believes the evidence in its case will show that, by using other water rights, Salem will withdrawal just as much water as if it had never sold the right to 30 million gallons to Hillsboro.

“The result is that the Thermal Trading Plan significantly underestimates the temperature impact of the Water Supply System,” Brian says.

In addition, the Thermal Trading Plan fails to adequately show how the Water Supply System will make up for the temperature impact of its water withdrawals. It proposes to use riparian restoration projects to increase streamside shading but fails to provide enough detail to show that the shading will

adequately offset the impact. The plan also proposes to increase flows with water from Willamette Basin reservoirs upstream, but that water is already being used to lower water temperature in the river.

The Willamette Water Supply System is just one example of how municipal water use – which includes drinking water but also water for things like washing cars and watering lawns – can impact streamflows and water quality.



If these issues are important to you, be sure to let your city leaders and water department officials know that you want your water supply to be sustainable by protecting fish, wildlife and water quality.■



WATERWATCH

Protecting Natural Flows in Oregon Rivers

Events:

19th Annual Celebration of Oregon Rivers

DATE AND TIME:
6:00pm on Saturday,
November 6th, 2021

VIRTUAL EVENT: Join us online!
LOCATION: Your living room!

DON'T MISS OUR BIG FALL EVENT!
The program includes captivating live speakers, videos, silent auction packages, and a paddle raise.



NATIONAL CREEK FALLS, OR

TICKETS ARE NOW ON SALE!
Regular tickets are \$25, or you can choose to buy a **WaterWatch Champion Ticket for \$50.**
If you're new to WaterWatch, there is a free option too!

VISIT:
www.waterwatch.org/about-us/events
for more info and to get your ticket!

CAMPAIGN DRIVES ACTION ON OUTLAW DAM

On the North Umpqua River, WaterWatch of Oregon is leading a coalition of over 20 local and statewide fishing, conservation, and whitewater groups working to end the harm caused by Winchester Dam, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's second highest priority for fish passage improvement among all privately owned dams in the state.

The disintegrating, 17-foot-high, 130-year-old Winchester Dam is maintained solely to create a private waterski lake for surrounding landowners, but **it kills, injures, or delays salmon and steelhead trying to access 160 miles of high quality habitat upstream.** Impacted runs include spring and fall Chinook, summer and winter steelhead, cutthroat, and Pacific Lamprey, as well as threatened Oregon Coast Coho listed under the federal Endangered Species Act.

To protect the irreplaceable North Umpqua, our coalition has so far intervened in a state proceeding to hold the dam owners accountable for a botched 2018 repair that killed numerous fish and harmed the primary drinking water source for 37,700 people, moved Oregon officials to require the owners to meet state dam safety standards for the first time in decades, and filed suit to stop harm the dam causes to protected Coho – after the dam owners rejected our coalition's offer to raise the public and private funds necessary to remove the dam at little to no direct cost to the owners.

One of just twenty designated high hazard dams evaluated by state officials to be in poor or

unsatisfactory condition in Oregon, Winchester is categorized as high hazard by the Oregon Department of Water Resources primarily due to likely loss of life in the case of dam failure among the people who frequent the river, parks, and boat ramps just downstream. There may be an increased risk of a failure at this dam in the near term due to recent catastrophic fire in the North Umpqua.

Unfortunately, Winchester Dam's owners reneged on a verbal commitment to repair known safety issues at the dam in 2021, after already delaying action for 17 months on a 2019 request from safety officials for a comprehensive inspection and repair of the derelict dam. These safety problems, including many large holes through and under the structure, also cause delay, injury, and death for salmon and steelhead. Previously, Winchester's owners ignored or delayed action on warnings regarding leakage under the dam's south abutment contained in state inspection letters in 2016 and 2017. In late 2018, fear of a dam failure due to the growing leakage precipitated a hurried, unpermitted, and ultimately botched repair at the dam.

River advocates will continue pushing the dam owners to comply with state and federal protections for fish, water quality, and public safety. Our preferred alternative to resolve the myriad problems at Winchester Dam is to remove this obsolete structure through a cooperative agreement. We expect removal will bolster fish runs and improve overall river health and resiliency in the face of climate change.

Your support helps make this work possible. Please consider a donation today at waterwatch.org/donationpage/ ■

DISASTER ON THE CROOKED RIVER YANCY LIND, Board Member, WaterWatch of Oregon coinformedangler.org

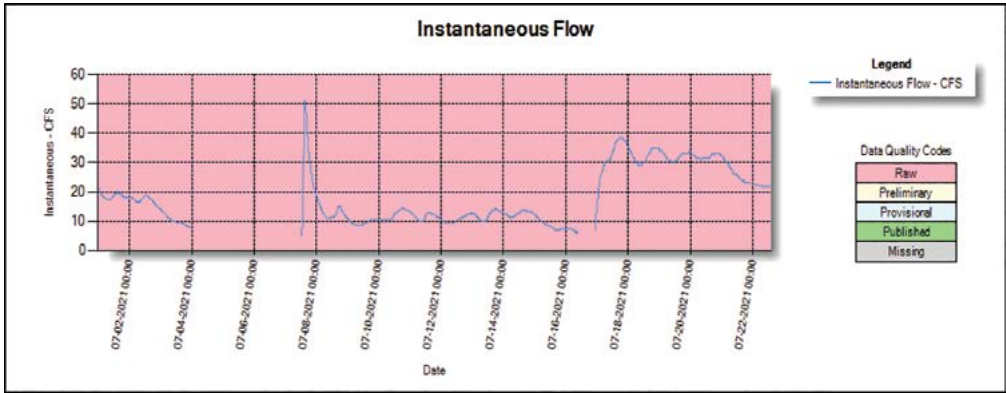
Drought conditions the past few years have made agriculture difficult, but not lethal to farmers. Irrigation withdrawals this past summer, however, made a mockery of efforts to ensure survivable conditions for resident fish as well as the reintroduction of anadromous fish. **This has been a disaster for the Crooked River.**

Densely populated with wild, native redband trout and mountain whitefish, the 8-mile Wild & Scenic section of Crooked River below Prineville is one of the most popular fishing destinations in Oregon. Less known is that prior to construction of the impassable Pelton Round Butte Hydroelectric project near Madras in the early 1960s, the Crooked and its tributaries contained the primary spawning grounds for steelhead and spring chinook that annually migrate up the Deschutes River.

WaterWatch of Oregon was a key participant in negotiations that ultimately granted a new 50-year operating license to the project in 2005. A key element of that license is a significant effort to provide passage and restore anadromous fish populations above the project in the Upper Deschutes Basin.

WaterWatch was also the key negotiator representing the environmental community for the Crooked River Collaborative Security Act of 2014. This bill states that approximately half the water held in Prineville Reservoir at full pool would be released "for the maximum biological benefit of fish and wildlife." The intent of the bill was to provide a minimum 80 cubic feet-per-second flow from Prineville Reservoir to Lake Billy Chinook all year.

Despite **WaterWatch's** hard work, however, in July a significant stretch of the Crooked River was essentially dry. While the Wild & Scenic section continued to have ample water, irrigation withdrawals begin immediately after this stretch, with a final major diversion just upstream from Smith Rock State Park.



THIS OREGON WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT WEBSITE CHART shows flows after this last diversion. There were periods in July when the flow was so low that it could not even be measured. In this chart, the flow on July 9 was about 10 cubic feet-per-second.



CROOKED RIVER LEVEL JULY 9

In this July 9 photo of Crooked River, the river at that level could be crossed without getting your feet wet and was impassable for fish. The Oregon Water Resources Department website showed the water temperature on that day was 90 degrees.

Clearly, this is deadly habitat for resident redband trout and mountain whitefish, as well as the aquatic insects they feed on. Even worse, thru July 22, 72 spring chinook had returned to the Upper Deschutes Basin as a result of the reintroduction effort. Per tracking data, over half of them moved up the Crooked River. Unfortunately, lack of water would stop them low in the river, many miles from the spawning beds they were seeking. Juvenile summer steelhead growing into smolts were also impacted by these terrible conditions.

WaterWatch knows that implementing and enforcing agreements can be more difficult than creating them on paper. To ensure this happens, we need your continued support. Please consider donating today to help us with this important work on behalf of rivers and streams throughout Oregon as well as fish and other species that need cold instream flows for survival.



SPRING CHINOOK ARE BIG AND NEED PLENTY OF WATER

Regarding the Crooked River, we continue to advocate to the Bureau of Reclamation that the 2014 Crooked River Act be implemented as it was intended. This includes obtaining water rights so that water released for fish from Prineville Reservoir makes it all the way to Lake Billy Chinook.

While parts of the Deschutes Basin Habitat Conservation Plan have been finalized, the areas that cover anadromous fish have not, and we continue to monitor developments. One thing we know for sure, however, is that low flows this summer highlight that the habitat conservation plan does not require minimum flows. This is certainly a fatal flaw for fish.

ANALYSIS CONFIRMS CONTINUED MISMANAGEMENT OF OREGON'S GROUNDWATER

By law, in Oregon, "All water within the state from all sources of water supply belongs to the public." ORS 537.110

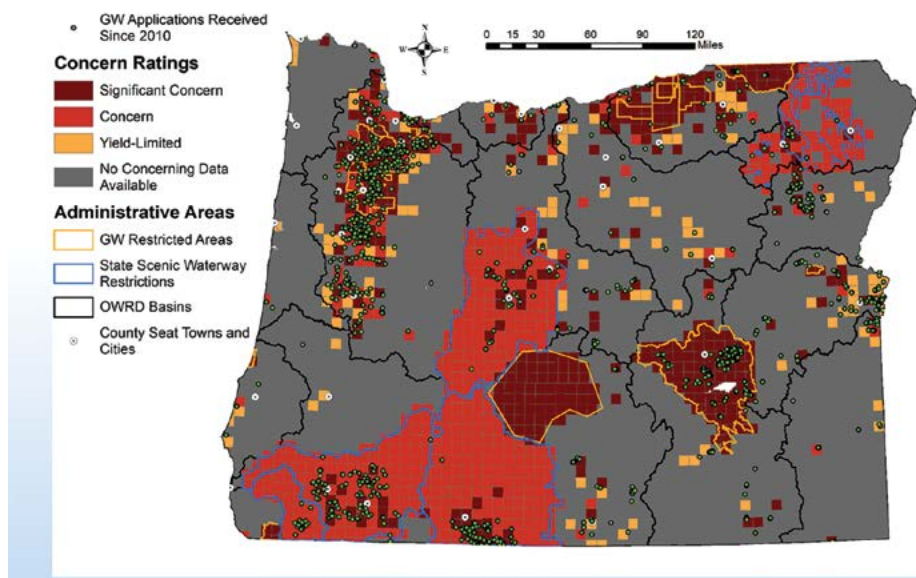
That means groundwater, in addition to surface water, belongs to the public. Oregon adopted a forward looking Groundwater Act in 1955. It mandates that OWRD only issue new groundwater permits if the proposed pumping is within the capacity of the resource and will not cause groundwater level declines.

Despite these mandates, the department has continued to issue new groundwater permits where it can't determine whether it already issued more groundwater permits than the resource can sustain. This is the approach that created the severe problem in the Harney Basin, which includes the internationally significant wetlands and lakes of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. About seven years ago, WaterWatch's analyses in the Harney Basin uncovered dramatic over issuing of groundwater permits for irrigation. Our work discovered that the OWRD was "defaulting to yes" on groundwater applications even when the agency lacked adequate data to say whether the proposed use was within the capacity of the resource. We have also discovered significant illegal use of groundwater in the area – both without any water right and outside of the conditions of water rights.

These are not academic issues. Today, domestic wells are drying up and declines in the water table of up to 100 feet in some places are threatening groundwater dependent ecosystems and causing uncertainty for irrigators. Countless hours and significant public funds are now being spent to try to address this difficult situation. One would hope that after the groundwater overallocation lessons of the Umatilla Basin (where WaterWatch also played a major role in addressing overallocation and illegal water use) and now the Harney Basin, the agency would change course and correctly implement the Groundwater Act, but—inexplicably—OWRD instead continues this damaging and unlawful approach all across the state.



MOST NEW APPLICATIONS ARE IN CONCERNING AREAS, AND THE MAJORITY ARE APPROVED DESPITE CONCERN IN TOWNSHIP. (Headline merged from original document pgs. 26-27)



Recently, OWRD groundwater scientists presented a troubling new analysis to the Oregon Water Resources Commission confirming even bigger problems with OWRD's groundwater management. The analysis shows that 80% of new groundwater permit applications filed since 2010 are in areas of concern or significant concern due to declining groundwater levels and OWRD has approved the majority of those applications. The analysis also notes that fully half of Oregon lacks the groundwater data needed to even do this critical analysis.

OWRD's analysis shows that not only is the agency damaging places by issuing permits because it lacks (or hasn't reviewed) data to know there is no more groundwater available, but the agency is approving damaging new groundwater applications in areas where it already knows the groundwater resource is in trouble.

Climate change, and associated frequent droughts, make it even more urgent that Oregon start to manage groundwater sustainably.

Groundwater could be a resource to help get us through droughts when surface water is unavailable, but this can't happen when OWRD continues to permit new unsustainable groundwater

pumping year in and year out. OWRD's approach is outdated, unlawful, and damaging to communities and to groundwater dependent ecosystems alike. Those ecosystems include springs, wetlands, lakes and streams that depend on inputs of cold, clean groundwater which are more important than ever with intensifying climate change.

WaterWatch will continue to work on reforms to Oregon's groundwater management. With the significant new funding secured for the agency during the 2021 legislative session and growing concerns statewide regarding groundwater, we are hopeful that with continued effort, reforms are on the horizon. ■

Please take a moment to contact OWRD Director Tom Byler and urge him to take steps now to sustainably manage groundwater.
Director@wrdr.state.or.us

If you would like to dig more deeply into these issues, please see these resources:

OWRD June 2021 Report:
<https://bit.ly/2ZVScYS>

OWRD June 2021 PowerPoint:
<https://bit.ly/3a38JmK>

END OF SESSION WRAP UP!

Despite holding session in the middle of a worldwide pandemic and uncertain economic times, the 2021 legislative session ended up being a surprisingly good year for water from both a budget and policy perspective.

AGENCY BUDGETS: Top of the list for the session were gains to the 2021-23 Natural Resource Agency Budgets. Specifically, both the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) saw unprecedented gains to their agency budgets, especially to their science and water management functions. OWRD gained 31 positions, an unprecedented gain for this very small agency (increased from 178 to 209 positions). And ODFW saw a 38% increase in their general fund dollars, much of which went to ODFW's Water Program and the creation of a new Habitat Division. Reversing the chronic underfunding of these agencies, particularly of the science and water management functions, is critical to improving water management and river and aquifer health.

KEY AGENCY BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

• **OWRD Groundwater data and studies:** The Oregon Legislature not only rejected a proposed cut in the Governor's Recommended Budget that would have lost 6 groundwater study positions, but it approved both HB 2018 and Policy Option Package 110, which together bring an additional 16 groundwater staff to the agency. With streams across the state over-appropriated, more and more people are turning to groundwater to serve their needs. Having adequate groundwater data to make sound decisions is one of the most important areas needing attention. We are thrilled with this news!

• **OWRD and ODFW tackling complex water issues:** The OWRD Budget includes funding for staff to work on complex water issues in the Deschutes, the Willamette and select other basins. The ODFW budget includes three new staff to work on the Willamette Basin Reallocation.

• **OWRD field staff for on-the-ground water management:** The OWRD budget includes 6 new watermaster positions to help with on-the-ground management, including managing for instream water rights.

• **ODFW Water Program:** The ODFW Water Quality and Quantity Program is one of the most important programs across agencies for protecting and restoring instream flows. Bolstering this program has been a priority of WaterWatch for the last several biennia. The legislature added 5 new positions to this program in the 2021-23 budget, and we couldn't be more excited!

• **OWRD Water Measurement Cost Share Fund:** The Legislature dedicated \$1 million dollars to the Water Measurement Cost Share fund. This fund helps water right holders pay for water use measurement devices. We are hopeful this will help incentivize increased measurement and reporting of water use across the state.

• **OWRD Data collection:** The OWRD received \$3 million dollars to purchase and deploy data collection devices to document both surface and groundwater (e.g. gages to measure streamflow and groundwater levels).

• **ODFW Fish Passage:** The ODFW budget includes nearly \$8 million to help address fish passage problems at dams, culverts and other obstructions.

• **ODFW Habitat Division:** The legislature established and funded the newly formed Habitat Division within ODFW to elevate the land and water issues facing fish and wildlife and to allow the agency to more effectively work with other agencies to promote habitat health, protection, and restoration, and focus resources on challenges presented by climate change.

• **OWRD Dam Safety:** The legislature invested over \$6 million into OWRD's dam safety program. This will bring much needed staff to the dam safety program and should help WaterWatch's dam removal efforts.

• **OWRD Equitable Water Access:** The legislature invested in conducting community led assessments of water needs of Black, Indigenous, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander and tribal communities and convening a Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group as part of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy.

• **OWRD Legal Fees:** The OWRD budget includes \$800,000 to fund its legal work, and \$2.2 million to help the agency work towards resolving the contested case backlog, including resolving important instream water right applications that have been in limbo for nearly 30 years.

POLICY BILLS THAT PASSED INTO LAW:

The legislature passed a few bills into law that not only help protect streams and rivers, but augmented the toolbox that allows for restoration of flows.

• **Protecting Wetlands from Agricultural Maintenance Activities:** Of note, HB 3185 will ensure that materials removed during agricultural channel maintenance activities cannot be placed – temporarily or permanently – on undisturbed wetlands. This bill fixes a major problem with the program that WaterWatch and others opposed in the 2019 session, and will help ensure that ecologically important wetlands are protected from these agricultural activities.

• **Stored Water, Transfers of Type of Use:** HB 3103 allows changes in the "character of use" of stored water. What this means, for example, is that an owner of a reservoir that is currently allowed to store water just for the use of irrigation can change the allowed use to other uses such as municipal or instream.

• **Groundwater:** In addition to agency budget attention to groundwater data, a number of bills passed that will help not only with critically needed data gathering (HB 2018) but also on the ground repair of wells to help protect our groundwater resources (HB 2145), funding mechanisms to help domestic well owners address water shortages due to over-appropriation of groundwater and large agricultural wells (HB 3092, HB 2145), and other provisions to help the state better manage groundwater.

POLICY BILLS THAT WATERWATCH HELPED DEFEAT: We are happy to report that we helped defeat several bad water bills. These bills would have gutted Oregon's fish passage laws (HB 2610), legalized an illegal reservoir in Southern Oregon (HB 2616), limited the state's ability to regulate groundwater (SB 661), transferred select water management tasks from the state to local entities (HB 2251, HB 3228), fast tracked a dispute over transfers of stored water to the front of the line at the Oregon Supreme Court (HB 3091), and allowed small businesses to get around rules meant to protect the environment (HB 2334).

CONTINUED ATTENTION NEEDED INTO THE FUTURE: We are disappointed to report that SB 387 and SB 583 – aimed at curbing negative water footprints of large-scale industrial animal feed lots – died. And months-long discussions on increasing the pace and scale of water use measurement and reporting (HB 3166) fell by the wayside. These are important issues that we expect to bring back in the future along with other legal reforms to better protect our rivers and groundwater and lead to sustainable water management.

WaterWatch is hugely thankful to all of our members who weighed in this session, from the "virtual" budget road shows to providing testimony on policy bills! Your voices were heard and because of your support and help, this session was a success!

Please take a moment to thank your legislators and urge continued attention to water in the future!

Find your legislator and/or their contact info at this link:

<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/findyourlegislator/leg-districts.html>



WATERWATCH

WaterWatch of Oregon
213 SW Ash Street, Suite 208
Portland, OR 97204

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO 110
MEDFORD OR

Printed on 30% post-consumer fiber

Thank you to our 2021 Auction Sponsors!



Dean Runyan Associates

HATCH



BORST
ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION LLC



RDG
RIVER DESIGN GROUP

OnPoint
COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION



Law Office of Karl G. Anuta, PC
735 SW First Avenue
Portland, OR 97204
(503-827-0320)

Environmental & Personal Injury Law