

# Oregon Water Resources Congress

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## WATERWORKS



ISSUE #21

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 Troisi

May Day really means spring time around the Northwest, I believe, unless you're in the Willamette Valley, or Spokane, or Northern Idaho. Since I live in the Willamette Valley I can testify to snow, hail, sleet and rain in the last week or two. The ground is still wet enough to restrict the use of our equipment along the ditch banks. I guess that's ok because they are broken down anyway and the parts are coming from afar. I was in Reardon & Spokane, Washington and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho last week and experienced similar weather up there, so I guess it really just seems like a normal spring in the Northwest, with one exception—our snow packs and water supply all appear to be way above normal, which should make for a great water year, no problems, no complaints, no issues. Yeah Right!

Our Legislative Committee and staff have been working with Water Resources Department on its draft legislative concepts for the 2009 Legislative Session. Of interest to our members is a concept involving district transfers of water rights that involve a supplemental permit or right and a concept related to standing to appeal a Final Order issued by the Department. If you are interested in the details of either of these concepts, contact Anita Winkler in the OWRC office. OWRC staff has also met with Water Resources Dept. staff and are participating in stakeholder meetings to discuss the Department's proposed budget for Fiscal Years 2009-2011. These are only preliminary discussions with many more discussions to come and several opportunities for you to participate in meetings regarding the Department's budget.

Staff has also encouraged the Department to hold meetings around the state to explain the Oregon Water Supply and Conservation Initiative and seek input from water users. The meetings, held in March, provided a chance for districts to learn about the WSCI and how to provide input to the process and to the data bases that are being developed. There is an update on the Initiative in this newsletter edition if you would like learn more.

Another important issue for OWRC is that the Department of State Lands (DSL) has begun a rulemaking process for its removal-fill rules. Several OWRC members have volunteered to serve on an OWRC committee to review the rules and ensure district interests are protected. Our Executive Director, Anita Winkler, serves on the technical advisory committee that is working with DSL. If you would like to be a part of the OWRC committee reviewing the DSL rules, or any other committee within OWRC, please let me or Anita know.

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### .....▶A Note from President Troisi, Continued

My first Board meeting as your OWRC President was a bust, as I had the opportunity to experience Rotator Cuff surgery (not something I would recommend) a few days before the meeting, and the board had to depend on your able Vice President, Chuck Wilcox, to lead them through the agenda. It is my understanding there was lots of discussion regarding funding OWRC's future as a follow-up from the recent board retreat. We will need to make some tough budget decisions during this year, such as should we increase dues (wow!), cut expenses (how?), and find new sources of revenue (where?). Whether you have ideas on the budget or recommending policy direction for the organization I encourage you to keep in touch and share your ideas. Getting feedback and staying involved is what keeps us engaged in the water world. Again, after days of writing it is easy to continue to rattle on, but I just got the call that the parts are in for the tractors so I better go, spring is here. - *Larry Troisi*,  
OWRC President

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



One of the advantages to being on this side of publishing the newsletter is that I can see what others have covered in their articles and not need to write much!

There are two upcoming conferences in the next few months that are not often nearby: NWRA's Western Water Seminar and USCID's fall conference. These both provide opportunities for those in the irrigation world to meet people from around the country (and around the world in the case of the USCID conference), share experiences and learn.

NWRA's Western Water Seminar is July 28-30 at the Skamania Lodge in Stevenson, Washington. There will be a golf tournament on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Tom Myrum, the Executive Director of the Washington State Water Resources Association and chair of NWRA's Federal Affairs Committee is in charge of planning the conference. NWRA's summer conference focuses primarily on federal and western water policy and typically includes policy makers from Washington D.C. OWRC typically has only a couple of people attend the Western Water Seminar. This is a chance for you to attend and interact with other NWRA members.

USCID's fall conference, "Managing Water in a Climate Changing World," will be in Portland September 17-20<sup>th</sup>. Conference plans include a Wednesday morning tour of Stevens Water Monitoring Systems facility in Portland and a Saturday tour of the irrigation districts in the Hood Basin highlighting their efforts to protect fish and the impact of the glacier melt on their infrastructure and operations. As the title indicates, the focus of this conference is on making sure we can meet water needs during a period of climate changes. Topics being developed for the agenda include figuring out new curves for managing reservoirs since historical curves may not work, how to allocate water under existing water laws, and alternate sources of supply.

I have been appointed to OSU's Institute for Water and Watersheds (IWW) Advisory Board. The Board met for the first time in April at which time IWW staff and staff from other OSU departments took us through a packed day of information about activities that are a part of the IWW or related to the IWW. We then spent time discussing future activities that IWW might undertake. The Board is a diverse group of consultants, policy makers and legislatures, and groups like OWRC that work in Oregon's water world.

During its recent retreat, the Board began to evaluate member services, explore additional services OWRC could provide, and evaluate how we provide the services with the intent of truly becoming the best at what we do. In that process, the Board is looking at the committees and their functions, the resources needed to meet that goal of becoming the best, and the different means for developing those resources. Needless to say, this is not an easy task nor can it be completed quickly. This will be an on-going effort for this year. I hope you will talk to your respective regional directors or your affiliate directors if you have suggestions. Of course, you can always give those suggestions to an officer or to staff as well.

Watching the recent rain (and sometimes snow and hail) fall and hearing the nightly weather reports of record amounts of snowfall and record snowpack on the ground in the Cascades this late in the year, it has been hard to think about climate change and the impact on water at times. Nevertheless, this topic calls for attention on a daily basis given the media coverage, Congressional initiatives, and the Governor's initiative. OWRC is involved in these activities in different ways and will keep you posted about them. For now, I just hope that we continue to have a cool spring so that the snow can melt gradually and work its way to the reservoirs and we can avoid flooding. For all of our member districts and water users, I hope this record snowfall will provide a good irrigation year for you.

**– Anita Winkler, OWRC Executive Director**



## HAPPENINGS FROM LEA'S DESK



The 2008 OWRC Member Directory is ready to go to print! The proofs were faxed or emailed out to all of our members the second week of April and I'm getting the final revisions completed. This has been a bit of a process because we've slightly changed the formatting and listings were re-generated from scratch. We expect to be sending out the new directories by the end of May.

The 2008 District Management Survey will be the next big project that I will be working on and needing your assistance with. I have been looking at how to reformat this survey to make it (perhaps) a bit more specific in the information we are seeking and user friendly so that more districts respond. Once it is sent out, we will give the districts about a month to get the information filled in and returned and I should have the summary completed by fall. We appreciate the time and effort our districts put into completing this annual survey.

***Thanks for Your Continued Support of OWRC!***

***– Lea Rasura***

***OWRC Office Administrator***

## EVENT UPDATES

### 2008 TECHNOLOGY SEMINAR AND HYDRO WORKSHOP

OWRC is planning some new events this fall for district and affiliate members alike. While these events are still in the preliminary planning phases, we want to tell you about them and hope that you will mark your calendars for the dates below.

This fall, OWRC will be at the Sunriver Resort in Central Oregon from October 22-24 for a one-day Technology Seminar on new technologies and a one-day Hydro Workshop, co-sponsored by the Northwest Hydroelectric Association, which will provide training on small and micro hydroelectric systems. The Technology Seminar will be preceded by the 2008 OWRC Golf Tournament and 19<sup>th</sup> Hole Party.

Oregon Water Resources Congress



The Technology Seminar will be held Thursday, October 23, and is designed to provide district managers, field staff, and others with the newest technological advancements related to irrigation management. This event is also an opportunity for OWRC affiliates to showcase their work in designing, engineering, and manufacturing irrigation technologies. For affiliates interesting in presenting at the seminar, there will be a request for presentation ideas emailed to affiliate members and posted on the OWRC website by the end of May. Presentations will be selected and organized by July using a steering committee. There will also be exhibit opportunities available at the Technology Seminar. Exhibit applications will be available in August.

The Small and Micro-Hydroelectric Workshop will be held on Friday, October 24, and will provide training on how to set-up a small or micro-hydroelectric system. The workshop will feature various speakers, including representatives from the state agencies that are involved in the hydropower permitting process (WRD, DOE), and the Northwest Hydroelectric Association. A step-by-step guidebook on how to navigate the hydroelectric permitting process, newly developed by NWA and DOE, will be included with the workshop.

Last, but certainly not least, we hope that you will join us for the 2008 OWRC Golf Tournament and 19<sup>th</sup> Hole Party on Wednesday, October 22. This year golfers will have the opportunity to play on Sunriver's Crosswater Course, rated by Golf Digest as "#28 of America's top 100 Greatest Golf Courses." For golfers and non-golfers alike, the 19<sup>th</sup> Hole Party in the evening will be filled with good food, beverages, and of course good company. There will also be other activities available at the Resort.



For more information about these events, click on the OWRC event link at: [www.owrc.org/OWRCevents.htm](http://www.owrc.org/OWRCevents.htm).

***Mark your calendars for October 22-24 and we look forward to seeing you there!***

***– April Snell***

***OWRC Assistant Director***

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## STATE LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

### WHAT'S GRASSROOTS GOT TO DO WITH IT?



I know - you hate politics. In your experience, legislators in Salem are out of touch and don't understand rural issues. They have no basic understanding of what you do. Worse,

their worldview is generally urban-based and often totally askew relative to your own daily life.

So, what's grassroots got to do with it? I'll rephrase the question. What do **you** have to do with grassroots? **Everything!!!**

Legislators are daily assaulted with bills for legislation, amendments, special interests (including OWRC), constituents, the media and their own caucus colleagues. Think about it – if you were a school teacher, a shoe designer, a dentist or a policeman elected to office, how would you get information about water rights, irrigation districts and other issues similarly foreign to you?

Lobbyists in Salem provide background, information and ask for votes. But your association lobbyist is only one voice among many competing voices – especially on potentially controversial natural resources issues which can sometimes pit friend against friend. Which lobbyist is a legislator to turn to?

A legislator will turn to the lobbyist who has real people—grassroots—**you!**—as their touchstone to reality. For me, a measure of success is when a legislator calls me about an issue some “real person” brought to their attention—or, vice-versa. That allows you and me to both affirm the issue and build credibility for OWRC. That legislator knows for certain that in the crazy kaleidoscope of Salem, OWRC represents real folks with real issues.

Serving as a touchstone for a legislator is a rewarding relationship, but one that takes steady cultivation. Now is the season to sow. First, do you know your state Representative and Senator? If not, check out [www.leg.state.or.us/findlegsltr/](http://www.leg.state.or.us/findlegsltr/)

After you identify your legislators, call them! They will be happy to hear from you. It is campaign season and they are working at outreach. Help them out. Pick up the phone. Introduce yourself on the phone and invite them to your farm or district for a tour, or ask for a short meeting over a cup of coffee.

Building this relationship is best over several “touches”

of short duration. Before your first meeting, identify three issues you'd like to discuss. For example, urbanization is an increasing challenge for most districts. Can you discuss the impacts of urbanization on your district to your legislator? While doing so, reinforce the idea that districts are comprised of an elected board of fellow farmers. There's two key issues right there. If you'd prefer, call OWRC and walk through ideas with Anita Winkler or me. We can also give you some feedback about your legislators so you have some background about them.

Continuing to build the relationship is important. After your initial meeting or two, and assuming you've decided to personally support the legislator, offer to post a lawn sign at your home. Even better, a field sign. Legislators value field signs immensely.

At this point, your legislator not only knows who you are within the community, he/she is familiar with your issues, and is appreciative of your help as a campaign supporter. Already, you have a base relationship that is becoming a touchstone. What a great return investment for a little time and effort on your part.

Building on this basic relationship, your next step might be to write short letter to the editor of your local newspapers. This will be easier than you think because, unlike 99% of voters in the district, you know the guy personally and can vouch for his/her value to agriculture.

A next step would be to introduce your friends to this legislator. Your “third party” endorsement among peers is critical and not difficult. One way you could do it is by inviting 10 couples to your home to meet the legislator over strawberry shortcake. Let him talk for 10 minutes and spend the rest of the time visiting and eating.

One last item: Money. It truly is the difference between winning and losing campaigns. But don't let the obscene campaign expenses overwhelm you. Just think what you can do. Those 10 couples you invited to your home? They could all contribute up to \$100 to the legislator – and get every dime back on their tax return. Every cent back as a tax credit at the end of the year! This under-utilized tool is a way for real people to participate in a meaningful way. You and your 10 couples just gave a legislative friend \$1,100. That is the power of grassroots. **Are you ready to start sowing?**

– **Kristina McNitt, KLM Consulting**  
OWRC Oregon Lobbyist

## DOES YOUR DISTRICT NEED MONEY?!



While your gut reaction might be “Who doesn’t?” OWRC needs more information about your district’s funding needs. Your feedback is needed in order to effectively pursue funding opportunities at the state and federal level. While we have heard that many districts could use funding for water conservation, infrastructure, and other projects, without the details its hard for OWRC to know what is most needed and where. Even if you only have an idea of what you need in the future, we would like to know about it. Surveys have been emailed to district managers and if you need another copy, please call the OWRC office. And if you have figured out how to successfully grow a money tree—please share your technique!

## FEDERAL AFFAIRS

### SPRING NEWS FROM WASHINGTON DC

#### The End is Near...But Not for Everyone

Lost in the election year excitement is that fact that Congress is continuing to engage in the Legislative branch activities to meet the needs of our nation.

Consider the following:

- The FY09 Budget has been submitted;
- Authorizing Committees have reviewed the significance of the proposals to the programs under their jurisdiction and reported to the Budget Committees;
- Budget Committees are moving forward with their respective Budget Resolutions for use by the Appropriation Committees so decisions can be made on how to change the FY09 Budget to reflect the Legislative Branch priorities;
- Appropriation Subcommittees have almost completed their hearings where the Administration, and sometimes outside witnesses, come in and explain the Budget, or the respective needs that were omitted or underfunded (rare is for someone to come in anymore and say something was overfunded); and
- There is every expectation that Appropriation bills will be reported out of subcommittees, come to the floor of the House of Representatives for consideration, and then passed and sent over to the Senate—eventually.

Now almost anyone will tell you that you will not see these bills passed and sent to the President until at least after the election and quite likely until after the new President is sworn into office next year. So if you are waiting on money, continue to wait. The Federal Government in all likelihood will be operating on a Continuing Resolution at present (FY08)

funding levels. Please take a look at the “Federal Program” page of the OWRC website for our testimony on what is important in the respective appropriation bills that we are involved in helping shape.

#### Closer to Home

Just recently (April 29<sup>th</sup>), the House of Representatives, by a vote of 291-117, passed S. 2739, a “packaging” of legislation containing sixty-two wilderness area, heritage area, water project, and other public land bills. For water users in Oregon, this legislation contains the North Unit, Deschutes Resource Conservancy, Little Butte and Wallowa Dam. It also contains the Site Security legislation that we have worked on with other Western states.

Congress is also in the final stages of passing the new Farm bill. We are informed that aside from the other major changes for farmers, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program would see a \$2.4 billion increase over baseline levels, the Conservation Stewardship Program would receive \$1.1 billion and the Farm and Ranch Land Protection would receive \$560 million. This is a 5-year authorization bill.

The House of Representatives has started its effort to fashion a Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) for 2008. We are still examining the provisions of the WRDA 2007 (that was 7 years in the making) and waiting to see the proposed implementation guidance for several of the new policy changes and programs that were identified for us in the report you will find on our website (Federal Program tab, HR 1495, “Building A New Foundation



For the West”). OWRC, as a member of the Water Resources Coalition in Washington, D.C. ([www.waterresourcescoalition.org](http://www.waterresourcescoalition.org)) will be involved in the development of the new WRDA bill for this Congress.

OWRC is also following closely the effort of Congressman Blumenauer regarding what to do about aging infrastructure in the Nation. This is not just a water quality/water quantity issue. OWRC is in the process of developing a “white paper” that will suggest some policy principles for that larger discussion and look to reflect what our membership need assistance for – possibly planning, technical, rehabilitation, betterment, construction beyond the size capability of the district, financing, grants, loans, innovative research and development of new materials – assistance. Please let us know how we might best be able to meet your and your patron’s needs in the future. We have previously provided a “Funding Needs” survey form that can help focus your thinking in this important area.

We continue our effort to get the Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) passed by Congress. The Senate is waiting to send their Committee reported bill over to the House of Representatives. We need you to contact your respective House Members and ask for action on H.R. 3830. All of the attention focused on saving salmon in the Northwest, and with support from our friends in the environmental community, Congress is missing a great opportunity to meet a need in a non-controversial setting.

OWRC continues to follow the Climate Change issue given the implications for our water resources in the Northwest. Though with not much expectation of passing Congress, and being enacted into law, we feel there is a strong need to be informed on the proposals being discussed in Congress. Many of our fellow organizations – Family Farm Alliance, National Water Resources Association, and Western States Water Council – continue to highlight the issue and educate water users on the potential implications. It is our hope bring this issue too you in pieces that relate to the on-the-ground significance of the debate and action.

Finally, Congress has reengaged in the issue of Waters of the United States and the Clean Water Restoration Act legislative proposals. This past month provided a hearings chalk full of witnesses in the Senate and House of Representatives authorizing committees with responsibility for the issue. We would refer you to our white paper on our website for the consequence of these proposals to Oregon. The National Water Resources Association and the Water Resources Coalition have carried our views on this important matter. Witnesses at the hearings were asked to provide specific legislative language to the committees that would address the issues identified in their respective testimony. Please let us know if any additional concerns occur to you as you review the paper. Thank you again for your continued interest and involvement in OWRC’s Federal Affairs Program.

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

## COMMITTEE UPDATES

### MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

The Membership Services Committee is conducting a survey of districts who are currently not members of OWRC. The committee hopes to learn more about the various reasons why districts choose not to join OWRC. This information will be used in future recruitment efforts and in continually developing member services and benefits.

The Committee is also working on developing marketing packets about OWRC. These packets will include short descriptions and recent examples of various member benefits and packaged in a professional looking folder. These materials will be available for current members to show their boards and to give to prospective members in your region.

– **April Snell**  
*OWRC Assistant Director*





# OREGON WATER NEWS TIDBITS

## UPDATE: OREGON WATER SUPPLY AND CONSERVATION INITIATIVE



As part of the ongoing Oregon Water Supply and Conservation Initiative (OWSCI), the Water Resources Department (WRD) recently awarded \$155,000 in grant funding to help support 11 communities in their regional water supply planning efforts. OWRC is happy to note that one of our members, East Valley Water District, is one of these recipients. East Valley plans to identify potential pipeline routes for water delivery in their district. Oregon Water Supply and Conservation Grants require a minimum 25% cost-share match by the applicants.

Additionally, the Water Resources Department conducted a series of regional stakeholder workshops about the Initiative in March. Workshops were held in Salem, Medford, Redmond, and Pendleton to brief the public on content and process of the Initiative and to receive feedback on the demand forecast and conservation project inventory components. We greatly appreciated the attendance and participation of OWRC district members and affiliates at the workshops.

As part of the forecast and conservation project inventory, a meeting of stakeholders will be held on May 6<sup>th</sup> at the Water Resources Department in Salem. This meeting is designed as a check-in point where the project team (WRD and consultants from HDR Engineering) will report on the status of the surveys collected from water users, and provide a summary of the number, type, and regional location of survey respondents. There will also be an update on the pilot work HDR has conducted in the Deschutes Basin, so that stakeholders can gauge how the statewide data and methodology compare with demand forecasting work already completed by one community.

The demand forecast and conservation project inventory is scheduled to be completed and delivered to the Department by July 1, 2008. Data will be available online by October 2008. We will continue to provide updates on these and the other three components of the Initiative as they develop.

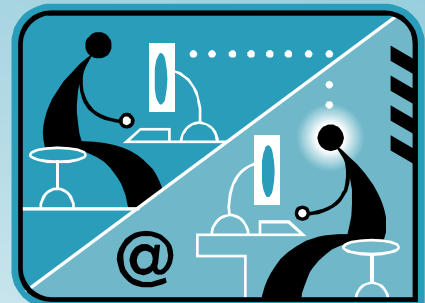
For more information about the Oregon Water Supply and Conservation Initiative visit:  
<http://egov.oregon.gov/OWRD/LAW/owsci.shtml>

**– April Snell**  
OWRC Assistant Director

### GOT EMAIL?

OWRC sends out a variety of information using email, such as the daily updates, meeting announcements, questions about interest in trainings, etc. While we try to send hard copies in the mail, you may be missing a lot of information if we do not have a current email address. Additionally, receiving documents electronically makes it easier to share with others, such as other staff and board members, and to make suggestions and changes.

If your district or organization needs an email address, there are several free options available that could easily meet your needs, such as “Gmail” by Google, which has a lot of storage space (<http://mail.google.com>) or “Hotmail” by Microsoft (<http://get.live.com/mail/options>). You will still need Internet access, but otherwise there is no cost to use these services. Additionally, you can check with you current Internet provider as some do offer free email accounts as part of the monthly service charge.



# Oregon Water Resources Congress

## 2008 BOARD ROSTER

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### OWRC STAFF

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Anita Winkler

**Assistant Director/Editor**  
April Snell

**Office Administrator**  
Lea Rasura



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**NWRA Western Water Seminar**  
*July 28 – 30*  
**Skamania Lodge in Stevenson, WA**

**OWRC 2008 Golf Tournament**  
*October 22, 2008*  
**Crosswater Course at Sunriver Resort,  
Sunriver, OR**

**OWRC Technology Seminar**  
*October 23, 2008*  
**Sunriver Resort,  
Sunriver, OR**

**OWRC & NW Hydro - Hydro Workshop**  
*October 24, 2008*  
**Sunriver Resort,  
Sunriver, OR**

**OWRC Annual Conference**  
*December 2-5, 2008*  
**Best Western Hood River Inn,  
Hood River, OR**

**For more information about these and other  
OWRC events, visit our website at:  
[www.owrc.org](http://www.owrc.org)**

### DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

OWRC is always looking for volunteers to write quality articles for the newsletter. If you have been involved with a project or issue that other OWRC members would be interested in and would like to share your thoughts about it, please call the OWRC office. Articles can be short and sweet or several paragraphs long. OWRC's WaterWorks newsletter is published quarterly.