

# Oregon Water Resources Congress

1201 Court St NE, Suite 303 \* Salem, OR 97301 \* Phone: (503) 363-0121 \* Fax: (503) 371-4926 \* Website: www.owrc.org

## WATERWORKS



ISSUE #25

The mission of the Oregon Water Resources Congress is to promote the protection and use of water rights and the wise stewardship of water resources.

### A NOTE FROM PRESIDENT TROSI

Over the years I have always tried to be prepared for things that I know are going to happen or that I have the responsibility to have done. A few things have been bugging me lately and with these President's articles I always try to relate things that affect me or bug me (or the Santiam Water Control District, SWCD) to our association, OWRC.

In July 2008 the SWCD ordered a new green tractor with a mower, price around \$100,000. In November 2009 we just received it and are getting around to signing the papers of ownership. The sales rep just walked in the door last week with the papers and the little gifts that go along with spending \$100,000 on a green tractor. A GREEN HAT. What bugs me is that I would have been proud to wear that green hat last spring or even this fall while mowing our ditches in preparation of the district's ditches for irrigation but not now with the Civil War game a week away I would not be caught dead in a green hat. Should that sales rep. or dealer been a little more prepared to serve his clients by delivering the goods in a timely manner, I think so.

Another thing that's bugging me is this sore throat that I have while writing this article. Is this the beginnings of H1N1, the Swine Flu? Last year we were aware of this flu bug and the potential of it to affect the health of the citizens of this country. I always try to get my flu shots in advance of the flu season, but no way this year. The only flu shots I see or am aware that have been given for the H1N1 are on TV. Every night, every broadcast, someone was getting a shot but I have not heard of anyone getting a H1N1 shot in the Stayton area. If a true pandemic occurred even after a years notice it does not appear as if we could handle it or be ready for it.

How do these issues relate to what's bugging me? Well there is an issue crawling to the forefront that will affect our potential to store and use water. Peak and Ecological Flows are a new buzz word that is out there. Contained within this year's water legislation HB 3369, was the statement that one is required to consider "Peak and Ecological flows" when applying for water development project grants and loans.

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Page</u>
<b>Note from President Trosi</b> .....	1
<b>Executive Director's Report</b> .....	2
<b>Event Updates</b>	
John Keys Partnership Program Update.....	4
<b>Federal Affairs Program</b>	
Fall News from Washington DC.....	5
<b>Awards</b>	
OWRC Member Districts Receive Federal Stimulus Funds.....	6
<b>Upcoming Events</b> .....	7

#### ***President's Note Continued***.....

It also states that Water Resources Department may require that a project protect peak and ecological flows to the extent determined by the Department of Fish and Wildlife to be necessary. The considerations that will be required to make these determinations will be very important for OWRC to be involved in. I see lots of studies, lots of attempts to divert water away from storage, and many other looming issues. The Board of Directors of OWRC I believe does understand the importance of being prepared for this issue, they have dedicated staff time and financial resources to establishing a position on the many issues that will be associated with determining Peak and Ecological flows. I think we will be prepared for the challenge. Will the Beavers be prepared—I think so! GO BEAVS!!

- *Larry Trosi,*  
**OWRC President**

*Larry—Thanks for serving as OWRC President and for your years of hard work on behalf of OWRC. Enjoy retirement!*

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

After I recovered from the surprise that 2009 is coming to an end, I took a look back at what happened during the year. It would take most of the newsletter to do justice to the different challenges and opportunities that arose for irrigated agriculture so I'll try to highlight just a few of them. I started to write this focusing on the different programs run by OWRC, but there are some topics that cut across two or more programs that could have major impact on the operations and future stability of irrigation systems in Oregon.

Peak flows, ecological flows, environmental flows; climate change; sustainable watersheds; ecosystem restoration; adaptation – those are terms that have come to the forefront at both the state and national level in an effort to redefine and restructure water management. And at first glance, they are terms that do not necessarily cause concern. In fact, many of them resonant as good things for watersheds, endangered species, and water supply until one tries to find an agreed upon definition for the term and for its application to the water world. OWRC has found itself struggling with these kinds of concepts as we seek a balance that protects irrigation water rights and irrigated agriculture and ensures districts on-going ability to deliver water to their respective water users with recognition and support of our members' on-going efforts to serve as responsible stewards of the water resource in which the work to improve streamflow, habitat, protect fish, and improve water quality.

As you might imagine, this takes a great deal of thought and input from our members through the Federal Affairs Committee, the Legislative Committee, the Board of Directors and the occasional work group or task force. These issues are not going away and will continue to require input from your members. I encourage those of you who want to be involved in shaping OWRC's work on these issues to contact me about serving on one of the committees

Now to the 2009 Legislative session. This was a very different session that I've experienced since joining OWRC. With a Democratic majority in both the House and Senate and Democratic control of the Governor's office, we knew we would be in for a change. Little did we know nor could we expect that a freshman Democratic Representative from the Portland area would decide to champion funding for water projects for the Umatilla Basin and elsewhere in Oregon. The coalition of water users that has been working on this issue for a few years drafted a bill that reflected our past efforts to provide state funding for major water projects which became the vehicle for that Representative to use for his efforts, which did not resemble in any fashion the bill we put forward. The final bill does provide funding for one water project in the near future -- the Umatilla groundwater recharge project in 2009-11. It sets up an unfunded grant program for later years and restructures the old water development loan program and provides funding in later years for that program. The bill goes much further, though in setting up requirements to qualify for funding that include new requirements for environmental studies as well as new environmental requirements for water supply projects that use state funding including maintenance of peak flows and ecological flows for fish bearing streams. The Oregon Water Resources Department will be undertaking several different rulemakings to implement this program in 2010. OWRC will be seeking your input on those rulemakings.

OWRC was deeply involved in efforts to prevent deep cuts to the Oregon Water Resources Department's budget as the Legislature struggled to balance the state's budget for 2009-11 in the face of declining revenues. While the Department did lose 6 staff as part of the rebalance of the 2007-09 budget (which had to be tackled at the start of the 2009 session, the coalition working together on the Department budget was able to work with Representative Bob Jenson to avoid further cuts. This required some substantial fee increases, but the OWRC Board and Legislative Committee determined that our members would be better served by using those fee increases to maintain staff to process transactions such as water rights transfers.

OWRC was also able to get the district transfer pilot program extended to 15 districts (from 3 in the original program) and extend the pilot project for several years so that the Oregon Water Resources Department can develop enough data to support a permanent program.

We are facing another "annual" special session of the state Legislature in February 2010. While this session is designed to handle the normal types of legislation, it is becoming more likely that the primary focus will be the state's budget given the recent revenue forecasts. It is too soon to predict what types of water bills will be introduced. OWRC's Legislative Committee and Board of Directors are considering a couple of concepts which we may ask to be introduced – more on that later.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT CONTINUED

This was the fourth year for what has become the John Keys Partnership Program with the Bureau of Reclamation. The Bureau of Reclamation nominated the Program for a the Department of Interior's Partners in Conservation award. I was privileged to fly to Washington D.C. to accept the award on behalf of OWRC. I was joined by Sue Tholen and Tim Personius who accepted the award on behalf of the Pacific NW Regional office of Reclamation and Bill McDonald, acting Commisisoner of Reclamation. The award was presented by Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar who was joined by Deanna Archleta, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science. A highlight was the reception on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of the Interior office building and Tim's insistence that Sue and I take a few minutes to appreciate the view of Washington D.C. from the patio just outside the reception room. Sue and I had dinner with Tanya Sommer, a participant in the program in its first year who is on assignment as the PN Liaison in Washington D.C.

It's the time of year when we all stop to think about those around us that contribute to our lives. In that vein, I want to thank all of you for your contributions to OWRC. Without you my job would not be possible. Members of the Membership Services Committee, Federal Affairs Committee, Legislative Committee, and Annual Conference Planning Committee have been invaluable in their participation. The Board of Directors deserves all of our thanks. Those represent the best in this industry and give many hours of their time to representing our members as we develop our federal and state policies and develop our educational programs.

Peter Carlson and Kristina McNitt have continued to provide invaluable counsel and guidance as OWRC works its way through very challenging issues at the federal and state level. OWRC could not maintain its effectiveness without their help and support. And finally, a thank you to April. As you know, we had to layoff our one staff person late last year in order to balance our budget without increasing your dues. April's commitment to making the a relatively seamless transition to a two person office was invaluable in our being able to maintain our programs and advocacy abilities.

As you read this we will be holding our annual conference – a wonderful way to end the year and to set the stage for 2010. This year we are holding a silent auction with the proceeds going to Farmers Ending Hunger. This is OWRC's effort to recognize the hardships facing many Oregonians this year and the role our members plan in feeding the residents of this state and the nation. Thanks our members who lined up the auction items and to the generous donors of those item – and of course to those of you who bid on an buy the items during the auction.

I look forward to working with our members to turn challenges into opportunities in 2010. On behalf of the Board of Directors and the OWRC staff, may you all have a wonderful and joyous holiday season with friends and family.



*– Anita Winkler,  
OWRC Executive Director*

## OWRC ON THE ROAD



*OWRC Board and District representatives touring the Klamath Irrigation District facilities in the Klamath Basin in August 2009.*



*OWRC Board and District representatives touring Stanfield and Hermiston Irrigation District facilities in the Umatilla Basin in October 2009.*

## EVENT UPDATES

### JOHN KEYS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE

The coordination between the Pacific Northwest irrigation districts, Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC), and the Bureau of Reclamation's Pacific Northwest Regional Office (PN Region) on the John Keys Partnership Program continues in 2009. The John Keys Partnership Program began in 2006 with Reclamation employees joining the Oregon Irrigation Districts in the Medford and the Owyhee Valley to learn first hand how an irrigation district operates. The Program has increased the understanding of Reclamation employees regarding the decisions irrigation users have to make. The Program won the Reclamation-wide 2008 Partners Cooperative Conservation Award.



*Mike Britton, Manager of North Unit Irrigation District, providing key information to Partnership Program participants in August 2009.*

Employees spend time on the ground with district employees learning water operations. "It is one thing to sit in a conference room talking about aging infrastructure, but it is quite another to actually stand on a canal bank observing crumbling concrete and discussing repair costs," says Bryan Horsburgh, Deputy Manager for Resource and Technical Services. Bryan attended the program in 2006 as the Regional Water Quality Specialist. The key to the Program is small groups to allow time for questions and conversations between District Employees and Reclamation employees.

During an evening dinner, employees and district board members discuss irrigation issues such as crop selection, prices, equipment, harvest timing, and watering sequences. "Too often we do not understand the reasons behind decisions and this gives us an understanding of the

complicated practices of growing crops," says Tanya Sommer, who attended the inaugural session of the program. Tanya now works in Washington DC as the PN Regional Liaison.

The program has expanded to Idaho and the State of Washington is interested in participating in the 2010 session.

– **Sue Tholen**

*Bureau of Reclamation*

*Program Coordinator, Pacific Northwest Region*

**GoodSearch**  
YOU SEARCH WE GIVE™

### SAVE TIME AND HELP OWRC BY SHOPPING ONLINE WITH GOODSHOP



As the holiday shopping season is upon us, if you shop online, please consider using GoodShop to make your purchases, which is a part of GoodSearch. You can access over 700 businesses through the GoodShop website and make your purchase as you would normally, except that by accessing the store through the GoodShop website link you can support OWRC.

For every eligible purchase you make, OWRC will receive a percentage of the sale, which varies based on the particular business, but can be up to 37%. To start shopping, or for more information about GoodSearch or GoodShop, visit [www.goodsearch.com/goodshop.aspx](http://www.goodsearch.com/goodshop.aspx) or click on the GoodSearch icon the right side of the OWRC website.

**Happy Shopping and Happy Holidays!!!**

**GoodShop**

Shop at your favorite stores and we'll donate up to 37% of every purchase to your favorite charity!

**SHOP NOW!**

# FEDERAL PROGRAM

## FALL NEWS FROM WASHINGTON DC

### Falling Into Place

T 'was the night before Christmas and all through the House and Senate not a person was stirring while proposals were whirling. And down through the chimney down came Santa Obama with his fistful of dollars hoping to find friends.....

### FY10 Appropriations

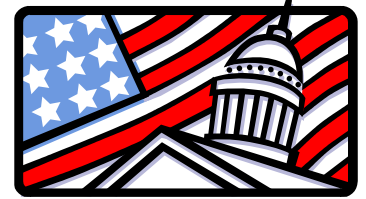
Congress has successfully passed (and had signed into law) two major funding bills of interest to the OWRC membership – the Energy and Water Appropriations bill that funds the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Interior and Environment Appropriations bill that funds the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Geological Survey. In addition to requesting funding increases for these programs on its' own, OWRC worked within three coalitions to advance the funding needs for programs addressing such issues as stream-gauging, fisheries restoration and water conservation.

These efforts built upon work of the OWRC Federal Affairs Committee to develop a framework for addressing major efforts before Congress on Infrastructure and Climate Change. Identifying not only the present needs of the OWRC membership but also the anticipated consequences of needing to have programs and funding to address aging infrastructure, environmental and population-related issues has proved invaluable in the discussions that have taken place in Washington, D.C. and the OWRC should be commended for the work they have done in this area.

2009 has been an unusual year for many reasons, not the least of which has been the influx of funding from three Federal pots of money in one year. Congress passed the FY09 appropriation bills early this year instead of the normal September/October of the previous year; funding was provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 recognizing the job-creation aspects of water resource investments; and the FY10 appropriations bills have passed as well. OWRC members have been leaders in developing proposals for use of this funding, as well as working to make sure these Federal agencies have the Budgets to continue the regular work that has been previously authorized.

Someone once said that with leadership comes more work, but only if you haven't adequately planned and educated those who follow. OWRC is now reaping the benefits of hard work that took place

in the late 1990's that resulted in the creation of the Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) of 2000. That program was



reauthorized earlier this year in the Omnibus Public Land Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-11). OWRC has taken the lead among the four Northwest states to work with their Congressional delegation to first secure passage and now to have the program budgeted for its' \$25 million a year authorization. Sometimes these activities take a little creativity, along with excellent working relationships with other water associations and state Congressional delegations, to convince an agency of the benefits of being responsible partners and place protection of the resource ahead of politics.

That same Public Law contained other provisions that will also be beneficial to the membership of the OWRC in the near future. But it will take that same level of commitment to capitalize on the opportunity. A new Cooperative Watershed Management Program was established along with a title on the SECURE Water Act and Aging Infrastructure. These programs are presently emerging from the cocoon of the new Administration now that Congress has acted and represent important new opportunities for information, funding and partnerships to advance the water resources needs, especially on a watershed level, for the OWRC members. You may have to step outside of your normal comfort zone to benefit but that's the wonderful aspect of an organization like the OWRC – you won't be stepping out alone.

The OWRC annual meeting presents a wonderful opportunity to find out that Federal and state water officials are real people who are responsible for carrying out the details for the laws like the one mentioned above. And they like to solve problems before they become major headaches. And just as Managers or General Managers work for a board of directors these people work for a Governor or a President that carries with it a term of office, philosophy and an agenda that may take some creativity and time to meet your need. But you will not know that until you take that first step of getting involved.

Just as you have work to do, so do I. It involves not only continuing to advance your Federal Affairs Committee agenda but it continues in arcane

issues such as the Principles and Guidelines for water programs (that the OWRC commented on last year); new ecosystem policies and programs for coastal areas; a new Ocean policy; new Administration policies on climate adaption and water conservation in anticipation of passage of Climate Change legislation; and continued efforts on issues such as a new national water policy, sustainability and new Trust Funds for aging infrastructure.

Next year will provide the first real demonstration of the Obama Administration Budget. The expectation is that it will not request as much money for some of our favorite programs as we've seen in the past. Part of the thinking is these programs are flush with ARRA funding. The other part of what is expected next year is that with all of the key players and appointments in place we will see more forceful efforts at moving forward on the Administrative and regulatory proposals of the Administration.

But we can also expect to see Congressional efforts at developing a new Water Resources Development Act for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, reauthorization of the EPA's State

Revolving Funds, a continued interest in jobs and the economy and an ongoing effort at advancing ecosystem restoration and place-based environmentalism. And there are always other policy and authorization proposals to be expected for the Reclamation program.

It will also be an election year for Congress. So your continued involvement, knowledge, ideas and thoughts are appreciated as we all work to make the OWRC an even more effective organization as we work together in advancing your perspective, interest and needs at the Federal level. So join in through participating in the Federal Affairs Committee or following along with a regular check-in of the OWRC website and see how we're doing as an effective voice of water in Washington, D.C., the Pacific Northwest, and the State of Oregon.

Thank you again for your continued interest and involvement in OWRC's Federal Affairs Program.

**- Peter Carlson,  
Will and Carlson,  
OWRC Washington DC lobbyist**

## AWARDS

### OWRC MEMBER DISTRICTS RECEIVE FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDS FOR WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Central Oregon, Farmers, Swalley and Three Sisters Irrigation Districts recently were awarded federal stimulus funding for water quality improvement projects from the Department of Environmental Quality's Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan program. DEQ Director Dick Pedersen presented oversized ceremonial checks to the districts at the 2009 OWRC Water Law Seminar on September 24<sup>th</sup> at the Eagle Crest Resort in Redmond, Oregon.

- ◆ Central Oregon Irrigation District in Redmond received \$4 million.
- ◆ Farmers Irrigation District in Hood River received \$4 million.
- ◆ Swalley Irrigation District in Bend received \$3.1 million.
- ◆ Three Sisters Irrigation District in Sisters received \$465,340.



*From left to right: Marc Thalacker, Three Sisters Irrigation District; Dick Pedersen, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality; Mike Kleinsmith, Farmers Irrigation District; Larry Roofener, Central Oregon Irrigation District; and Suzanne Butterfield, Swalley Irrigation District.*

These four Districts received a total of \$11,565,340 for canal piping projects and were the only districts out of 13 projects that received DEQ funding. The funds came through a capitalization grant DEQ obtained from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for monies available to states via the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. For more information about Oregon's Clean Water State Revolving Fund, visit:

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/wq/loans/loans.htm>

## Oregon Water Resources Congress 2009 BOARD ROSTER

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Larry Trosi, President  
Chuck Wilcox, Vice-President  
Jay Chamberlin, Treasurer  
Shawn Gerdes, Secretary  
Jim Pendleton, Past President  
Doug MacDougal, At Large  
Elmer McDaniels, At Large

### 2009 REGIONAL DIRECTORS

Region 1: Bob Koenig  
Joe Rutledge  
Region 2: Blair Nash  
Dan Shepard  
Region 3: Shane McDonald  
Dave Solem  
Region 4: Russ Rhoden  
Marc Thalacker  
Region 5: John Buckley  
Mike Richardson  
Region 6: Bev Bridgewater  
Ray Kopacz  
Region 7: Vacant  
Region 8: Harvey Manser

### AFFILIATES

Jon Burgi, David Evans and Associates  
David Filippi, Stoel Rives  
Douglas MacDougal, Schwabe Williamson Wyatt  
Mark Wharry, Winzler & Kelly

### AT LARGE

Steve Bruce, EnviroLogic Resources  
Elmer McDaniels, Tumalo Irrigation District  
Brian Nakamura, East Fork Irrigation District  
Steve Shropshire, Jordan Schrader Ramis

### OWRC STAFF

**Executive Director**  
Anita Winkler

**Assistant Director/Editor**  
April Snell



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 2009 OWRC Annual Conference

**December 1-4<sup>th</sup>**

*Best Western Hood River Inn  
Hood River, Oregon*

### Tri-State Meeting

**January 22, 2010**

*Ramada Inn  
Portland, Oregon*

### 2010 SDAO

### District Directors Training

**January 28th, 2010**

### Optional Tour on January 29th

*RiverHouse  
Bend, Oregon*

### O & M Workshop

**February 11-12<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

*Location TBA  
Central Oregon*

*For more information about these events,  
visit [www.owrc.org](http://www.owrc.org)*

