



# Oregon Water Resources Congress

## 2018 Federal Program Overview



*Promoting the protection and use of water rights  
and the wise stewardship of water resources  
since 1912*



# Oregon Water Resources Congress

## 2018 Federal Priorities

### Federal Budget & Appropriations

- Support funding for key agencies/programs, including:
  - U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (WaterSMART grants, Drought assistance)
  - U.S. Geological Survey (Streamgaging and other data collection)
  - U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (Natural Resources Conservation Service grants)
  - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Clean Water Revolving Fund)
  - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) (State water planning assistance)
  - U.S. Fish and Wildlife (Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA))

### Water Supply & Infrastructure

- Encourage investment in locally driven water supply planning and development, including new above- and below-ground, and off-stream storage projects
- Support funding for rehabilitation of aging storage and water delivery infrastructure
- Support funding and technical assistance for collaborative drought planning and mitigation efforts, including emergency and long-term strategies for meeting multi-purpose water supply needs
- Support funding for wildfire prevention, protecting water supply and infrastructure on federal lands

### Clean Water Act Regulation

- Support regulatory streamlining to reduce burden upon districts and ag water users
- Oppose expansion of federal jurisdiction and/or new regulations that threaten districts' ability to deliver water

### Endangered Species Act & Critical Habitat

- Support collaborative, voluntary tools to assist in species management
- Support practical policies and regulatory reform

### Fish Passage and Fish Screens

- Develop and support funding for fish screen and fish passage restoration efforts
- Support appropriations for the recently reauthorized FRIMA program

### Qualified Conduit Hydropower

- Support regulatory streamlining for qualified conduit hydropower projects
- Develop and promote incentives for environmentally beneficial hydropower projects
- Monitor and engage in discussions on Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA); Lease of Power Privilege (LOPP), wheeling, interconnection issues.

### Watershed Planning

- Support/protect state sovereignty over water resources and leadership in water planning
- Support funding for state/local watershed planning efforts
  - Oregon's robust state watershed planning program is a model for voluntary, collaborative, locally-driven watershed solutions
  - Monitor Columbia River Treaty and engage in regional discussions as needed
- Support funding for additional research on water related resources management

### Other Regulatory and Policy Issues

- Monitor and engage in discussions on new Farm Bill; development of new Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA)
- Monitor and engage in proposed changes to the Reclamation Manual (D&S)
- Monitor Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) rules related to agricultural water quality
- Monitor Federal Government Agency Reorganization Efforts

### Key Strategies & Alliances:

- Continue to submit testimony, comments, and white papers on key issues
- Strengthen relationships with key federal agencies
- Strengthen relationships with Congressional delegation and staff (DC and local)
- Increase involvement with Family Farm Alliance, NWRA and other partner organizations
- Actively seek and promote collaborative and cooperative partnerships
- Engage in public/private investment efforts (P3, etc.); support private investment with adequate safeguards to protect public infrastructure

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# Oregon Water Resources Congress

## 2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

<b>President</b>	Mike Britton, North Unit Irrigation District
<b>Vice-President</b>	Brent Stevenson, Santiam Water Control District
<b>Treasurer</b>	Brian Hampson, Rogue River Valley Irrigation District
<b>Secretary</b>	Craig DeHart, Middle Fork Irrigation District
<b>Past President</b>	Blair Nash, Sutherlin Water Control District
<b>At-large</b>	Annette Kirkpatrick, Hermiston Irrigation District Steve Shropshire, Jordan Ramis

### REGIONAL DIRECTORS

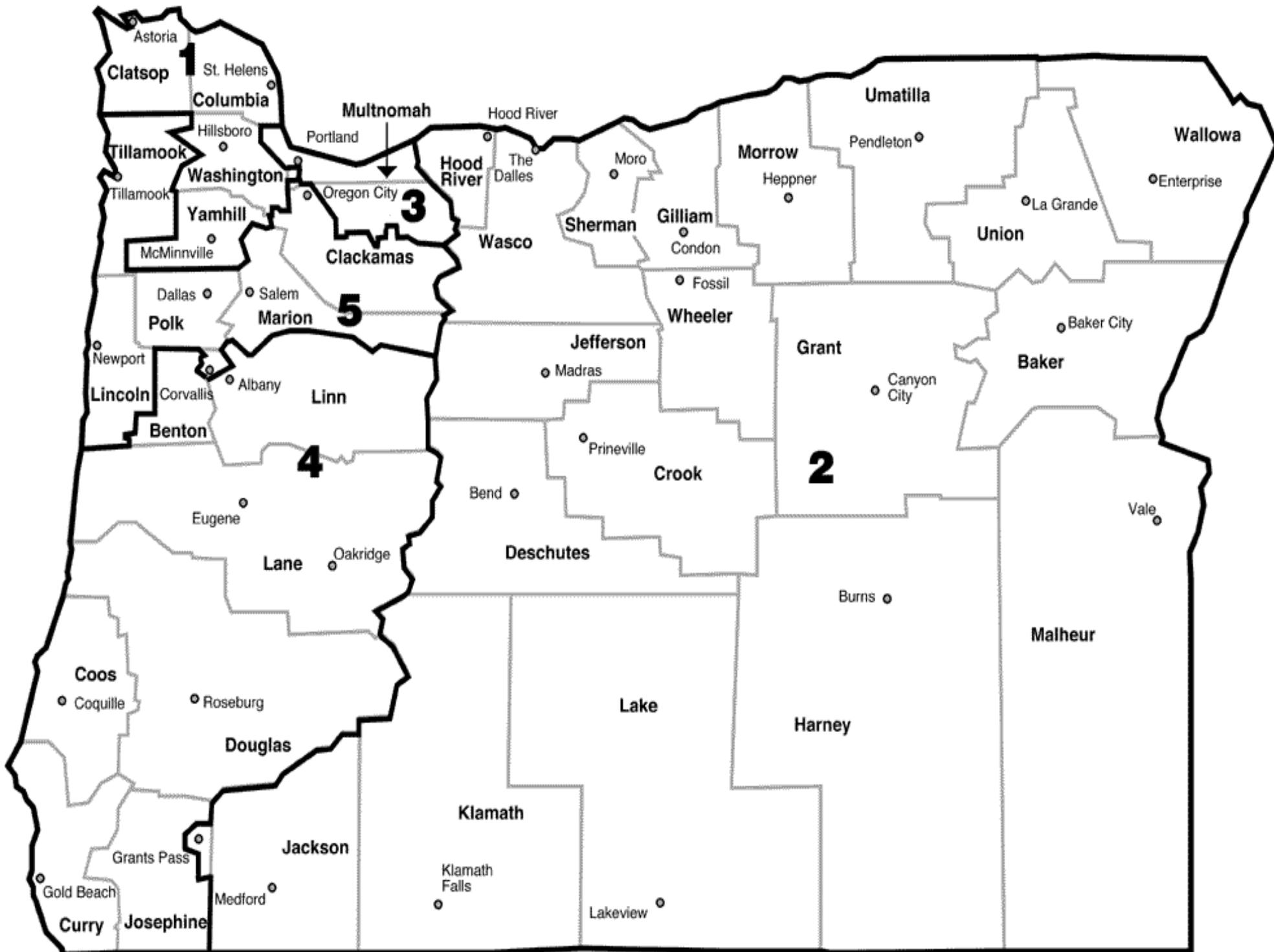
<b>Region 1</b>	Bob Koenig, Santiam Water Control District Joe Rutledge, Tualatin Valley Irrigation District
<b>Region 2</b>	Bryan Baumgartner, Rogue River Valley Irrigation District Jim Pendleton, Talent Irrigation District
<b>Region 3</b>	Shane McDonald, Enterprise Irrigation District Tyler Martin, Klamath Irrigation District
<b>Region 4</b>	Craig Horrell, Central Oregon Irrigation District Ken Rieck, Tumalo Irrigation District
<b>Region 5</b>	John Buckley, East Fork Irrigation District Les Perkins, Farmers Irrigation District
<b>Region 6</b>	Bev Bridgewater, West Extension Irrigation District Annette Kirkpatrick, Hermiston Irrigation District
<b>Region 7</b>	<i>Vacant</i>
<b>Region 8</b>	Jay Chamberlin, Owyhee Irrigation District Harvey Manser, Owyhee Irrigation District

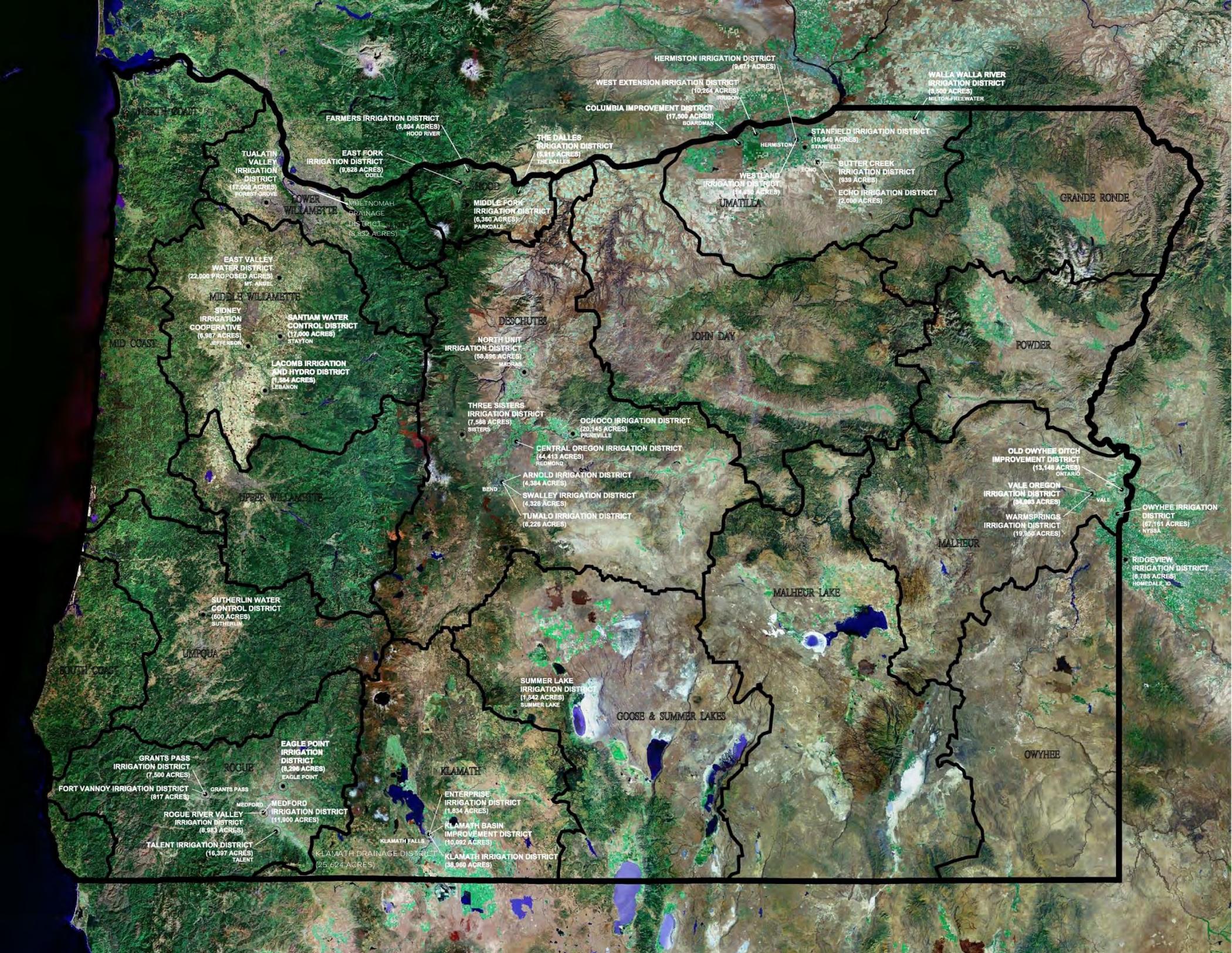
### AFFILIATES

Kevin Crew, Black Rock Consulting  
Kirk Maag, Stoel Rives  
Kate Moore, Dunn Carney  
Jim Newton, Newton Consultants

### AT-LARGE

Jer Camarata, Swalley Irrigation District  
Jack Friend, Medford Irrigation District  
Ray Kopacz, Stanfield Irrigation District  
Brian Nakamura, East Fork Irrigation District  
Steve Shropshire, Jordan Ramis  
Marc Thalacker, Three Sisters Irrigation District





HERMISTON IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(9,671 ACRES)

WALLA WALLA RIVER  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(3,500 ACRES)  
MILTON-FREEWATER

WEST EXTENSION IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(10,264 ACRES)  
IRRIBON

COLUMBIA IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
(17,500 ACRES)  
BOARDMAN

STANFIELD IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(10,840 ACRES)  
STANFIELD

FARMERS IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(5,804 ACRES)  
HOOD RIVER

THE DALLES  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(8,815 ACRES)  
THE DALLES

BUTTER CREEK  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(939 ACRES)

TUALATIN VALLEY  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(17,700 ACRES)  
CONANT GROVE

EAST FORK  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(9,628 ACRES)  
ODELL

MIDDLE FORK  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(6,380 ACRES)  
PARKDALE

WESTLAND  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(14,482 ACRES)  
UMATILLA

ECHO IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(2,000 ACRES)

LOWER WILLAMETTE  
DRAINAGE DISTRICT  
(6,832 ACRES)

EAST VALLEY  
WATER DISTRICT  
(22,000 PROPOSED ACRES)  
MT. ANDEL

MIDDLE WILLAMETTE

SANTIAM WATER  
CONTROL DISTRICT  
(17,000 ACRES)  
STAYTON

SIDNEY  
IRRIGATION  
COOPERATIVE  
(8,987 ACRES)  
JEFFERSON

LACOMB IRRIGATION  
AND HYDRO DISTRICT  
(1,884 ACRES)  
LEBANON

NORTH UNIT  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(59,896 ACRES)  
MADRAS

OCHOCHO IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(20,146 ACRES)  
PRINEVILLE

THREE SISTERS  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(7,598 ACRES)  
SISTERS

CENTRAL OREGON IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(44,413 ACRES)  
REDMOND

ARNOLD IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(4,384 ACRES)

SWALLEY IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(4,326 ACRES)

TUMALDO IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(6,228 ACRES)

OLD OWYHEE DITCH  
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
(13,148 ACRES)  
ONTARIO

VALE OREGON  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(34,883 ACRES)

WARMSPRINGS  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(19,890 ACRES)

OWYHEE IRRIGATION  
DISTRICT  
(57,161 ACRES)  
NYSSA

UPPER WILLAMETTE

SUTHERLIN WATER  
CONTROL DISTRICT  
(600 ACRES)  
SUTHERLIN

SUMMER LAKE  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(1,842 ACRES)  
SUMMER LAKE

RIDGEVIEW IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(8,785 ACRES)  
HOMEDALE, ID.

UMPUQA

GOOSE & SUMMER LAKES

MALHEUR LAKE

OWYHEE

GRANTS PASS  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(7,500 ACRES)

EAGLE POINT  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(8,296 ACRES)  
EAGLE POINT

KLAMATH

ENTERPRISE  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(1,834 ACRES)

KLAMATH BASIN  
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
(10,092 ACRES)

KLAMATH IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(38,960 ACRES)

FORT VANNOY IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(817 ACRES)

ROGUE RIVER VALLEY  
IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(8,983 ACRES)

TALENT IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(16,397 ACRES)  
TALENT

KLAMATH DRAINAGE DISTRICT  
(25,624 ACRES)

MEDFORD IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
(11,900 ACRES)



**Santiam Water Control District**  
***Willamette Basin***



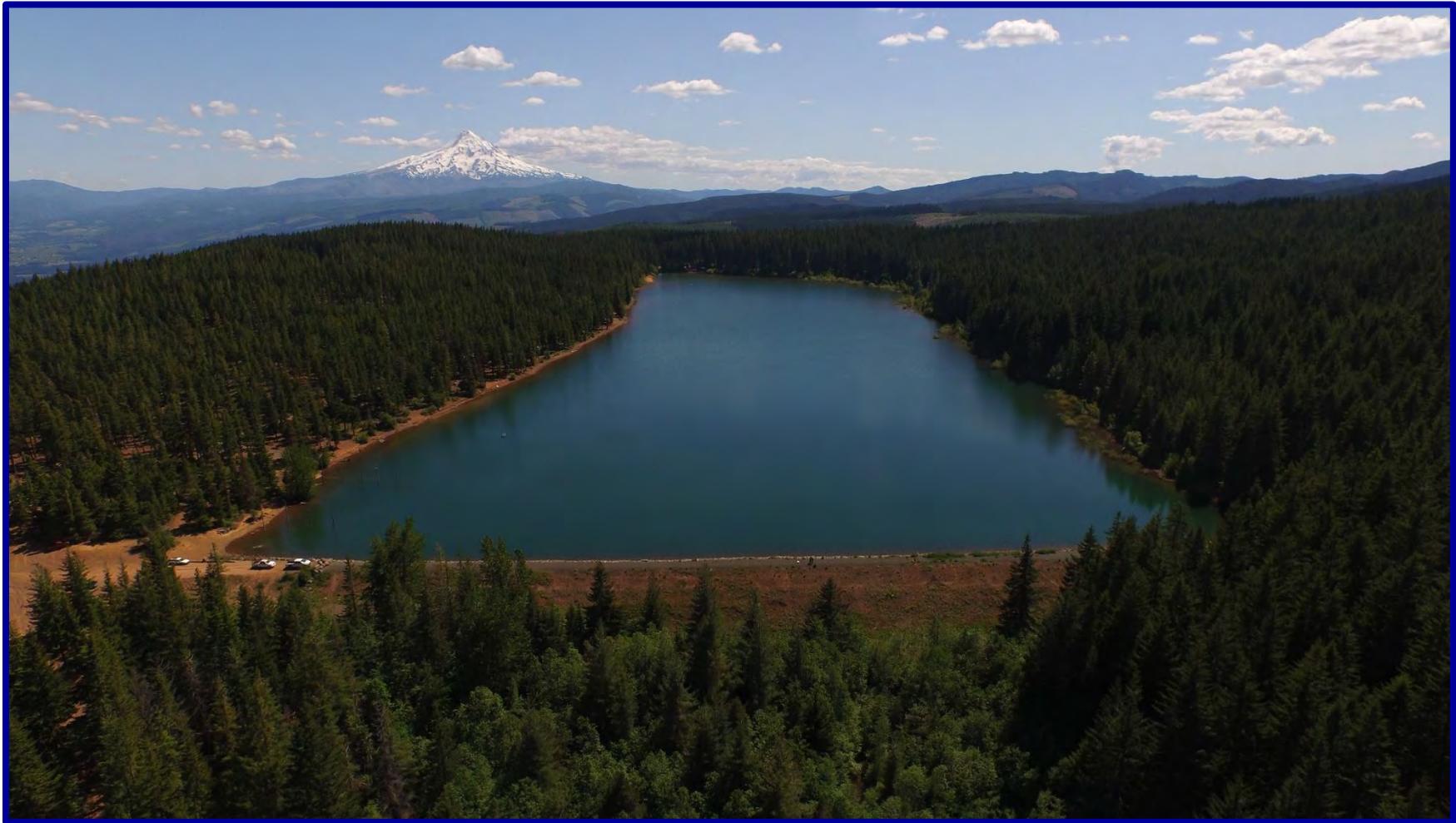
**Rogue River Valley Irrigation District**  
*Rogue Basin*



**Klamath Irrigation District**  
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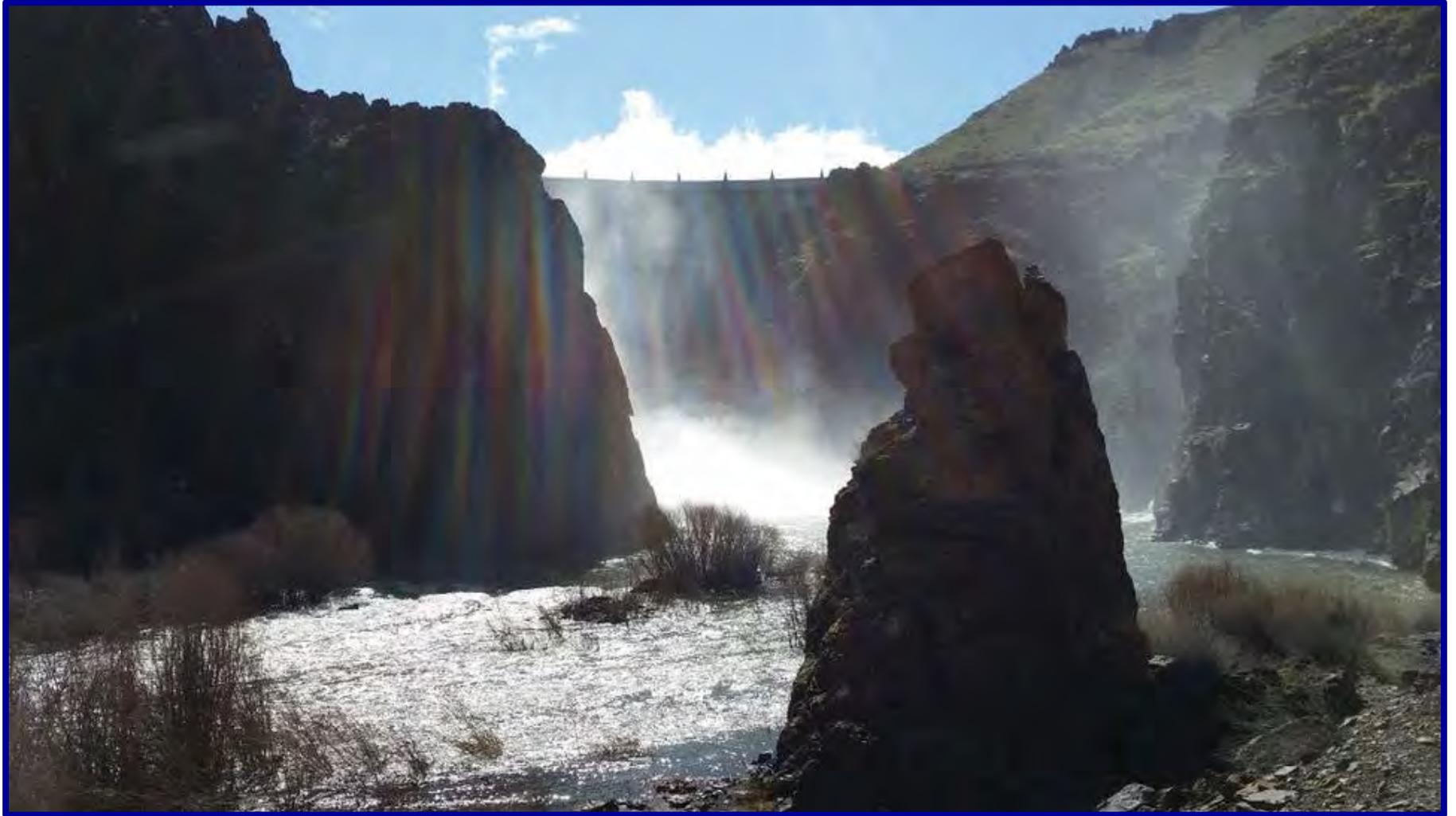
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***Owyhee Basin***



**Fish Screen  
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April Snell, Executive Director, Oregon Water Resources Congress  
Testimony submitted to the United States Senate Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on  
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies  
March 30, 2018

**RE: FY19 Budget for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service Programs**

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) strongly supports the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs and are concerned that proposed funding is inadequate to tackle the complex natural resources conservation issues facing the nation. We request a minimum of \$150 million for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), \$2 billion for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and \$200 million for the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program. These increases are vital to continue multi-year coordinated federal agency watershed planning watershed efforts, efficiently leverage partnerships, and maximize the value of federal investment in collaborative natural resources conservation projects.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to support the protection and use of water rights and promote the wise stewardship of water resources statewide. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate and manage complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower facilities.

Our members across Oregon face challenges related to irrigation water supply reliability and aging infrastructure. While there are common concerns and interests throughout irrigated agriculture, each basin is unique, and necessitates that local communities' work together to identify their needs and develop solutions to best meet them. Funding programs, like the ones housed under the USDA NRCS programs are essential tools to meet the myriad of infrastructure needs throughout all our basins, without placing the entire burden on the backs of the farmers and the agricultural economy that produces food and fiber for our nation.

**NRCS Program Benefits & Needs**

NRCS programs provide a wide variety of benefits to agriculture in Oregon and across the nation. Projects funded through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program help leverage scarce state and local resources, increase inter-agency cooperation, and result in collaborative on-the-ground solutions that help irrigated agriculture and the natural resources of the surrounding landscape. Financial and technical resources provided by NRCS are often a catalyst to bring other agencies and stakeholders to the table which not only leads to better outcomes but also maximizes efficiency and the value of federal investment.

Over the years, the various NRCS programs used by Oregon districts have been renamed or otherwise changed, but historically, have included the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) and the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI). These programs were used successfully by districts along with other state, local and federal interests to developing cooperative basin-wide approaches and address Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Clean Water Act (CWA) issues in watershed basins and sub basins. The valuable tools under these former programs are now generally covered under RCPP.

OWRC strongly supports RCPP, and while we understand the need to streamline federal agency activities and programs, it is our hope that essential programs like RCPP continue to receive the additional funding that is still needed to meet program demands. The RCPP is a critical tool for districts and other agricultural water suppliers in developing and implementing water and energy conservation projects in Oregon.

### **Examples of RCPP & EQIP Benefits**

Federal support of water conservation activities funded through NRCS programs, including the RCPP, is essential to the conservation of our natural resources and critical to protecting our food, energy and water supply. In 2018, USDA will be investing \$220 million in innovation conservation partnerships, funding 91 high impact projects across the country, including projects that will address water quality and drought like the Oregon projects described below. More projects like this could be developed and implemented with additional federal support through the RCPP.

- ***East Fork Irrigation District (EFID)*** - EFID with a diverse set of partners in the Hood River Watershed, of the Columbia River Basin, will focus on a top-priority water conservation and fish habitat project in the Lower East Fork Hood River. EFID and its partners will construct Phase 1 of the Eastside Lateral pipeline project, assist agricultural producers with approximately 400 acres of on-farm water conservation practices and educate producers and farm workers on the latest irrigation water management techniques. The project will also restore one mile of spawning and rearing habitat on the East Fork Hood River for threatened steelhead, spring Chinook, and Coho. The project will increase irrigation water reliability for high value food crops, improve resilience to drought, and restore instream habitat for ESA listed species. **RCPP Funding: \$2,033,000**
- ***Wallowa Lake Irrigation Modernization, Farmers Conservation Alliance (FCA)*** – This project will address water quantity, water quality, and inadequate habitat resource concerns in the Prairie Creek area of Wallowa County, Oregon. This project proposes to pipe 11.8 miles of private ditches, install water control structures/fish screens on newly piped ditches and install up to ten new sprinkler systems to increase on-farm conveyance and application efficiency. The actions will improve water conveyance and application efficiency, reduce fish entrainment risk decrease return flows into Prairie Creek and the Wallowa River, and decrease sediment, nutrient, and bacteria inputs into Prairie Creek and the Wallowa River. FCA and its partners seek to benefit threatened or endangered populations of spring Chinook salmon, summer steelhead trout and bull trout. **RCPP Funding: \$1,730,000**

- ***Lower Crooked River Strategic Restoration*** – This is a comprehensive project intended to address degraded fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, and riparian plant communities over 17 miles of the Crooked River in Central Oregon. Proposed restoration activities include both instream and riparian restoration to improve habitat for fish and wildlife, water quality, and agricultural productivity. In addition, the project will reduce the threat of regulatory enforcement associated with the Federal Endangered Species Act and compliance with non-point source impacts from agriculture under Sections 303 and 319 of the Federal Clean Water Act. **RCPP Funding: \$7,091,000**
- ***Three Sisters Irrigation District (TSID)*** - TSID in the Deschutes Basin, Oregon, with government, private industry and nonprofit partners will implement multiple innovative projects to mitigate drought, improve water quality/quantity and improve fish habitat. The project includes the completion of piping Watson McKenzie Main Canal, resulting in the conservation of 800 acre-feet of annual canal seepage loss. The on-farm component of this project will encompass 61 projects, over 1500 acres, in the Upper District, allowing farmers to pipe private laterals, thereby providing access to pressurized water from the District's pipeline. Pressurized water will eliminate electrical pumps that use over 2.5 million kWh of electricity annually. A feasibility study will be conducted to determine the potential for 60 on-farm hydro net metering projects. This project will allow TSID to mitigate drought by piping the entire District. **RCPP Funding: \$990,604**

OWRC also continues to support funding for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), in accordance with the 2014 Farm Bill. As demonstrated by the huge demand for RCPP funding, programs like EQIP need to remain considering the large need for investment in conservation projects. It is essential the EQIP have at least \$2 billion in appropriations funding if Congress would like to see widespread results, particularly in addressing on-farm conservation and efficiency. Furthermore, with the numerous new and potential listings under ESA and increased water regulations under the CWA, there is a dire need for additional funding to support conservation efforts nationwide.

RCPP helps fill a funding void for multi-partner conservation projects and allow farmers to pool together and leverage the dollars invested in the off-farm project with the addition of EQIP on-farm projects. The effects of drought combined with ESA and CWA regulation has created a daunting set of circumstances for irrigated agriculture in the West. RCPP and EQIP have become an essential lifeline for farmers to adapt to drought. It is critical to increase funding for new eligible RCPP projects that maximize economic investment while benefiting the environment and alleviating some of the negative effects of drought.

### **Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program and Watershed Planning Needs**

OWRC also strongly supports increased funding for the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program. Two of our members, Sutherlin Water Control District (SWCD) and Middle Fork Irrigation District (MFID) have dams that were built under the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program through P.L. 566. SWCD and MFID have received funds to begin the long and expensive process of updating their 50-year-old dams to today's standards for safety, however; both districts will need continued funding from the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program to fully update their infrastructure.

SWCD has two dams built under P.L. 566 in the Umpqua Basin and while they were built to seismic standards 50 years ago, they do not meet today's standards for earthquakes. SWCD's dams serve as multi-purpose storage for the community; providing flood control, irrigation water, municipal water and recreation. To date, SWCD has been authorized to receive funding for planning, design and construction of one of their dams and planning and design on the other. However, SWCD will still need considerable funding dollars to complete construction on the second dam.

MFID is responsible for the management and maintenance of Clear Branch Dam, a P.L. 566 dam within the Hood River watershed, which provides a clean, dependable water supply and distribution system for the irrigation of pears, apples, cherries and other high value crops. Rehabilitation of the dam is needed to protect the public from flooding, for access to a clean and dependable water supply, and to maintain agricultural productivity. Rehabilitation of Clear Branch Dam will improve fish passage connectivity for ESA threatened Bull Trout and improve water temperature for spawning, rearing and migration.

Once planning and design studies are complete, both MFID and SWCD will know what the costs will be to make the necessary improvements to their dams, which is currently estimated at over \$10 million for both SWCD dams and \$9.8 million for MFID.

Additionally, in 2017, Senator Merkley championed increased funding within P.L. 566 for Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations. The program was funded at \$150 million and included projects that benefit wildlife and irrigation. These funds are available to substantially assist Central Oregon irrigators with water conservation projects that benefit spotted frog preservation while ensuring farmers and ranchers in the region get the water they need for their operations. Considering the high costs to fix just three of the P.L. 566 dams, and the immense price tag of modernizing infrastructure to increase water conservation, preserve wildlife habitat and increase water reliability for farmers and ranchers, a minimum of \$200 million is needed to fund this important program.

Our member districts, the farms and other water users they serve, and the communities in which they are located benefit greatly from the NRCS programs described in our testimony. NRCS programs are essential to irrigation districts in developing and implementing conservation projects that benefit the entire watershed and community. Furthermore, conservation projects also benefit the economy through job creation and ensuring the future viability of American agriculture. Oregon's agricultural community is actively committed to water conservation programs, but those programs require robust Federal participation if the agricultural community is to be able to continue its efforts to address Oregon's water supply needs through conservation. Increasing the budget for NRCS programs is a strategic investment that will pay both environmental and economic dividends to Oregonians and America as a whole. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the proposed FY19 budget for the USDA's NRCS Programs.

Sincerely,  
April Snell, Executive Director  
Contact: 503-363-0121; [april@owrc.org](mailto:april@owrc.org); 795 Winter St. NE, Salem, OR 97301

Testimony of April Snell, Executive Director, Oregon Water Resources Congress  
Submitted to the United States Senate Appropriations Committee,  
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

March 30, 2018

**RE: FY19 Budget for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Civil Works**

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) is concerned about continued reductions to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Civil Works budget and is requesting that appropriations for this program be at least **\$5.5 billion** in FY19. The USACE Civil Works program addresses vital water resource needs throughout the nation, and in Oregon, the USACE Northwestern Division operates on our two largest river systems, the Columbia River and the Willamette River, as well as maintaining Oregon's coastal rivers for navigation. OWRC is concerned that the FY19 budget for the USACE Civil Works budget will be woefully inadequate to meet the growing water infrastructure needs of Oregon and our nation. Increased funding would help support and leverage collaborative state level planning efforts that USACE is engaged in Oregon and nationwide.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to support the protection of water rights and promote the wise stewardship of water resources statewide. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate and manage complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower facilities.

Our members across Oregon face challenges related to irrigation water supply reliability and aging infrastructure. While there are common concerns and interests throughout irrigated agriculture, each basin is unique, and necessitates that local communities' work together to identify their needs and develop solutions to best meet them. The two largest river systems in Oregon (the Columbia River and the Willamette River) are managed by USACE and play a vital role in providing not only water supplies for agriculture, but also ports and passage for transporting food and fiber globally, flood protection for communities, fish and wildlife benefits, hydropower production, and recreation. Additional funding for the Civil Works budget is needed to ensure that USACE has the necessary resources to meet the myriad of infrastructure needs of those systems, without placing the entire burden on the backs of the farmers and ranchers who produce food and fiber for our nation.

**FY19 Appropriations**

We recognize that we must make strategic investments with scarce resources. The USACE Civil Works program is a perfect example of a budget that should have funding increased because the water infrastructure it encompasses directly contributes to the economy as well protecting public safety and the environment. The Civil Works program includes the development, management and restoration of water resources related to supply, navigability, flood control, hydropower, recreation, and fish and wildlife habitat across the nation. OWRC feels strongly that USACE

needs substantially increased funding to provide critical repairs on our nation's aging water infrastructure to prevent catastrophic failure, as well as address routine operations and maintenance on other infrastructure before it becomes unrepairable.

### **Willamette Basin Reservoir Study**

OWRC is currently collaborating with a broad water resources constituency to explore options related to the potential reallocation of stored water in the Willamette Basin dams operated by the USACE. The Portland District of the USACE Northwestern Division operates 13 dams and reservoirs in the Willamette Basin, with a combined storage capacity of over 1.6 million acre-feet. The dams were constructed primarily to protect downstream communities from flooding but also store and release water for irrigation, hydropower generation, water quality, fish and wildlife flows, and recreation. Currently, only a small portion of the stored water is under contract for irrigation (through the US Bureau of Reclamation) and there is not a specific amount of space allocated for a specific use in the reservoirs.

Since the construction of the dams in the 1930s, Oregon has seen an increase in population, which in turn has spurred increased development, agriculture and a whole host of new demands on the reservoirs. Municipal water entities would like access to available stored water to better meet drinking water needs for growing communities as well as businesses such as the high-tech industry. Additionally, there are fish and wildlife species in the river system listed under the Endangered Species Act and related ecosystem restoration needs that were not contemplated when the facilities were constructed. As a result, there is strong interest within Oregon to continue the Willamette Basin Reservoir Study and determine how the reservoirs can best help meet the myriad of current and future water demands in the Willamette Basin.

The State of Oregon, through the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD), has been working cooperatively with USACE for several years and has provided a 50% funding match (up to \$1.5 million) related to the study. USACE has thus far met its internal deadlines for demonstrating progress, and while some research and modeling has been conducted there remains a need for more time and discussion to develop a balanced and implementable solution. In November 2017, USACE issued a draft Feasibility Study and a tentatively selected plan for the Willamette Project. Subsequently, a lawsuit was filed in March 2018 alleging that USACE (and National Marine Fisheries Service) operations of the Willamette dams are jeopardizing listed species and critical habitat for wild Chinook and wild winter steelhead. It is unknown how this litigation will impact the Willamette Reservoir Study process, but it is still important to continue discussions between USACE, the State of Oregon, and the diverse group of stakeholders who remain committed to a balanced outcome to meet current and future agricultural, municipal/industrial, and fish and wildlife needs.

OWRC would like to see continued funding to support ongoing efforts related to the study included in the USACE civil works budget FY19, and the Willamette Basin Reservoir Study incorporated into the USACE FY19 work plan. Given the complexity of the Willamette system and the diverse benefits that are provided, it is crucial to ensure that any reallocation decision is carefully crafted and appropriately balances USACE core responsibilities to meet the needs of people and the environment we share. Federal funding would not only leverage scarce state

resources but also the in-kind and direct contributions of other stakeholders participating in the project.

### **Planning Assistance to States**

OWRC strongly supports providing funding for states to undertake planning activities to meet their water needs. Oregon is the model for watershed planning and does not need a new federal agency or Executive Branch office to oversee planning, however, federal funding and technical assistance is needed. Planning activities are conducted through local watershed councils, volunteer-driven organizations that work with local, state and federal agencies, economic and environmental interests, agricultural, industrial and municipal water users, local landowners, tribes, and other members of the community. There are over 60 individual watershed councils in Oregon that are already deeply engaged in watershed planning and restoration activities. Watershed planning in Oregon formally began in 1995 with the development of the Oregon Plan for Salmon Recovery and Watershed Enhancement, a statewide strategy developed in response to the federal listing of several fish species. This strategy led to the creation of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), a state agency and policy oversight board that funds and promotes voluntary and collaborative efforts that “help create and maintain healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies” in 1999.

Additionally, OWRC has been an active participant and supporter of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRs) adopted by the Oregon Water Resources Commission in August 2012 and updated in December 2017. The IWRs continues to be an important step forward in planning for the various water needs of Oregon but there is much more work to be done and little funding to implement. Providing funding for state-level planning activities will help support important efforts like the IWRs, and maximize the leveraging of state and federal resources, as well as providing viable models for other states to replicate. This approach will help leverage scarce financial resources at both the state and federal level while promoting cooperation and collaborative solutions to complex water resources challenges.

### **Additional Funding Programs**

OWRC is encouraged by the recent additions to the USACE Civil Works program including funding for climate change response, dam safety and earthquake hazard reduction; however, programs as important as these should receive even more funding. Additional funding is needed to support and leverage state efforts to identify and address earthquake hazards. Oregon faces the risk of catastrophic earthquake from the Cascadia Subduction Zone and the State is in the early stages of planning and mitigating to improve seismic resiliency. It is uncertain when or how devastating the earthquake could be but it is clear there would be broad impacts, particularly since most infrastructure was constructed prior to the discovery of the fault and does not meet current seismic standards. Aging water infrastructure is particularly vulnerable and there is a significant need for financial and technical assistance to upgrade reservoirs and other key facilities. Without increased earthquake preparedness and dam safety funding, Oregon cannot mitigate the potential damage. We encourage the Senate to further fund these programs to effectively prepare the states for earthquakes and prevent widespread devastation to people and property.

Additionally, like many other Western states, Oregon has been experiencing more frequent and severe drought conditions. For Oregon, the drought stems from a lack of snowpack that serves as the natural water storage throughout the year for many farms, communities, and fish and wildlife. The impacts may take longer to show, but drought can be as devastating as earthquakes, hurricanes, and other natural disasters. 2018 has the potential to be another difficult water year and impacts from prolonged drought take time to recover from and like other natural disasters, the best way to survive and help communities recover is through coordinated planning and developing diverse tools to use when these crises occur. We know from our experience working with our state agency and partner organizations in Oregon that funding for planning, feasibility, and implementation of projects to increase drought preparedness and resiliency is a cornerstone to an economically, socially and environmentally sound approach for a sustainable water future.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, we respectfully request the appropriation of at least \$5.5 billion for the USACE Civil Works budget for FY19. The critical nature of the water infrastructure services the USACE provides requires a budget that matches the seriousness of the national need and the importance of the water supply, navigation, public safety, and other natural resources benefits it provides. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding the FY19 budget for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Sincerely,

April Snell, Executive Director

Phone: 503-363-0121 Address: 795 Winter St. NE, Salem, OR 97301

Testimony of April Snell, Executive Director, Oregon Water Resources Congress  
Submitted to the United States Senate Appropriations Committee,  
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development  
March 30, 2018

**RE: U.S. Department of the Interior's FY19 Budget for the Bureau of Reclamation**

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) continues to support increased funding for the Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) Water and Related Resources program and are concerned that the proposed FY19 budget will be woefully insufficient to meet the diverse water supply and infrastructure needs in the 17 Western States that Reclamation serves. OWRC requests a minimum of \$1 billion be included in the Water and Related Resources program for FY19, with at least \$50 million for the WaterSMART program. Additional funding would help leverage other resources, support collaborative partnerships, and increased coordination between other federal agencies on addressing aging infrastructure, drought adaptation, ecosystem restoration, and other water related challenges.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to support the protection and use of water rights and promote the wise stewardship of water resources. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower. About 1/2 of our members are in Reclamation Projects and most have been awarded WaterSMART grants.

Our members across Oregon face challenges related to irrigation water supply reliability and aging infrastructure. While there are common concerns and interests throughout irrigated agriculture, each basin is unique, and necessitates that local communities' work together to identify their needs and develop solutions to best meet them. Reclamation's Water and Related Resources program has valuable tools to meet the myriad of infrastructure needs in each basin; incentivizing partnerships and innovative conservation projects, without placing the entire burden on the backs of the agricultural economy that produces food and fiber for our nation.

**WaterSMART Initiative**

OWRC strongly supports Reclamation's ongoing WaterSMART Initiative and increased funding for the WaterSMART Grants and Water Conservation Field Services Programs—the two programs used the most by Oregon's irrigation districts to support water conservation activities. These programs are an important part of the overall funding package for water resources projects collaboratively developed by local communities, supported with local and state funding, and designed to meet those communities' unique water supply and water conservation needs.

***Water Conservation Field Services Program (WCFSP)***

The WCFSP is a key component in supporting irrigation districts' and similar water delivery systems' water conservation efforts. WCFSP provides a breadth of technical and financial assistance to irrigation districts, including partial funding for materials used to pipe and line canals, measurement and other technology, and water conservation plans—all supporting water conservation efforts being implemented by these districts. Providing increased funding for WCFSP projects will yield more immediate and cost-effective water conservation measures in all 17 Western States.

The planning projects and technical assistance funded under the WCFSP are key components that help our member districts identify opportunities for water conservation through improved water management and capital investments. A lack of funding for the feasibility phase of projects is an impediment to the districts' ability to move forward with implementing water conservation projects like those listed below. This program provides seed money for both short and long term planning by districts and water users that results in helping Oregon meet the competing demands for water in basins throughout the state. Furthermore, technical assistance under this program can help water suppliers plan for and adapt to potential impacts from drought.

Additionally, we believe the management of the WCFSP should remain with the Regional Offices in order to retain the close connection between Reclamation and Project managers and ensure that Reclamation's resources are used to best support the management of its Projects. The WCFSP is one of the Reclamation services most appreciated by our members. The regional staff, and particularly the local area office staff, understand the unique operating and delivery challenges of the various Projects, and therefore provide very meaningful support to the managers of those Projects.

### ***WaterSMART Grants***

WaterSMART cost-share grants have supported Oregon districts' efforts to improve water delivery systems, conserve water, and implement innovative projects to meet the water needs in our state. These projects have been a key ingredient to the districts' cooperative efforts with other stakeholders in their respective river basins to address in-stream, water quality, and water supply needs of their basins, without reducing the amount of land to which the districts deliver water, and avoiding regulatory actions by Federal or State agencies. There continues to be more applicants than available funding and additional financial resources are needed to enable local water suppliers to continue efforts to conserve water and help meet the Secretary's water conservation goal. With a return of over \$5 for every \$1 of Federal investment, and non-federal match generally exceeding the required amount, this program far surpasses the results of other partnerships between the Federal government and local project sponsors.

### **Examples of Oregon Projects Funded through the WaterSMART Initiative**

The following projects are examples of how Reclamation's WaterSMART Initiative is helping Oregon districts increase water conservation and improve water delivery efficiency.

- ***Rogue River Valley Irrigation District, Bradshaw Drop Irrigation Canal Piping Project (Phase 2)*** – Rogue River Valley Irrigation District (Medford) will convert 2.4 miles of open canal to high density polyethylene pipe. The project is expected to result in annual water savings of 436 acre-feet currently lost to seepage, which will help meet water demands in the District. Once completed, the pressurized pipeline will allow irrigators to complete on-farm improvements, such as the conversion from flood irrigation to more efficient sprinkler irrigation. **Reclamation Funding: \$290,000 Total Project Cost: \$2,955,080**
- ***Three Sisters Irrigation District, Canal Piping and McKenzie Hydroelectric Facility Project*** - Three Sisters Irrigation District (Sisters) will pipe 7.5 miles of existing open canals with high density polyethylene pipe, complete restoration work along 6 miles of Whychus Creek, and install a 300-kilowatt hydroelectric turbine. The conversion of open canals to pipe is expected to result in annual water savings of 1,400 acre-feet that is currently lost to seepage. The District will work with the Deschutes River Conservancy to dedicate ~ 201 acre-feet per year of the conserved water to a new instream water right held

by the State of Oregon. The increased instream flows and restoration will improve riparian habitat and benefit various species, including Bull and Steelhead Trout, Chinook and Sockeye Salmon, the Oregon Spotted Frog, the willow flycatcher, and the yellow breasted chat. The pressurized pipeline resulting from this project will allow farmers who receive deliveries from the District to implement further improvements. Lastly, the project will also include the installation of a 300-kilowatt hydro turbine at McKenzie Reservoir, which is expected to generate over 1 million kilowatt-hours of energy annually. **Reclamation Funding: \$400,000 Total Project Cost: \$4,476,155**

- ***Santiam Water Control District, Irrigation System SCADA Automation and Water Measurement Improvement Project*** - The Santiam Water Control District (Stayton) will automate numerous manual control gate and diversion structures within the canal system, including the automation of the District's small hydropower plant. The improvements will also include new and improved water measurement capabilities. More precise deliveries are expected to result in annual water savings of 2,150 acre-feet. **Reclamation Funding: \$300,000 Total Project Cost: \$941,700**
- ***Klamath Irrigation District, Stukel Spill Project*** – Klamath Irrigation District (Klamath Falls) will design and construct a large capacity operational spill structure near the Stukel pump site. The spill will consist of a concrete intake structure and electric actuated roller gate, and a pipe discharge with measuring device and supervisory control and data acquisition intertie, which will discharge to Lost River. The project will provide for better management of water deliveries which will result in the reduction of diversions from Upper Klamath Lake. **Reclamation Funding: \$80,535 Total Project Cost: \$231,666**
- ***North Unit Irrigation District, Lateral 58-11 Piping Project*** - North Unit Irrigation District (Madras) will pipe 2 miles of the 58-11 open ditch lateral to address seepage losses. The project will also include installation of 8 pressurized deliveries to District landowners. The project is expected to result in annual water savings of 570 acre-feet. Through a partnership with the Deschutes River Conservancy, conserved water will be marketed to restore instream flows in a critical reach of the Crooked River. **Reclamation Funding: \$704,478 Total Project Cost: \$1,525,545**
- ***Tumalo Irrigation District, Piping of the Tumalo Feed Canal (Phase IV)*** - Tumalo Irrigation District (Tumalo) will complete Phase IV of the Tumalo Feed Canal Piping Project. Phase IV of the project includes piping 3,400 feet of remaining 6-mile open canal system, which is expected to result in annual water savings of 776 acre-feet currently being lost to seepage and evaporation. The conserved water will be dedicated to the State of Oregon for permanent instream flows for use in Tumalo Creek, Crescent Creek, and the Little Deschutes River. **Reclamation Funding: \$704,478 Total Project Cost: \$1,525,545**

Further innovative projects like the ones above could be developed and implemented in Oregon if more funding is made available through the WaterSMART Initiative. Additionally, OWRC would like to see the funding cap increased from \$1 million to \$5 million in areas where there are known endangered, threatened or vulnerable species. By increasing the funding cap, Reclamation would have the ability to fund projects aimed at improving species habitat at a higher level, allowing for these important projects to move forward.

### **Ecosystem Restoration**

Additional funding to support collaborative ecosystem restoration efforts that align with the environmental aspects of Reclamation's mission is also important to OWRC and its members.

Funding for the Columbia and Snake River Salmon Recovery Program is essential as Reclamation, the Bonneville Power Administration, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and NOAA Fisheries prepare to implement reasonable and prudent alternatives to mitigate impacts to Columbia-Snake river salmon and steelhead under the Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion. We strongly encourage Reclamation to consider funding for fish passage and fish screening projects that can help meet these requirements. This type of funding could be leveraged with state and local efforts to maximize cost effectiveness and environmental benefits.

Furthermore, funding for the ongoing efforts in the Deschutes Basin related to the development of the Deschutes Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) should be included in Reclamation's FY19 budget. Specifically, funding similar to that received by the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project should be allocated to North Unit Irrigation District and Ochoco Irrigation District for continued work on development of the HCP and for implementation of conservation measures and monitoring the effects of the conservation measures developed under the HCP. This funding will help support ongoing efforts to improve water supplies to meet the myriad of agricultural and environmental needs that depend upon it. Financial support for these types of collaborative restoration efforts will lead to implementable, cost-effective water resources solutions that help reduce conflict and expensive litigation.

### **Drought Planning and Aging Infrastructure**

OWRC is supportive of developing strategies to address potential drought related impacts to water resources. It is imperative that the nation's water infrastructure is capable of handling more frequent and severe weather events, changes in precipitation/snowpack, and other drought related impacts to water resources. Reclamation needs additional funding to coordinate and leverage state, local and other federal resources to support necessary evaluations and improvements of water infrastructure in the 17 Western States related to potential drought effects. Many of the 824 dams and reservoirs that Reclamation manages (and associated delivery systems) were built 50 to 100 years ago and are already in dire need of improvement. These improvements are costly and deferred maintenance leads to reduced system efficiency, water conservation, and in some instances catastrophic failure.

Providing funding to evaluate and improve water infrastructure in the face of drought will ensure that Reclamation reservoirs and associated delivery systems can continue to provide essential water supplies used to grow food and other agricultural crops—a vital part of our local, state, and national economy, as well as ensuring food security. Reclamation's WaterSMART Basin Study program has proved to be an effective tool for analyzing the effects of drought. Past and future studies will prepare river basins throughout the 17 Western States for developing solutions to water shortages through conservation as well as building innovative new storage facilities, large and small.

We respectfully request the appropriation of at least \$1 billion for Reclamation's Water and Related Resources program for FY19. Providing increased funding for the WaterSMART Initiative and other related programs is a wise investment that will yield benefits for our nation's economy, environment, and communities that depend on water resources. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding the FY19 budget for the U.S Bureau of Reclamation.

Sincerely,

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Testimony of April Snell, Executive Director, Oregon Water Resources Congress  
Submitted to the United States Senate Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

April 20, 2018

**RE: FY19 Budget for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program**

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) is concerned about continuing reductions to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program (CWSRF) and is requesting that appropriations for this program be increased to at least **\$2 billion** in FY19. The CWSRF is an effective loan program that addresses critical water infrastructure needs while benefitting the environment, local communities, and the economy.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to support the protection of water rights and promote the wise stewardship of water resources statewide. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower facilities.

**FY19 Appropriations**

We recognize that we must make strategic investments with our country's scarce resources and maximize benefits to the American people. The CWSRF is a perfect example of the type of program that should have funding increased because it creates jobs while benefitting the environment and is a highly efficient return on taxpayer investment. Oregon, like many other states, continues to face high levels of unemployment and the CWSRF funded projects provide much needed construction and professional services jobs. Moreover, as a loan program, it is a wise investment that allows local communities to leverage their limited resources and address critical infrastructure needs that would otherwise be unmet.

Nationally, there are large and growing critical water infrastructure needs. In EPA's most recent needs surveys, *The Clean Watersheds Needs Survey 2012: Report to Congress and Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment: Fifth Report to Congress*, the estimated funding need for drinking water infrastructure totaled \$384 billion (in 2011 dollars) and wastewater infrastructure needs totaled \$271 billion (in 2012 dollars). Appropriations for water infrastructure, specifically CWSRF, should not be declining but remaining strong in order to meet these critical needs. In 2016 and 2017 appropriations for the CWSRF program were approximately \$1.394 billion. We are concerned as we see this negative downward trend continuing while the status of our nation's water infrastructure continues to decline.

We also continue to be highly supportive of expanding "green infrastructure," in fact, irrigation districts and other water suppliers in Oregon are on the forefront of "green infrastructure" through innovative piping projects that provide multiple environmental benefits, which is discussed in greater detail below. However, continually reducing the amount of funds available

for these types of worthwhile projects has created increased uncertainty for potential borrowers about whether adequate funding will be available in future years. CWSRF is often an integral part of an overall package of state, federal and local funding that necessitates a stronger level of assurance that loan funds will be available for planned water infrastructure projects. Reductions in the CWSRF could lead to loss of grant funding and delay or derail beneficial projects that irrigation districts have been developing for years.

Additionally, OWRC is pleased that EPA continues “strategic partnerships” with the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) and other federal agencies to improve water quality and address nonpoint source pollution. Oregon had one priority watershed eligible for funding through the National Water Quality Initiative in 2017 and anticipates that additional watersheds will be included in the future. As Oregon is a delegated state, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) administers the CWSRF and is an important lead agency in incentivizing voluntary efforts to improve these and other impaired waterways in the state. DEQ and its administration of the CWSRF has been an extremely valuable tool in Oregon for improving water quality and efficiently addressing infrastructure challenges that are otherwise cost-prohibitive.

### **CWSRF Needs in Oregon**

The appropriations for the CWSRF program over the past few years has been far short of what is needed to address critical water infrastructure needs in Oregon and across the nation. This has led to fewer water infrastructure projects, and therefore a reduction in improvements to water quality. DEQ’s most recent “Proposed Intended Use Plan Update #2 - State Fiscal Year 2018,” lists 21 projects in need of a total of \$166,079,756 in Oregon alone. The federal capitalization grant funding awarded in FY17 will total \$14,977,000, which is wholly inadequate to address and complete these much-needed projects.

Now that irrigation districts are once again eligible for principal forgiveness (which was recently reinstated with the passage of the WIIN Act), seven irrigation districts submitted applications for funding in 2018. All totaled Oregon irrigation districts have submitted applications to DEQ for over \$63,000,000 for the design and construction of multiple projects to improve water quality and quantity associated with irrigation diversions, canals and pipelines throughout the state. OWRC is hopeful that with an increase in money available, there will be enough funding available to complete projects that will not only benefit the environment and the patrons served by the water delivery system, but also benefit the economy.

### **CWSRF and Irrigation Districts**

OWRC and our members are highly supportive of the CWSRF, including promoting the program to our members and annually submitting federal appropriations testimony to support increased funding for the CWSRF. We believe it is an important funding tool that irrigation districts and other water suppliers are using for innovative piping projects that provide multiple environmental and economic benefits.

Many OWRC member districts have successfully received loans from the CWSRF over the last several years and many more continue to apply. Numerous irrigation districts and other water suppliers need to pipe currently open canals, which reduces sediment and water temperature and

provides other water quality improvements as well as increasing water availability for fish and irrigators by reducing water loss from the delivery system. As an example of past success, in 2009, four irrigation districts received over \$11 million funding in Oregon from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) through the CWSRF for projects which created valuable jobs while improving water quality. These four projects were essential to DEQ not only meeting but exceeding the minimum requirement that 20% of the total ARRA funding for the CWSRF be used for “green” projects. Without the irrigation district projects, it is likely that Oregon’s CWSRF would not have qualified for ARRA funding.

### **The Importance and Success of Local Watershed Planning**

Oregon’s success in watershed planning illustrates that planning efforts work best when diverse interests develop and implement plans at the local watershed level with support from state government. Oregon has recently revised their CWSRF rules; thus making conservation easier and its benefits to be better achieved in the State. As the national model for watershed planning, Oregon does not need a new federal agency or Executive Branch office to oversee conservation and restoration efforts. Planning activities are conducted through local watershed councils, volunteer-driven organizations that work with local, state and federal agencies, economic and environmental interests, agricultural, industrial and municipal water users, local landowners, tribes, and other members of the community. There are over 60 individual watershed councils in Oregon that are already deeply engaged in watershed planning and restoration activities. Watershed planning in Oregon formally began in 1995 with the development of the Oregon Plan for Salmon Recovery and Watershed Enhancement, a statewide strategy developed in response to the federal listing of several fish species. This strategy led to the creation of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), a state agency and policy oversight board that funds and promotes voluntary and collaborative efforts that “help create and maintain healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies” in 1999.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, we applaud the CWSRF program for allowing Oregon's DEQ to make targeted loans that address Clean Water Act issues and improve water quality but also help incentivize innovative water management solutions that benefit local communities, agricultural economies, and the environment. This voluntary approach creates and promotes cooperation and collaborative solutions to complex water resources challenges. We respectfully request the appropriation of at least \$2 billion for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund for FY 2019.

Sincerely,  
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Testimony of April Snell, Executive Director, Oregon Water Resources Congress  
Submitted to the United States Senate Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

April 20, 2018

**RE: FY19 Budget for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act Program**

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) is writing to express its strong support for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) Program and is requesting that appropriations for this program be **\$15 million** in FY19, which is what FRIMA is currently authorized for. The FRIMA program is an essential cost-share funding program that helps water users and fishery agencies better protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered fish species while ensuring water supply delivery to farms and communities.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to support the protection of water rights and promote the wise stewardship of water resources statewide. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower production.

**FY19 Appropriations**

The FRIMA program meets a critical need in fishery protection and restoration, complimenting other programs through the U.S Fish and Wildlife Services (FWS), while leveraging state, local, and private funds. The program provides vital cost-share funding that helps meet fishery needs without placing the burden solely on the backs of farmers and ranchers who rely on the same water source. Fish passage and fish screens installations are a vital component to fishery protection with several benefits:

- Keeps sensitive, threatened and endangered fish out of canals and water delivery systems
- Allows fish to be safely bypassed around reservoirs and other infrastructure
- Eliminates water quality risks to fish species

There are over 100 irrigation districts and other special districts in Oregon that deliver water supplies to over one million acres of irrigated cropland in the state. Almost all of these districts are affected by either state or federal Endangered Species Act listings of Salmon, Steelhead, Bull Trout or other sensitive, threatened or endangered species. The design and installation of fish screens and fish passage to protect the myriad of fish species is often cost-prohibitive for individual districts to implement without outside funding sources.

Oregon irrigation districts anticipate no less than \$25 million in funding will be required to meet current fish passage and fish screen needs. Limited cost-share funds are available from the Oregon Watershed Enhanced Board (OWEB) program in Oregon, but the primary cost-share for fish screen and fish passage projects has been provided by the districts and their water users.

Project needs include both construction of new fish screens and fish passage facilities as well as significant upgrades of existing facilities to meet new requirements (new species, new science) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Service and the FWS. Upgrades are often needed to modernize facilities with new technologies that provide better protection for fish species as well as reduced maintenance and increased lifespan for the operator.

### **Background of the Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) Program**

FRIMA, originally enacted November 2000, created a federal partnership program incentivizing voluntary fish screen and fish passage improvements for water withdrawal projects in Idaho, Oregon, Washington and western Montana. The funding goes to local governments for construction of fish screens and fish passage facilities and is matched with non-federal funding. Irrigation districts and other local governments that divert water for irrigation accessed the funding directly, while individual irrigators accessed funding through their local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), which are local governments affiliated with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

FRIMA was reauthorized as part of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN) of 2016 for only \$15 million, well short of the estimated \$500 million in fish screening and passage needs in the Pacific Northwest alone. The original legislation in 2000 (PL.106-502) was supported and requested by the Pacific Northwest Partnership, a coalition of local governmental entities in the four Northwest states. As one of the members of that coalition, we appreciate and strongly support your efforts to reauthorize the FRIMA program. The FRIMA legislation authorized \$25 million annually, to be divided equally among the four states from 2001 to 2012, which was when the original authorization expired. The actual funding appropriated to the FRIMA program (through Congressional write-ins) ranged from \$1 million to \$8 million, well short of the \$25 million it was authorized for and far short of what is needed to address fish passage and screening needs across the region. However, that small amount funding was used to leverage other funds and assisted the region in making measurable progress towards addressing fish screens and fish passage needed to protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered fish species.

FRIMA funding was channeled through FWS to state fishery agencies in the four states, distributed using an application and approval process based on a ranking system implemented uniformly among the states, including the following factors: fish restoration benefits, cost effectiveness, and feasibility of planned structure. All projects provided improved fish passage or fish protection at water diversion structures and benefitted native fish species in the area, including several state or federally listed species. Projects were also subject to applicable state and federal requirements for project construction and operation.

### **Program Benefits**

FRIMA projects provide immediate protection for fish and fills a large unmet need in the Pacific Northwest for cost-share assistance with fish screening and fish passage installations and improvements. A report by FWS covering program years FY 2002-2012 provides state-by-state coverage of how the Congressional provided funding has been used in the program. Compared to other recovery strategies, the installation of fish screens and fish passage infrastructure has the

highest assurance for increasing numbers of fish species in the Pacific Northwest. Furthermore, the installation of these devices have minimal impacts on water delivery operations and projects are done cooperatively using methods that are well accepted by landowners and rural communities.

The return of the FRIMA program will catalyze cooperative partnerships and innovative projects that provide immediate and long-term benefits to irrigators, fishery agencies, and local communities throughout the Pacific Northwest. This program is also a wise investment, with past projects contributing more than the required match and leveraging on average over one dollar for each federal dollar invested. FRIMA provides for a maximum federal cost-share of 65%, with the applicant's cost-share at 35% plus the on-going maintenance and support of the structure for passage or screening purposes. Applicants operate the projects and the state agencies monitor and review the projects.

### **Oregon's Project Benefits**

Twenty-six fish screens or fish passage projects in Oregon were previously funded using FRIMA for part of the project financing. These projects have led to:

- Installation of screens at seventeen diversions or irrigation pumps
- Removal or modification of twelve fish passage barriers
- Three-hundred sixty-five miles being re-opened to fish passage

In addition, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) has used some of the FRIMA funding to develop an inventory of need for fish screens and passages in the state. Grants ranged from just under \$6,000 to \$400,000 in size with a local match averaging 64% of the project costs, well over the amount required under the Act (35%). In other words, each federal dollar invested in the FRIMA program generates a local investment of just over one dollar for the protection of fish species in the Pacific Northwest.

The following are examples of how Oregon used some of its FRIMA money:

**Santiam Water Control District Project:** Fish screen project on a large 1050 cubic feet per second (cfs) multipurpose water diversion project on the Santiam River (Willamette Basin) near Stayton, Oregon. Partners are the Santiam Water Control District, ODFW, Marion Soil and Water Conservation District, and the City of Stayton. Approved **FRIMA** funding of **\$400,000** leveraged a **\$1,200,000** total project cost. Species benefited included winter steelhead, spring Chinook, rainbow trout, and cutthroat trout.

**South Fork Little Butte Creek:** Fish screen and fish passage project on a 65 cfs irrigation water diversion in the Rogue River Basin near Medford, Oregon. Partners are the Medford Irrigation District and ODFW. Approved **FRIMA** funding of **\$372,000** leveraged a **\$580,000** total project cost. Species benefited included listed summer and winter steelhead, coho salmon, and cutthroat trout.

**Running Y (Geary Diversion) Project:** Fish screen project on a 60 cfs irrigation water diversion in the upper Klamath Basin near Klamath Falls, Oregon. Partners are the Wocus Drainage District, ODFW, and Jeld-Wen Ranches. Approved **FRIMA** funding of **\$44,727** leveraged a total project cost of **\$149,000**. Species benefited included listed red-band trout and short-nosed sucker.

**Lakeshore Gardens Project:** Fish screen project on a 2 cfs irrigation water diversion in the upper Klamath Basin near Klamath Falls, Oregon. Partners are the Lakeshore Gardens Drainage District and ODFW. Approved **FRIMA** funding of **\$5,691** leveraged a total project cost of **\$18,970**. Species benefited included red-band trout, short-nosed sucker and Lost River sucker.

### **Conclusion**

Providing appropriations for the FRIMA program will fill a vital funding gap for fish screens and fish passage projects that are needed to better protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered fish species, which also benefits the economy, local communities, and the environment we share. FRIMA funds projects that are ready to be constructed and will provide both immediate improved protections for fish and immediate jobs for the construction of the projects. Dollar-for-dollar, providing screening and fish passage at diversions is one of the most cost-effective uses of restoration dollars, creating fishery protection at low cost, with low risk and significant benefits. The return of the FRIMA program will catalyze cooperative partnerships and innovative projects that provide immediate and long-term economic and environmental benefits to irrigators, fishery agencies, and local communities throughout the Pacific Northwest. We respectfully request an appropriation of \$15 million for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act program for FY 2019.

Sincerely,

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April Snell, Executive Director, Oregon Water Resources Congress

Testimony submitted to the United States House Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on  
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

April 13, 2018

**RE: FY19 Budget for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service Programs**

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) strongly supports the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs and are concerned that proposed funding is inadequate to tackle the complex natural resources conservation issues facing the nation. We request a minimum of \$150 million for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), \$2 billion for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and \$200 million for the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program. These increases are vital to continue multi-year coordinated federal agency watershed planning watershed efforts, efficiently leverage partnerships, and maximize the value of federal investment in collaborative natural resources conservation projects.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to promote the protection and use of water rights and the wise stewardship of water resources statewide. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate and manage complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower.

Our members across Oregon face challenges related to irrigation water supply reliability and aging infrastructure. While there are common concerns and interests throughout irrigated agriculture, each basin is unique, and necessitates that local communities' work together to

identify their needs and develop solutions to best meet them. NRCS programs are essential tools to meet the myriad of infrastructure needs throughout all our basins, without placing the entire burden on the backs of the farmers that produce vital food and fiber for our nation.

### **NRCS Program Benefits & Needs**

NRCS programs provide a wide variety of benefits to agriculture in Oregon and across the nation. Projects funded through the RCPP, EQIP, and the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program help leverage scarce state and local resources, increase inter-agency cooperation, and result in collaborative on-the-ground solutions that help irrigated agriculture and the natural resources of the surrounding landscape. Financial and technical resources provided by NRCS are often a catalyst to bring other agencies and stakeholders to the table which not only leads to better outcomes but also maximizes efficiency and the value of federal investment.

Over the years, the various NRCS programs used by Oregon districts have been renamed or otherwise changed, but historically, have included the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) and the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI). These programs were used successfully by districts along with other state, local and federal interests to developing cooperative basin-wide approaches and address Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Clean Water Act (CWA) issues in watershed basins and sub basins. The valuable tools under these former programs are now generally covered under RCPP.

OWRC strongly supports RCPP, and while we understand the need to streamline federal agency activities and programs, it is our hope that essential programs like RCPP continue to receive the additional funding that is still needed to meet program demands. The RCPP is a critical tool for districts and other agricultural water suppliers in developing and implementing water and energy conservation projects in Oregon.

## Examples of RCPP & EQIP Benefits

Federal support of water conservation activities funded through NRCS programs, including the RCPP, is essential to the conservation of our natural resources and critical to protecting our food, energy and water supply. In 2018, USDA will be investing \$220 million in innovation conservation partnerships, funding 91 high impact projects across the country, including projects that address water quality and drought like the Oregon projects described below. More projects like this could be developed and implemented with additional federal support through the RCPP.

- ***East Fork Irrigation District (EFID)*** - EFID with a diverse set of partners in the Hood River Watershed, of the Columbia River Basin, will focus on a top-priority water conservation and fish habitat project in the Lower East Fork Hood River. EFID and its partners will construct Phase 1 of the Eastside Lateral pipeline project, assist agricultural producers with approximately 400 acres of on-farm water conservation practices and educate producers and farm workers on the latest irrigation water management techniques. The project will also restore one mile of spawning and rearing habitat on the East Fork Hood River for threatened steelhead, spring Chinook, and Coho. The project will increase irrigation water reliability for high value food crops, improve resilience to drought, and restore instream habitat for ESA listed species. **RCPP Funding: \$2,033,000**
- ***Wallowa Lake Irrigation Modernization, Farmers Conservation Alliance (FCA)*** – This project will address water quantity, water quality, and inadequate habitat resource concerns in the Prairie Creek area of Wallowa County, Oregon. This project proposes to pipe 11.8 miles of private ditches, install water control structures/fish screens on newly piped ditches and install up to ten new sprinkler systems to increase on-farm conveyance and application efficiency. The actions will improve water conveyance and application

efficiency, reduce fish entrainment risk decrease return flows into Prairie Creek and the Wallowa River, and decrease sediment, nutrient, and bacteria inputs into Prairie Creek and the Wallowa River. FCA and its partners seek to benefit threatened or endangered populations of spring Chinook salmon, summer steelhead trout and bull trout.

**RCPP Funding: \$1,730,000**

OWRC also continues to support funding for EQIP, in accordance with the 2014 Farm Bill. As demonstrated by the huge demand for RCPP funding, programs like EQIP need to remain considering the large need for investment in conservation projects. It is essential the EQIP have at least \$2 billion in appropriations funding if Congress would like to see widespread results, particularly in addressing on-farm conservation and efficiency. Furthermore, with the numerous new and potential listings under ESA and increased water regulations under the CWA, there is a dire need for additional funding to support conservation efforts nationwide.

RCPP helps fill a funding void for multi-partner conservation projects and combined with EQIP allows farmers to pool and leverage dollars for both on-farm and off-farm conservation projects. The effects of drought combined with ESA and CWA regulation has created a daunting set of circumstances for irrigated agriculture in the West. It is critical to increase funding for eligible RCPP and EQIP projects that maximize economic investment while benefiting the environment and alleviating some of the negative effects of drought.

**Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program and Watershed Planning Needs**

OWRC also strongly supports increased funding for the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program. Two of our members, Sutherlin Water Control District (SWCD) and Middle Fork Irrigation District (MFID) have dams that were built under this program, through P.L. 566. SWCD and MFID have received funds to begin the long and expensive process of updating their

50-year-old dams to today's standards for safety, however; both districts will need continued funding to fully update their infrastructure. Once planning and design studies are complete, both MFID and SWCD will know the costs to make the necessary improvements to their dams, which is currently estimated at over \$10 million for both SWCD dams and \$9.8 million for MFID.

Additionally, in 2017, Senator Merkley championed \$150 million in increased funding within P.L. 566 for projects that benefit wildlife and irrigation. These funds are available to assist Central Oregon irrigators with water conservation projects that benefit spotted frog habitat while ensuring farmers and ranchers receive the water for food and fiber. Given the high costs to fix just 3 of the P.L. 566 dams, and immense price tag of modernizing infrastructure to increase water conservation, species preservation, and water reliability for farmers and ranchers, a minimum of \$200 million is needed to fund this important program.

Our member districts, the farms and other water users they serve, and the communities in which they are located benefit greatly from the NRCS programs described in our testimony. NRCS programs are essential to irrigation districts in developing and implementing conservation projects that benefit the entire watershed and community. Furthermore, conservation projects also benefit the economy through job creation and ensuring the future viability of American agriculture. Oregon's agricultural community is actively committed to water conservation, but these efforts require robust Federal participation in order to successfully address Oregon's water supply needs. Increasing the budget for NRCS is a strategic investment that will pay environmental and economic dividends to Oregonians and America as a whole. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the proposed FY19 budget for USDA NRCS Programs.

Sincerely, April Snell, Executive Director

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Testimony of April Snell, Executive Director, Oregon Water Resources Congress  
Submitted to the United States House Appropriations Committee,  
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

April 20, 2018

**RE: FY19 Budget for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Civil Works**

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) is concerned about continued reductions to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Civil Works budget and is requesting that appropriations for this program be at least **\$5.5 billion** in FY19. The USACE Civil Works program addresses vital water resource needs throughout the nation, and in Oregon, the USACE Northwestern Division operates on our two largest river systems, the Columbia River and the Willamette River, as well as maintaining Oregon's coastal rivers for navigation. OWRC is concerned that the FY19 budget for the USACE Civil Works budget will be woefully inadequate to meet the growing water infrastructure needs of Oregon and our nation. Increased funding would help support and leverage collaborative state level planning efforts that USACE is engaged in Oregon and nationwide.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to support the protection of water rights and promote the wise stewardship of water resources statewide. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate and manage complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower facilities.

Our members across Oregon face challenges related to irrigation water supply reliability and aging infrastructure. While there are common concerns and interests throughout irrigated agriculture, each basin is unique, and necessitates that local communities' work together to identify their needs and develop solutions to best meet them. The two largest river systems in Oregon (the Columbia River and the Willamette River) are managed by USACE and play a vital role in providing not only water supplies for agriculture, but also ports and passage for transporting food and fiber globally, flood protection for communities, fish and wildlife benefits, hydropower production, and recreation. Additional funding for the Civil Works budget is needed to ensure that USACE has the necessary resources to meet the myriad of infrastructure needs of those systems, without placing the entire burden on the backs of the farmers and ranchers who produce food and fiber for our nation.

**FY19 Appropriations**

We recognize that we must make strategic investments with scarce resources. The USACE Civil Works program is a perfect example of a budget that should have funding increased because the water infrastructure it encompasses directly contributes to the economy as well protecting public safety and the environment. The Civil Works program includes the development, management and restoration of water resources related to supply, navigability, flood control, hydropower, recreation, and fish and wildlife habitat across the nation. OWRC feels strongly that USACE

needs substantially increased funding to provide critical repairs on our nation's aging water infrastructure to prevent catastrophic failure, as well as address routine operations and maintenance on other infrastructure before it becomes unrepairable.

### **Willamette Basin Reservoir Study**

OWRC is currently collaborating with a broad water resources constituency to explore options related to the potential reallocation of stored water in the Willamette Basin dams operated by the USACE. The Portland District of the USACE Northwestern Division operates 13 dams and reservoirs in the Willamette Basin, with a combined storage capacity of over 1.6 million acre-feet. The dams were constructed primarily to protect downstream communities from flooding but also store and release water for irrigation, hydropower generation, water quality, fish and wildlife flows, and recreation. Currently, only a small portion of the stored water is under contract for irrigation (through the US Bureau of Reclamation) and there is not a specific amount of space allocated for a specific use in the reservoirs.

Since the construction of the dams in the 1930s, Oregon has seen an increase in population, which in turn has spurred increased development, agriculture and a whole host of new demands on the reservoirs. Municipal water entities would like access to available stored water to better meet drinking water needs for growing communities as well as businesses such as the high-tech industry. Additionally, there are fish and wildlife species in the river system listed under the Endangered Species Act and related ecosystem restoration needs that were not contemplated when the facilities were constructed. As a result, there is strong interest within Oregon to continue the Willamette Basin Reservoir Study and determine how the reservoirs can best help meet the myriad of current and future water demands in the Willamette Basin.

The State of Oregon, through the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD), has been working cooperatively with USACE for several years and has provided a 50% funding match (up to \$1.5 million) related to the study. USACE has thus far met its internal deadlines for demonstrating progress, and while some research and modeling has been conducted there remains a need for more time and discussion to develop a balanced and implementable solution. In November 2017, USACE issued a draft Feasibility Study and a tentatively selected plan for the Willamette Project. Subsequently, a lawsuit was filed in March 2018 alleging that USACE (and National Marine Fisheries Service) operations of the Willamette dams are jeopardizing listed species and critical habitat for wild Chinook and wild winter steelhead. It is unknown how this litigation will impact the Willamette Reservoir Study process, but it is still important to continue discussions between USACE, the State of Oregon, and the diverse group of stakeholders who remain committed to a balanced outcome to meet current and future agricultural, municipal/industrial, and fish and wildlife needs.

OWRC would like to see continued funding to support ongoing efforts related to the study included in the USACE civil works budget FY19, and the Willamette Basin Reservoir Study incorporated into the USACE FY19 work plan. Given the complexity of the Willamette system and the diverse benefits that are provided, it is crucial to ensure that any reallocation decision is carefully crafted and appropriately balances USACE core responsibilities to meet the needs of people and the environment we share. Federal funding would not only leverage scarce state

resources but also the in-kind and direct contributions of other stakeholders participating in the project.

### **Planning Assistance to States**

OWRC strongly supports providing funding for states to undertake planning activities to meet their water needs. Oregon is the model for watershed planning and does not need a new federal agency or Executive Branch office to oversee planning, however, federal funding and technical assistance is needed. Planning activities are conducted through local watershed councils, volunteer-driven organizations that work with local, state and federal agencies, economic and environmental interests, agricultural, industrial and municipal water users, local landowners, tribes, and other members of the community. There are over 60 individual watershed councils in Oregon that are already deeply engaged in watershed planning and restoration activities. Watershed planning in Oregon formally began in 1995 with the development of the Oregon Plan for Salmon Recovery and Watershed Enhancement, a statewide strategy developed in response to the federal listing of several fish species. This strategy led to the creation of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), a state agency and policy oversight board that funds and promotes voluntary and collaborative efforts that “help create and maintain healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies” in 1999.

Additionally, OWRC has been an active participant and supporter of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRs) adopted by the Oregon Water Resources Commission in August 2012 and updated in December 2017. The IWRs continues to be an important step forward in planning for the various water needs of Oregon but there is much more work to be done and little funding to implement. Providing funding for state-level planning activities will help support important efforts like the IWRs, and maximize the leveraging of state and federal resources, as well as providing viable models for other states to replicate. This approach will help leverage scarce financial resources at both the state and federal level while promoting cooperation and collaborative solutions to complex water resources challenges.

### **Additional Funding Programs**

OWRC is encouraged by the recent additions to the USACE Civil Works program including funding for climate change response, dam safety and earthquake hazard reduction; however, programs as important as these should receive even more funding. Additional funding is needed to support and leverage state efforts to identify and address earthquake hazards. Oregon faces the risk of catastrophic earthquake from the Cascadia Subduction Zone and the State is in the early stages of planning and mitigating to improve seismic resiliency. It is uncertain when or how devastating the earthquake could be but it is clear there would be broad impacts, particularly since most infrastructure was constructed prior to the discovery of the fault and does not meet current seismic standards. Aging water infrastructure is particularly vulnerable and there is a significant need for financial and technical assistance to upgrade reservoirs and other key facilities. Without increased earthquake preparedness and dam safety funding, Oregon cannot mitigate the potential damage. We encourage the House to further fund these programs to effectively prepare the states for earthquakes and prevent widespread devastation to people and property.

Additionally, like many other Western states, Oregon has been experiencing more frequent and severe drought conditions. For Oregon, the drought stems from a lack of snowpack that serves as the natural water storage throughout the year for many farms, communities, and fish and wildlife. The impacts may take longer to show, but drought can be as devastating as earthquakes, hurricanes, and other natural disasters. 2018 has the potential to be another difficult water year and impacts from prolonged drought take time to recover from and like other natural disasters, the best way to survive and help communities recover is through coordinated planning and developing diverse tools to use when these crises occur. We know from our experience working with our state agency and partner organizations in Oregon that funding for planning, feasibility, and implementation of projects to increase drought preparedness and resiliency is a cornerstone to an economically, socially and environmentally sound approach for a sustainable water future.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, we respectfully request the appropriation of at least \$5.5 billion for the USACE Civil Works budget for FY19. The critical nature of the water infrastructure services the USACE provides requires a budget that matches the seriousness of the national need and the importance of the water supply, navigation, public safety, and other natural resources benefits it provides. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding the FY19 budget for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Sincerely,

April Snell, Executive Director

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Testimony of April Snell, Executive Director, Oregon Water Resources Congress  
Submitted to the United States House Appropriations Committee,  
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development  
April 20, 2018

**RE: U.S. Department of the Interior's FY19 Budget for the Bureau of Reclamation**

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) continues to support increased funding for the Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) Water and Related Resources program and are concerned that the proposed FY19 budget will be woefully insufficient to meet the diverse water supply and infrastructure needs in the 17 Western States that Reclamation serves. OWRC requests a minimum of \$1 billion be included in the Water and Related Resources program for FY19, with at least \$50 million for the WaterSMART program. Additional funding would help leverage other resources, support collaborative partnerships, and increased coordination between other federal agencies on addressing aging infrastructure, drought adaptation, ecosystem restoration, and other water related challenges.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to support the protection and use of water rights and promote the wise stewardship of water resources. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower. About 1/2 of our members are in Reclamation Projects and most have been awarded WaterSMART grants.

Our members across Oregon face challenges related to irrigation water supply reliability and aging infrastructure. While there are common concerns and interests throughout irrigated agriculture, each basin is unique, and necessitates that local communities' work together to identify their needs and develop solutions to best meet them. Reclamation's Water and Related Resources program has valuable tools to meet the myriad of infrastructure needs in each basin; incentivizing partnerships and innovative conservation projects, without placing the entire burden on the backs of the agricultural economy that produces food and fiber for our nation.

**WaterSMART Initiative**

OWRC strongly supports Reclamation's ongoing WaterSMART Initiative and increased funding for the WaterSMART Grants and Water Conservation Field Services Programs—the two programs used the most by Oregon's irrigation districts to support water conservation activities. These programs are an important part of the overall funding package for water resources projects collaboratively developed by local communities, supported with local and state funding, and designed to meet those communities' unique water supply and water conservation needs.

***Water Conservation Field Services Program (WCFSP)***

The WCFSP is a key component in supporting irrigation districts' and similar water delivery systems' water conservation efforts. WCFSP provides a breadth of technical and financial assistance to irrigation districts, including partial funding for materials used to pipe and line canals, measurement and other technology, and water conservation plans—all supporting water conservation efforts being implemented by these districts. Providing increased funding for WCFSP projects will yield more immediate and cost-effective water conservation measures in all 17 Western States.

The planning projects and technical assistance funded under the WCFSP are key components that help our member districts identify opportunities for water conservation through improved water management and capital investments. A lack of funding for the feasibility phase of projects is an impediment to the districts' ability to move forward with implementing water conservation projects like those listed below. This program provides seed money for both short and long term planning by districts and water users that results in helping Oregon meet the competing demands for water in basins throughout the state. Furthermore, technical assistance under this program can help water suppliers plan for and adapt to potential impacts from drought.

Additionally, we believe the management of the WCFSP should remain with the Regional Offices in order to retain the close connection between Reclamation and Project managers and ensure that Reclamation's resources are used to best support the management of its Projects. The WCFSP is one of the Reclamation services most appreciated by our members. The regional staff, and particularly the local area office staff, understand the unique operating and delivery challenges of the various Projects, and therefore provide very meaningful support to the managers of those Projects.

### ***WaterSMART Grants***

WaterSMART cost-share grants have supported Oregon districts' efforts to improve water delivery systems, conserve water, and implement innovative projects to meet the water needs in our state. These projects have been a key ingredient to the districts' cooperative efforts with other stakeholders in their respective river basins to address in-stream, water quality, and water supply needs of their basins, without reducing the amount of land to which the districts deliver water, and avoiding regulatory actions by Federal or State agencies. There continues to be more applicants than available funding and additional financial resources are needed to enable local water suppliers to continue efforts to conserve water and help meet the Secretary's water conservation goal. With a return of over \$5 for every \$1 of Federal investment, and non-federal match generally exceeding the required amount, this program far surpasses the results of other partnerships between the Federal government and local project sponsors.

### **Examples of Oregon Projects Funded through the WaterSMART Initiative**

The following projects are examples of how Reclamation's WaterSMART Initiative is helping Oregon districts increase water conservation and improve water delivery efficiency.

- ***Rogue River Valley Irrigation District, Bradshaw Drop Irrigation Canal Piping Project (Phase 2)*** – Rogue River Valley Irrigation District (Medford) will convert 2.4 miles of open canal to high density polyethylene pipe. The project is expected to result in annual water savings of 436 acre-feet currently lost to seepage, which will help meet water demands in the District. Once completed, the pressurized pipeline will allow irrigators to complete on-farm improvements, such as the conversion from flood irrigation to more efficient sprinkler irrigation. **Reclamation Funding: \$290,000 Total Project Cost: \$2,955,080**
- ***Three Sisters Irrigation District, Canal Piping and McKenzie Hydroelectric Facility Project*** - Three Sisters Irrigation District (Sisters) will pipe 7.5 miles of existing open canals with high density polyethylene pipe, complete restoration work along 6 miles of Whychus Creek, and install a 300-kilowatt hydroelectric turbine. The conversion of open canals to pipe is expected to result in annual water savings of 1,400 acre-feet that is currently lost to seepage. The District will work with the Deschutes River Conservancy to dedicate ~ 201 acre-feet per year of the conserved water to a new instream water right held

by the State of Oregon. The increased instream flows and restoration will improve riparian habitat and benefit various species, including Bull and Steelhead Trout, Chinook and Sockeye Salmon, the Oregon Spotted Frog, the willow flycatcher, and the yellow breasted chat. The pressurized pipeline resulting from this project will allow farmers who receive deliveries from the District to implement further improvements. Lastly, the project will also include the installation of a 300-kilowatt hydro turbine at McKenzie Reservoir, which is expected to generate over 1 million kilowatt-hours of energy annually. **Reclamation Funding: \$400,000 Total Project Cost: \$4,476,155**

- ***Santiam Water Control District, Irrigation System SCADA Automation and Water Measurement Improvement Project*** - The Santiam Water Control District (Stayton) will automate numerous manual control gate and diversion structures within the canal system, including the automation of the District's small hydropower plant. The improvements will also include new and improved water measurement capabilities. More precise deliveries are expected to result in annual water savings of 2,150 acre-feet. **Reclamation Funding: \$300,000 Total Project Cost: \$941,700**
- ***Klamath Irrigation District, Stukel Spill Project*** – Klamath Irrigation District (Klamath Falls) will design and construct a large capacity operational spill structure near the Stukel pump site. The spill will consist of a concrete intake structure and electric actuated roller gate, and a pipe discharge with measuring device and supervisory control and data acquisition intertie, which will discharge to Lost River. The project will provide for better management of water deliveries which will result in the reduction of diversions from Upper Klamath Lake. **Reclamation Funding: \$80,535 Total Project Cost: \$231,666**
- ***North Unit Irrigation District, Lateral 58-11 Piping Project*** - North Unit Irrigation District (Madras) will pipe 2 miles of the 58-11 open ditch lateral to address seepage losses. The project will also include installation of 8 pressurized deliveries to District landowners. The project is expected to result in annual water savings of 570 acre-feet. Through a partnership with the Deschutes River Conservancy, conserved water will be marketed to restore instream flows in a critical reach of the Crooked River. **Reclamation Funding: \$704,478 Total Project Cost: \$1,525,545**
- ***Tumalo Irrigation District, Piping of the Tumalo Feed Canal (Phase IV)*** - Tumalo Irrigation District (Tumalo) will complete Phase IV of the Tumalo Feed Canal Piping Project. Phase IV of the project includes piping 3,400 feet of remaining 6-mile open canal system, which is expected to result in annual water savings of 776 acre-feet currently being lost to seepage and evaporation. The conserved water will be dedicated to the State of Oregon for permanent instream flows for use in Tumalo Creek, Crescent Creek, and the Little Deschutes River. **Reclamation Funding: \$704,478 Total Project Cost: \$1,525,545**

Further innovative projects like the ones above could be developed and implemented in Oregon if more funding is made available through the WaterSMART Initiative. Additionally, OWRC would like to see the funding cap increased from \$1 million to \$5 million in areas where there are known endangered, threatened or vulnerable species. By increasing the funding cap, Reclamation would have the ability to fund projects aimed at improving species habitat at a higher level, allowing for these important projects to move forward.

### **Ecosystem Restoration**

Additional funding to support collaborative ecosystem restoration efforts that align with the environmental aspects of Reclamation's mission is also important to OWRC and its members.

Funding for the Columbia and Snake River Salmon Recovery Program is essential as Reclamation, the Bonneville Power Administration, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and NOAA Fisheries prepare to implement reasonable and prudent alternatives to mitigate impacts to Columbia-Snake river salmon and steelhead under the Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion. We strongly encourage Reclamation to consider funding for fish passage and fish screening projects that can help meet these requirements. This type of funding could be leveraged with state and local efforts to maximize cost effectiveness and environmental benefits.

Furthermore, funding for the ongoing efforts in the Deschutes Basin related to the development of the Deschutes Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) should be included in Reclamation's FY19 budget. Specifically, funding similar to that received by the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project should be allocated to North Unit Irrigation District and Ochoco Irrigation District for continued work on development of the HCP and for implementation of conservation measures and monitoring the effects of the conservation measures developed under the HCP. This funding will help support ongoing efforts to improve water supplies to meet the myriad of agricultural and environmental needs that depend upon it. Financial support for these types of collaborative restoration efforts will lead to implementable, cost-effective water resources solutions that help reduce conflict and expensive litigation.

### **Drought Planning and Aging Infrastructure**

OWRC is supportive of developing strategies to address potential drought related impacts to water resources. It is imperative that the nation's water infrastructure is capable of handling more frequent and severe weather events, changes in precipitation/snowpack, and other drought related impacts to water resources. Reclamation needs additional funding to coordinate and leverage state, local and other federal resources to support necessary evaluations and improvements of water infrastructure in the 17 Western States related to potential drought effects. Many of the 824 dams and reservoirs that Reclamation manages (and associated delivery systems) were built 50 to 100 years ago and are already in dire need of improvement. These improvements are costly and deferred maintenance leads to reduced system efficiency, water conservation, and in some instances catastrophic failure.

Providing funding to evaluate and improve water infrastructure in the face of drought will ensure that Reclamation reservoirs and associated delivery systems can continue to provide essential water supplies used to grow food and other agricultural crops—a vital part of our local, state, and national economy, as well as ensuring food security. Reclamation's WaterSMART Basin Study program has proved to be an effective tool for analyzing the effects of drought. Past and future studies will prepare river basins throughout the 17 Western States for developing solutions to water shortages through conservation as well as building innovative new storage facilities, large and small.

We respectfully request the appropriation of at least \$1 billion for Reclamation's Water and Related Resources program for FY19. Providing increased funding for the WaterSMART Initiative and other related programs is a wise investment that will yield benefits for our nation's economy, environment, and communities that depend on water resources. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding the FY19 budget for the U.S Bureau of Reclamation.

Sincerely,

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Testimony of April Snell, Executive Director, Oregon Water Resources Congress  
Submitted to the United States House Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

April 20, 2018

**RE: FY19 Budget for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program**

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) is concerned about continuing reductions to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program (CWSRF) and is requesting that appropriations for this program be increased to at least **\$2 billion** in FY19. The CWSRF is an effective loan program that addresses critical water infrastructure needs while benefitting the environment, local communities, and the economy.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to support the protection of water rights and promote the wise stewardship of water resources statewide. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower facilities.

**FY19 Appropriations**

We recognize that we must make strategic investments with our country's scarce resources and maximize benefits to the American people. The CWSRF is a perfect example of the type of program that should have funding increased because it creates jobs while benefitting the environment and is a highly efficient return on taxpayer investment. Oregon, like many other states, continues to face high levels of unemployment and the CWSRF funded projects provide much needed construction and professional services jobs. Moreover, as a loan program, it is a wise investment that allows local communities to leverage their limited resources and address critical infrastructure needs that would otherwise be unmet.

Nationally, there are large and growing critical water infrastructure needs. In EPA's most recent needs surveys, *The Clean Watersheds Needs Survey 2012: Report to Congress and Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment: Fifth Report to Congress*, the estimated funding need for drinking water infrastructure totaled \$384 billion (in 2011 dollars) and wastewater infrastructure needs totaled \$271 billion (in 2012 dollars). Appropriations for water infrastructure, specifically CWSRF, should not be declining but remaining strong in order to meet these critical needs. In 2016 and 2017 appropriations for the CWSRF program were approximately \$1.394 billion. We are concerned as we see this negative downward trend continuing while the status of our nation's water infrastructure continues to decline.

We also continue to be highly supportive of expanding "green infrastructure," in fact, irrigation districts and other water suppliers in Oregon are on the forefront of "green infrastructure" through innovative piping projects that provide multiple environmental benefits, which is discussed in greater detail below. However, continually reducing the amount of funds available

for these types of worthwhile projects has created increased uncertainty for potential borrowers about whether adequate funding will be available in future years. CWSRF is often an integral part of an overall package of state, federal and local funding that necessitates a stronger level of assurance that loan funds will be available for planned water infrastructure projects. Reductions in the CWSRF could lead to loss of grant funding and delay or derail beneficial projects that irrigation districts have been developing for years.

Additionally, OWRC is pleased that EPA continues “strategic partnerships” with the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) and other federal agencies to improve water quality and address nonpoint source pollution. Oregon had one priority watershed eligible for funding through the National Water Quality Initiative in 2017 and anticipates that additional watersheds will be included in the future. As Oregon is a delegated state, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) administers the CWSRF and is an important lead agency in incentivizing voluntary efforts to improve these and other impaired waterways in the state. DEQ and its administration of the CWSRF has been an extremely valuable tool in Oregon for improving water quality and efficiently addressing infrastructure challenges that are otherwise cost-prohibitive.

### **CWSRF Needs in Oregon**

The appropriations for the CWSRF program over the past few years has been far short of what is needed to address critical water infrastructure needs in Oregon and across the nation. This has led to fewer water infrastructure projects, and therefore a reduction in improvements to water quality. DEQ’s most recent “Proposed Intended Use Plan Update #2 - State Fiscal Year 2018,” lists 21 projects in need of a total of \$166,079,756 in Oregon alone. The federal capitalization grant funding awarded in FY17 will total \$14,977,000, which is wholly inadequate to address and complete these much-needed projects.

Now that irrigation districts are once again eligible for principal forgiveness (which was recently reinstated with the passage of the WIIN Act), seven irrigation districts submitted applications for funding in 2018. All totaled Oregon irrigation districts have submitted applications to DEQ for over \$63,000,000 for the design and construction of multiple projects to improve water quality and quantity associated with irrigation diversions, canals and pipelines throughout the state. OWRC is hopeful that with an increase in money available, there will be enough funding available to complete projects that will not only benefit the environment and the patrons served by the water delivery system, but also benefit the economy.

### **CWSRF and Irrigation Districts**

OWRC and our members are highly supportive of the CWSRF, including promoting the program to our members and annually submitting federal appropriations testimony to support increased funding for the CWSRF. We believe it is an important funding tool that irrigation districts and other water suppliers are using for innovative piping projects that provide multiple environmental and economic benefits.

Many OWRC member districts have successfully received loans from the CWSRF over the last several years and many more continue to apply. Numerous irrigation districts and other water suppliers need to pipe currently open canals, which reduces sediment and water temperature and

provides other water quality improvements as well as increasing water availability for fish and irrigators by reducing water loss from the delivery system. As an example of past success, in 2009, four irrigation districts received over \$11 million funding in Oregon from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) through the CWSRF for projects which created valuable jobs while improving water quality. These four projects were essential to DEQ not only meeting but exceeding the minimum requirement that 20% of the total ARRA funding for the CWSRF be used for “green” projects. Without the irrigation district projects, it is likely that Oregon’s CWSRF would not have qualified for ARRA funding.

### **The Importance and Success of Local Watershed Planning**

Oregon’s success in watershed planning illustrates that planning efforts work best when diverse interests develop and implement plans at the local watershed level with support from state government. Oregon has recently revised their CWSRF rules; thus making conservation easier and its benefits to be better achieved in the State. As the national model for watershed planning, Oregon does not need a new federal agency or Executive Branch office to oversee conservation and restoration efforts. Planning activities are conducted through local watershed councils, volunteer-driven organizations that work with local, state and federal agencies, economic and environmental interests, agricultural, industrial and municipal water users, local landowners, tribes, and other members of the community. There are over 60 individual watershed councils in Oregon that are already deeply engaged in watershed planning and restoration activities. Watershed planning in Oregon formally began in 1995 with the development of the Oregon Plan for Salmon Recovery and Watershed Enhancement, a statewide strategy developed in response to the federal listing of several fish species. This strategy led to the creation of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), a state agency and policy oversight board that funds and promotes voluntary and collaborative efforts that “help create and maintain healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies” in 1999.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, we applaud the CWSRF program for allowing Oregon's DEQ to make targeted loans that address Clean Water Act issues and improve water quality but also help incentivize innovative water management solutions that benefit local communities, agricultural economies, and the environment. This voluntary approach creates and promotes cooperation and collaborative solutions to complex water resources challenges. We respectfully request the appropriation of at least \$2 billion for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund for FY 2019.

Sincerely,  
April Snell, Executive Director  
Phone: 503-363-0121 Address: 795 Winter St. NE, Salem, OR 97301

Testimony of April Snell, Executive Director, Oregon Water Resources Congress  
Submitted to the United States House Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

April 20, 2018

**RE: FY19 Budget for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act Program**

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) is writing to express its strong support for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) Program and is requesting that appropriations for this program be **\$15 million** in FY19, which is what FRIMA is currently authorized for. The FRIMA program is an essential cost-share funding program that helps water users and fishery agencies better protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered fish species while ensuring water supply delivery to farms and communities.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to support the protection of water rights and promote the wise stewardship of water resources statewide. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower production.

**FY19 Appropriations**

The FRIMA program meets a critical need in fishery protection and restoration, complimenting other programs through the U.S Fish and Wildlife Services (FWS), while leveraging state, local, and private funds. The program provides vital cost-share funding that helps meet fishery needs without placing the burden solely on the backs of farmers and ranchers who rely on the same water source. Fish passage and fish screens installations are a vital component to fishery protection with several benefits:

- Keeps sensitive, threatened and endangered fish out of canals and water delivery systems
- Allows fish to be safely bypassed around reservoirs and other infrastructure
- Eliminates water quality risks to fish species

There are over 100 irrigation districts and other special districts in Oregon that deliver water supplies to over one million acres of irrigated cropland in the state. Almost all of these districts are affected by either state or federal Endangered Species Act listings of Salmon, Steelhead, Bull Trout or other sensitive, threatened or endangered species. The design and installation of fish screens and fish passage to protect the myriad of fish species is often cost-prohibitive for individual districts to implement without outside funding sources.

Oregon irrigation districts anticipate no less than \$25 million in funding will be required to meet current fish passage and fish screen needs. Limited cost-share funds are available from the Oregon Watershed Enhanced Board (OWEB) program in Oregon, but the primary cost-share for fish screen and fish passage projects has been provided by the districts and their water users.

Project needs include both construction of new fish screens and fish passage facilities as well as significant upgrades of existing facilities to meet new requirements (new species, new science) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Service and the FWS. Upgrades are often needed to modernize facilities with new technologies that provide better protection for fish species as well as reduced maintenance and increased lifespan for the operator.

### **Background of the Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) Program**

FRIMA, originally enacted November 2000, created a federal partnership program incentivizing voluntary fish screen and fish passage improvements for water withdrawal projects in Idaho, Oregon, Washington and western Montana. The funding goes to local governments for construction of fish screens and fish passage facilities and is matched with non-federal funding. Irrigation districts and other local governments that divert water for irrigation accessed the funding directly, while individual irrigators accessed funding through their local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), which are local governments affiliated with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

FRIMA was reauthorized as part of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN) of 2016 for only \$15 million, well short of the estimated \$500 million in fish screening and passage needs in the Pacific Northwest alone. The original legislation in 2000 (PL.106-502) was supported and requested by the Pacific Northwest Partnership, a coalition of local governmental entities in the four Northwest states. As one of the members of that coalition, we appreciate and strongly support your efforts to reauthorize the FRIMA program. The FRIMA legislation authorized \$25 million annually, to be divided equally among the four states from 2001 to 2012, which was when the original authorization expired. The actual funding appropriated to the FRIMA program (through Congressional write-ins) ranged from \$1 million to \$8 million, well short of the \$25 million it was authorized for and far short of what is needed to address fish passage and screening needs across the region. However, that small amount funding was used to leverage other funds and assisted the region in making measurable progress towards addressing fish screens and fish passage needed to protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered fish species.

FRIMA funding was channeled through FWS to state fishery agencies in the four states, distributed using an application and approval process based on a ranking system implemented uniformly among the states, including the following factors: fish restoration benefits, cost effectiveness, and feasibility of planned structure. All projects provided improved fish passage or fish protection at water diversion structures and benefitted native fish species in the area, including several state or federally listed species. Projects were also subject to applicable state and federal requirements for project construction and operation.

### **Program Benefits**

FRIMA projects provide immediate protection for fish and fills a large unmet need in the Pacific Northwest for cost-share assistance with fish screening and fish passage installations and improvements. A report by FWS covering program years FY 2002-2012 provides state-by-state coverage of how the Congressional provided funding has been used in the program. Compared to other recovery strategies, the installation of fish screens and fish passage infrastructure has the

highest assurance for increasing numbers of fish species in the Pacific Northwest. Furthermore, the installation of these devices have minimal impacts on water delivery operations and projects are done cooperatively using methods that are well accepted by landowners and rural communities.

The return of the FRIMA program will catalyze cooperative partnerships and innovative projects that provide immediate and long-term benefits to irrigators, fishery agencies, and local communities throughout the Pacific Northwest. This program is also a wise investment, with past projects contributing more than the required match and leveraging on average over one dollar for each federal dollar invested. FRIMA provides for a maximum federal cost-share of 65%, with the applicant's cost-share at 35% plus the on-going maintenance and support of the structure for passage or screening purposes. Applicants operate the projects and the state agencies monitor and review the projects.

### **Oregon's Project Benefits**

Twenty-six fish screens or fish passage projects in Oregon were previously funded using FRIMA for part of the project financing. These projects have led to:

- Installation of screens at seventeen diversions or irrigation pumps
- Removal or modification of twelve fish passage barriers
- Three-hundred sixty-five miles being re-opened to fish passage

In addition, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) has used some of the FRIMA funding to develop an inventory of need for fish screens and passages in the state. Grants ranged from just under \$6,000 to \$400,000 in size with a local match averaging 64% of the project costs, well over the amount required under the Act (35%). In other words, each federal dollar invested in the FRIMA program generates a local investment of just over one dollar for the protection of fish species in the Pacific Northwest.

The following are examples of how Oregon used some of its FRIMA money:

**Santiam Water Control District Project:** Fish screen project on a large 1050 cubic feet per second (cfs) multipurpose water diversion project on the Santiam River (Willamette Basin) near Stayton, Oregon. Partners are the Santiam Water Control District, ODFW, Marion Soil and Water Conservation District, and the City of Stayton. Approved **FRIMA** funding of **\$400,000** leveraged a **\$1,200,000** total project cost. Species benefited included winter steelhead, spring Chinook, rainbow trout, and cutthroat trout.

**South Fork Little Butte Creek:** Fish screen and fish passage project on a 65 cfs irrigation water diversion in the Rogue River Basin near Medford, Oregon. Partners are the Medford Irrigation District and ODFW. Approved **FRIMA** funding of **\$372,000** leveraged a **\$580,000** total project cost. Species benefited included listed summer and winter steelhead, coho salmon, and cutthroat trout.

**Running Y (Geary Diversion) Project:** Fish screen project on a 60 cfs irrigation water diversion in the upper Klamath Basin near Klamath Falls, Oregon. Partners are the Wocus Drainage District, ODFW, and Jeld-Wen Ranches. Approved **FRIMA** funding of **\$44,727** leveraged a total project cost of **\$149,000**. Species benefited included listed red-band trout and short-nosed sucker.

**Lakeshore Gardens Project:** Fish screen project on a 2 cfs irrigation water diversion in the upper Klamath Basin near Klamath Falls, Oregon. Partners are the Lakeshore Gardens Drainage District and ODFW. Approved **FRIMA** funding of **\$5,691** leveraged a total project cost of **\$18,970**. Species benefited included red-band trout, short-nosed sucker and Lost River sucker.

### **Conclusion**

Providing appropriations for the FRIMA program will fill a vital funding gap for fish screens and fish passage projects that are needed to better protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered fish species, which also benefits the economy, local communities, and the environment we share. FRIMA funds projects that are ready to be constructed and will provide both immediate improved protections for fish and immediate jobs for the construction of the projects. Dollar-for-dollar, providing screening and fish passage at diversions is one of the most cost-effective uses of restoration dollars, creating fishery protection at low cost, with low risk and significant benefits. The return of the FRIMA program will catalyze cooperative partnerships and innovative projects that provide immediate and long-term economic and environmental benefits to irrigators, fishery agencies, and local communities throughout the Pacific Northwest. We respectfully request an appropriation of \$15 million for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act program for FY 2019.

Sincerely,

April Snell, Executive Director

Phone: 503-363-0121 Address: 795 Winter St. NE, Salem, OR 97301





### ***Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act Fact Sheet***

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) is seeking support for the recapitalization of the Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) Program, which was reauthorized as S. 2886 by Senator Wyden and Senator Merkley. **Recapitalizing this essential cost-share funding program at \$25 million will help water users and fishery agencies better protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered fish species while ensuring water supply delivery to farms and communities.**

As a nonprofit association representing irrigation districts, water control districts, improvement districts, drainage districts and other quasi-municipal local government entities delivering agricultural water supplies, OWRC has a strong interest in the reauthorization of FRIMA. The water stewards we represent operate complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, and pipelines, delivering water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. For over 100 years, OWRC has promoted the protection and use of water rights and the wise stewardship of water resources.

#### **Background of the Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) Program**

FRIMA, enacted November 2000, created a federal partnership program incentivizing voluntary fish screen and fish passage improvements for water withdrawal projects in Idaho, Oregon, Washington and western Montana. The funding goes to local governments for construction of fish screens and fish passage facilities and is matched with non-federal funding. Irrigation districts and other local governments that divert water for irrigation accessed the funding directly, while individual irrigators accessed funding through their local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), which are local governments affiliated with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The FRIMA legislation authorized \$25 million annually, to be divided equally among the four states from 2001 forward. The actual funding appropriated to the FRIMA program (through Congressional write-ins) ranged from \$1 million to \$8 million, well short of the \$25 million it was authorized for and far short of what is needed to address fish passage and screening needs across the region. FRIMA funding was channeled through FWS to state fishery agencies in the four states, distributed using an application and approval process based on a ranking system implemented uniformly among the states, including the following factors: fish restoration benefits, cost effectiveness, and feasibility of planned structure. All projects provided improved fish passage or fish protection at water diversion structures and benefitted native fish species in the area, including several state or federally listed species. Projects were also subject to applicable state and federal requirements for project construction and operation.

#### **Need**

The FRIMA program meets a critical need in fishery protection and restoration, complimenting other programs through the U.S Fish and Wildlife Services (FWS). Fish passage and fish screens installations are a vital component to fishery protection with several benefits:

- Keeps sensitive, threatened and endangered fish out of canals and water delivery systems
- Allows fish to be safely bypassed around reservoirs and other infrastructure
- Eliminates water quality risks to fish species

#### **Program Benefits**

FRIMA projects provide immediate protection for fish and fills a large unmet need in the Pacific Northwest for cost-share assistance with fish screening and fish passage installations and

improvements. A report by FWS covering program years FY 2002-2012 provides state-by-state coverage of how the Congressional provided funding has been used in the program. Compared to other recovery strategies, the installation of fish screens and fish passage infrastructure has the highest assurance for increasing numbers of fish species in the Pacific Northwest. Furthermore, the installation of these devices have minimal impacts on water delivery operations and projects are done cooperatively using methods that are well accepted by landowners and rural communities.

The return of the FRIMA program will catalyze cooperative partnerships and innovative projects that provide immediate and long-term benefits to irrigators, fishery agencies, and local communities throughout the Pacific Northwest. This program is also a wise investment, with past projects contributing more than the required match and leveraging on average over one dollar for each federal dollar invested. FRIMA provides for a maximum federal cost-share of 65%, with the applicant's costshare at 35% plus the on-going maintenance and support of the structure for passage or screening purposes. Applicants operate the projects and the state agencies monitor and review the projects.

The reauthorization of FRIMA fills a vital funding gap for fish screens and fish passage projects that are needed to better protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered fish species, which also benefits the economy, local communities, and the environment we share. FRIMA funds projects that are ready to be constructed and will provide immediate improved protections for fish and immediate jobs for the construction of the projects. Dollar-for-dollar, providing screening and fish passage at diversions is one of the most cost-effective uses of restoration dollars, creating fishery protection at low cost, with low risk and significant benefits.

The return of the FRIMA program will catalyze cooperative partnerships and innovative projects that provide immediate and long-term benefits to irrigators, fishery agencies, and local communities throughout the Pacific Northwest. We strongly support the recapitalization of the Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act of 2000 and urge that appropriations for this program be increased to **\$25 million**. Thank you for efforts to recapitalize this valuable program.

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### **Examples of Irrigation District FRIMA Projects in Oregon**

***Santiam Water Control District Project:*** Fish screen project on a large 1050 cubic feet per second (cfs) multipurpose water diversion project on the Santiam River (Willamette Basin) near Stayton,

Oregon. Partners are the Santiam Water Control District, ODFW, Marion Soil and Water Conservation District, and the City of Stayton. Approved **FRIMA** funding of **\$400,000** leveraged a **\$1,200,000** total project cost. Species benefited included winter steelhead, spring Chinook, rainbow trout, and cutthroat trout.

***South Fork Little Butte Creek:*** Fish screen and fish passage project on a 65 cfs irrigation water diversion in the Rogue River Basin near Medford, Oregon. Partners are the Medford Irrigation District and ODFW. Approved **FRIMA** funding of **\$372,000** leveraged a **\$580,000** total project cost. Species benefited included listed summer and winter steelhead, coho salmon, and cutthroat trout.

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***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.***



Montana  
Water  
Resources  
Association



Oregon Water Resources Congress



## Multi-State Letter in Support of Funding for the Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act Program

June 28, 2017

We are an informal coalition of Western state associations writing to express our shared strong support for the full funding (\$15 million) of the Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) Program. Providing appropriations for this essential cost-share funding program will help water users and fishery agencies to better protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered fish species while continuing to provide water supplies to farms and communities.

### Background

Our associations, the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), the Idaho Water Users Association (IWUA), Montana Water Resources Association (MWRA), Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC), and the Washington State Water Resources Association (WSWRA) represent irrigation entities, other water suppliers, and the water users they serve in California, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. The original FRIMA legislation, enacted November 2000 (PL.106-502), was supported and requested by the Pacific Northwest Partnership, an informal coalition of local governmental entities in Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and Montana. The FRIMA program was highly successful until the authorization for this vital funding mechanism expired at the end of 2015. A report by U.S Fish and Wildlife Services (FWS) covering program years FY 2002-2012 provides state-by-state coverage of how the Congressional provided funding has been used in the program.

FRIMA was reauthorized in the WRDA/WINN legislation at the end of the 114th Congress through 2019. The authorization is for \$15 million and a fifth state, California, was added to the program. There is currently no funding available for the program.

### Program Need & Benefits

FRIMA is an essential cost-share program for irrigation entities and other water users with water diversions on streams and rivers within California, Idaho, western Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Funding for voluntary fish screen and fish passage construction helps meet a critical need in fishery protection and restoration while ensuring the continued viability of irrigated crops, community water supplies, and industries reliant on water withdrawal projects in our five states. Fish passage and fish screens are a vital component to fishery protection with several benefits:

- Keeps sensitive, threatened and endangered fish out of canals and water delivery systems
- Allows fish to be safely navigate around reservoirs, diversions, and other infrastructure
- Reduces water quality risks to fish species

All five of our states are affected by either state or federal Endangered Species Act listings of Salmon and Steelhead, Bull Trout or other sensitive, threatened or endangered species. The design and installation of fish screens and fish passage to protect the myriad of fish species is often cost-prohibitive for individual entities to implement without outside funding sources. Limited cost-share funds are available from local and state funding programs but the primary cost-share for fish screen and fish passage projects has been provided by the various irrigation entities and their water users. Project needs include both construction of new fish screens and fish passage facilities as well as significant upgrades of existing facilities to meet new requirements (new species, new science) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Service and the FWS.

Upgrades are often needed to modernize facilities with new technologies that provide better protection for fish species as well as reduced maintenance and increased lifespan for the operator. Installing these new technologies not only helps fish but also improves operations and irrigation efficiency by keeping debris out of the water delivery infrastructure.

FRIMA projects provide immediate protection for fish and fills a large unmet need in the Pacific Northwest for cost-share assistance with fish screening and fish passage installations and improvements. FWS studies indicate that compared to other recovery strategies, the installation of fish screens and fish passage infrastructure has the highest assurance for increasing numbers of fish species in the Pacific Northwest. Furthermore, the installation of these devices have minimal impacts on water delivery operations and projects are done cooperatively using methods that are well accepted by landowners and rural communities.

Funding the FRIMA program is also a wise investment, with past projects contributing more than the required match and leveraging on average over one dollar for each federal dollar invested. FRIMA provides for a maximum federal cost-share of 65%, with the applicant's cost-share at 35% plus the on-going maintenance and support of the structure for passage or screening purposes. Applicants operate the projects and the state agencies monitor and review the projects.

FRIMA fills a vital funding gap for fish screens and fish passage projects that are needed to better protect sensitive, threatened, and endangered fish species, which also benefits the economy, local communities, and the environment we share. FRIMA funds projects that are ready to be constructed and will provide immediate improved protections for fish and immediate jobs for the construction of the projects. Dollar-for-dollar, providing screening and fish passage at diversions is one of the most cost-effective uses of restoration dollars, creating fishery protection at low cost, with low risk and significant benefits.

We strongly support the full appropriation of \$15 million for the Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act Program for FY 2018. Thank you for efforts to fund this valuable program.

Sincerely,

Paul Arrington, Executive Director  
Idaho Water Users Association (IWUA)  
Contact: 208-344-6690, [paul@iwua.org](mailto:paul@iwua.org)

Michael Murphy, Executive Director  
Montana Water Resources Association (MWRA)  
Contact: 406-235-4555, [mwra\\_h2o@msn.com](mailto:mwra_h2o@msn.com)

Tom Myrum, Executive Director  
Washington State Water Resources Association (WSWRA)  
Contact: 360-754-0756, [tmyrum@swra.org](mailto:tmyrum@swra.org)

Tim Quinn, Executive Director  
Association of California Water Agencies  
Contact: 916-441-4545, [timq@acwa.com](mailto:timq@acwa.com)

April Snell, Executive Director  
Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC)  
Contact: 503-363-0121, [aprils@owrc.org](mailto:aprils@owrc.org)



November 9, 2017

The Honorable Greg Walden  
2185 Rayburn Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support for Klamath Legislation

Dear Congressman Walden:

On behalf of the Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC), I am writing to express our support of Congressman Walden's efforts to address aging infrastructure issues in the Klamath Basin and his continued assistance to the Klamath Basin.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to support the protection of water rights and promote the wise stewardship of water resources statewide. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower facilities that serve a diverse set of farmers, ranchers, and other water users contributing to the local and global economy.

Our members from throughout Oregon face challenges related to irrigation water supply reliability and aging infrastructure. While there are common concerns and interests throughout irrigated agriculture, each basin is unique, and necessitates that local communities' work together to identify their needs and develop solutions to best meet them. The Klamath Project was initiated in the very early 1900's, and at that time, the Federal Government promised land and water in perpetuity to homesteading world war veterans. Many of those veteran's families still farm on the Project today. However, the rising cost of power due to longstanding contracts that were not renewed, have impacted district and farming operations, local tax rolls and water efficiency on the Project.

The century-old Klamath Project is reaching the end of its useful life and there are safety concerns for those living in and around its aging infrastructure. Modernizing the Project's infrastructure is not only the right thing to do for the safety of the community, it is an investment in the future of the basin's economy. The growing demand on water in the Klamath Basin has forced the irrigation community think of alternatives to mitigate water supply shortages and it is paramount that the Klamath Project be given the authority to utilize tools that will lessen the impact of drought and environmental regulations.

We commend you in recognizing and addressing these issues that impact the Klamath Basin and the area's family farmers and ranchers. Your leadership on this issue will not go unnoticed and OWRC thanks you for taking a personal interest in the sustainability of irrigated agriculture.

Sincerely,

April Snell  
Executive Director



## The Western Agriculture and Conservation Coalition Common Compensatory Mitigation Principles

The Western Agriculture and Conservation Coalition believes in the importance of sustaining our working lands and natural resources. We believe that landowners play an important role in mitigating impacts of development projects on our western landscapes. To further that goal, our organizations have developed significant experience designing and implementing successful compensatory mitigation projects and solutions, including conservation banks, in lieu fee programs, habitat exchanges, and assisting in project-sponsored mitigation. When habitat impacts cannot be avoided nor minimized, compensatory mitigation allows energy companies and other industries to offset those impacts by purchasing credits from landowners who create, maintain, or improve habitat. In this way, mitigation provides economic incentives for landowners who voluntarily engage in conservation and helps maintain the needed functional habitat for key natural systems.

Mitigation is a common-sense approach that provides for multiple uses of our landscapes, stimulates public-private partnerships, allows for market-based approaches, and supports jobs and local economies. Well-designed and implemented mitigation can serve as a critical tool in securing certainty and a vibrant future for ranches, rural communities, industry, and conservation. For compensatory mitigation actions to be equitable, transparent, successful, and be properly implemented, a sound mitigation policy should:

- Provide a system of economic incentives that aligns conservation with the progress of development so that mitigation can lead to improved economics for ranching and reduced regulatory uncertainty for industry;
- Support and provide incentives for a free and open market which is supported by conservationists, agriculture, and industry;
- Create a level playing field by establishing equal and consistent performance standards for all mitigation mechanisms, including conservation banks, habitat exchanges, in-lieu fee programs, and proponent-sponsored mitigation;

- Restore or preserve ecological function and value of the impacted land or equivalent resource;
- Establish clear and predictable outcomes and measures, reduce subjectivity, and ensure accountability to the extent feasible;
- Strengthen the role of states in protecting wildlife; and,
- Complement other private, state, and federal conservation programs.

Economic and environmental values are important to a vibrant, vital West in which we can all enjoy and prosper. Fair and thoughtful compensatory mitigation strategies – coupled with positive economic incentives and appropriate rewards for voluntary, proactive conservation – can help sustain our working lands and natural resources for current and future generations.

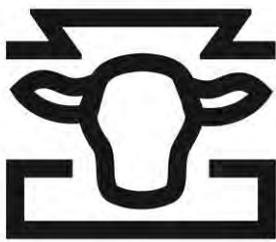
Contact Jeff Eisenberg, coalition director, or any of the members of the coalition should you have any questions about these principles. Jeff's email is [jeffeisenberg@rocksprings.com](mailto:jeffeisenberg@rocksprings.com). His telephone number is 571-355-3073.

Signed,

Steering Committee: California Farm Bureau Federation, Environmental Defense Fund, Family Farm Alliance, Irrigation Association, The Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, Wyoming Stock Growers Association

Members: California Agricultural Irrigation Association, Montana Stock Growers Association, National Audubon Society, Western Growers Association, Oregon Water Resources Congress, World Wildlife Fund

Business Advisory Council: K·Coe Isom, LLP, Farmers Conservation Alliance



## Western Agriculture and Conservation Coalition Common Endangered Species Act Principles

Implementation of the ESA should focus on maximizing the conservation and recovery of species and avoiding burdens on landowners essential to meeting the requirements of the Act. Improving the incentives and mechanisms for private landowners to manage their lands in ways that advance the objectives of the Act is among the highest priority changes needed for implementation of the Act. The following suggestions would help bring about this change in the implementation of the ESA:

### Focus on recovery

- Recovery should be promoted by FWS and NMFS and clearly define the criteria for a listing decision and/or the recovery goals for a species. The FWS and NMFS should emphasize species recovery in their administration of the ESA by timely preparation of science-based recovery plans and by acting promptly to delist a species when the recovery goals established in those plans are met. In focusing on recovery, plans should emphasize conservation of landscapes with multiple species as the most effective path for conserving individual species. Recovery planning should also ensure broad inclusion of multiple stakeholders, as allowed under the law, to help ensure the feasibility of recovery actions and enhance location specific knowledge.
- The FWS should routinely issue rules under section 4(d) of the Act tailored to the specific threats to and recovery opportunities for any species listed as threatened, with a special emphasis on the role of States and private landowners in the recovery of the species.

## **Federal lands and Waters**

- More emphasis must be placed on ensuring that federal agencies meet their obligations under section 7(a)(1) of the Act to advance the objectives of the Act in how they manage the lands and waters under their jurisdiction and in how they administer the programs for which they are responsible.

## **Collaboration with states and private landowners**

- States and private landowners must be more closely integrated into the management of both candidate and listed species to maximize conservation of populations and habitat.
- States should engage private landowners, on a voluntary, willing-landowner basis, in state conservation efforts, including those pursuant to an agreement with the FWS or NMFS under section 6 of the Act, by providing funding and technical expertise.
- The concerns of states, tribes, local governments, conservation groups, and private landowners should be reflected meaningfully in ESA decisions in harmony with the conservation requirements of the Act.

## **Regulatory incentives**

- Regulatory and financial incentives from federal, state, and private sources should be made available to landowners at the scale necessary to recover listed species, avoid the need to list candidate species, and reduce litigation. Examples of these incentives include habitat exchanges, conservation banks, safe harbor agreements, and candidate conservation agreements with assurances. The FWS and NMFS should reduce regulatory obstacles for the users of these outcome-based and market-based tools, and State and federal agencies must budget for, and Congress and State legislatures must provide sufficient resources to allow those agencies to make those tools effective and widely available.

## **Information sharing**

Local, State, and federal agencies involved in land use planning and the permitting of infrastructure and development activities should have ready and comprehensive access to the best available information concerning potential impacts of proposed infrastructure and development on listed and candidate species and their habitat, and the best locations and methods for mitigating those impacts, so that those agencies can administer their programs in ways that avoid conflicts and advance the objectives of the Act while facilitating needed development.

Contact Jeff Eisenberg, coalition director, or any of the members of the coalition should you have any questions about these principles. Jeff's email is [jeffeisenberg@rockspringrs.com](mailto:jeffeisenberg@rockspringrs.com). His telephone number is 571-355-3073.

Signed,

Steering Committee: Arizona Cattle Growers Association, California Farm Bureau Federation, Environmental Defense Fund, Family Farm Alliance, Irrigation Association, The Nature Conservancy, Public Lands Council, Trout Unlimited, Wyoming Stock Growers Association

Members: California Agricultural Irrigation Association, Montana Stock Growers Association, Kennedy and Coe, LLC



## The Western Agriculture and Conservation Coalition

April 17, 2018

Chairman Mike Conaway

Ranking Member Collin Peterson

U.S. House Committee on Agriculture

Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: WACC Support for Conservation Programs in H.R. 2, the House Farm Bill

Dear Chairman Conaway and Ranking Member Peterson:

The Western Agricultural and Conservation Coalition (WACC) thanks the Committee for the strong western provisions in the draft conservation title it has introduced as part of the reauthorization of the Farm Bill.

As introduced, the Farm Bill has the potential to strengthen the ability to use some USDA conservation programs to manage agricultural landscapes in the West. The conservation programs in the bill that best serve western producers and the needs for conserving and restoring watersheds are EQIP, RCPP, and ACEP. These programs are especially important for

conservation, rural economic, and social goals in the West. H.R. 2 recognizes the impact of these private land conservation programs, invests in them, and includes reforms to improve program accessibility and ensure they work better for more producers. The bill also simplifies administration of the RCPP program, includes mandatory funding for the Small Watersheds program, seeks to better support beginning farmers and ranchers, and improves the flexibility of existing programs to better serve multi-producer, water-delivery entities.

These improvements strengthen management of western landscapes for agricultural production and conservation. We hope that these improvements, and the rest of WACC's recommendations to the Committee, are included with robust funding in a bipartisan bill that passes the House and ultimately is enacted into law.

If you have any questions regarding this letter or WACC's activities, please feel free to contact Jeff Eisenberg, coalition director, or any of the members of the coalition. Jeff can be reached at [jeffeisenberg@rockspringrs.com](mailto:jeffeisenberg@rockspringrs.com) or 571.355.3073.

Sincerely,

Members of the Western Agriculture and Conservation Coalition

Steering Committee: Arizona Cattle Growers Association, California Farm Bureau Federation, Environmental Defense Fund, Family Farm Alliance, Irrigation Association, The Nature Conservancy, Public Lands Council, Trout Unlimited, Wyoming Stock Growers Association

Members: California Agricultural Irrigation Association, Montana Stock Growers Association, National Audubon Society, Farmers Conservation Alliance, Oregon Water Resources Congress, Western Growers Association, World Wildlife Fund



April 17, 2018

The Honorable Mike Conaway, Chairman  
The Honorable Collin Peterson, Ranking Member  
U.S. House Committee on Agriculture  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: “Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018”**

Dear Chairman Conaway and Ranking Member Peterson:

On behalf of the Family Farm Alliance (Alliance), I write to thank your Committee for the strong conservation and forestry titles included in the recent release of H.R. 2, the “Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018” (2018 Farm Bill). The Alliance is a grassroots organization of family farmers, ranchers, irrigation districts, and allied industries in 16 Western states. We are focused on one mission: to ensure the availability of reliable, affordable irrigation water supplies to Western farmers and ranchers. We are also committed to the fundamental proposition that Western irrigated agriculture must be preserved and protected for a host of economic, sociological, environmental and national security reasons – many of which are often overlooked in the context of other national policy decisions. The Alliance is a key player in the context of Western water resource management and how this important function is impacted by implementation of federal laws and regulations.

Because of the narrowly-focused nature of the Alliance’ mission, our farm bill energies and engagement leading up to the release of H.R. 2 have focused primarily on the conservation title. The Alliance supports a farm bill that maintains funding for the conservation title, and that makes farm bill programs work better for producers in the irrigated West. Our overall goal for the farm bill is to increase opportunities for farmers and their related water management entities to invest in improvements in water management and more efficient irrigation technologies, leading to more reliable water supplies, increased resource conservation, and increased crop yields and environmental benefits. Of course, benefits realized by farmers and ranchers translate to benefits enjoyed by American consumers.

We also have recommendations on forest health (due to the recent spate of wildfires impacting Western watersheds) and programs that promote young farmers. Thus, our comments today are limited to those issues, which we believe H.R. 2 addresses in an effective manner.

## **Conservation Title**

The Alliance is pleased to see that H.R. 2 provides several billion dollars of new funding for the Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP) and Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) beyond existing levels. This increase in funding for key programs is particularly significant in the face of the possibility that others may wish to cut funding for the conservation title. The bill strengthens the tools for managing agricultural landscapes in several other ways:

- The bill makes EQIP and RCPP funding accessible to western irrigation districts and other water organizations for the first time, something we have been advocating for since the 2002 farm bill. Partnerships with irrigation/water districts and individual producers strengthen the outreach potential and ability to effectively implement projects for growers. With this change in the law, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will have the authority to do this for the first time. We have some suggestions on how to better clarify eligible entities for this program, which we will share with your staff soon.
- The bill simplifies administration of the RCPP program which will allow NRCS to spend more time on getting conservation dollars to producers on the ground, and less time on navigating unnecessarily complex rules.
- The bill provides new, significant mandatory funding for the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention program (often referred to as the P.L. 566 program), which we hope will be an increasingly flexible and valuable tool for larger-scale water infrastructure projects.
- The bill authorizes the Secretary to waive the size limitation on producer participation in conservation programs “to protect environmentally sensitive land of special significance.” Additionally, the bill provides for longer agreements under the RCPP. These two provisions increase the likelihood that priority watershed resource concerns will be adequately addressed.

We believe the House bill represents the high-water mark for funding and modifying the conservation programs that the Alliance has supported through the past two farm bills.

## **Forestry Title**

Today, on average 7-8 million acres of forests and grasslands burn annually, about double the figure from three decades ago. Today’s wildfires are often larger, more catastrophic and deadlier. Wildfires are being impacted by decades of fire suppression, longer fire seasons, pest/insect infestations, reduced snowpack in high elevation forests and increasingly severe droughts. Plus, Western population growth has significantly expanded the construction of homes within or adjacent to forests and grasslands, increasing the risk of accidental, human-caused fires also putting property and people at greater risk.

Modern forest practices have helped to protect streams and riparian zones, but more needs to be learned about the implications of such practices as thinning or partial cuts. This understanding can, for example, lead to the development of “best management” practices to help balance timber harvesting with sustainable water flow and quality.

We are pleased to see the H.R. 2 Forestry Title include provisions to streamline projects to thin forests and reduce the fire threat across our National Forests. Title XIII removes the requirement for consultation under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act for a project carried out by the Forest Service if the project is found not likely to adversely affect a listed species. It allows for an expedited consultation where the projects conducted under a NEPA categorical exclusion (CE) for which a section 7 consultation is required, the action is deemed to have complied with the requirements of Section 7 after 90 days. The bill also clarifies that if a forest management activity might fall under more than one of the categorical exclusions, the Secretary has full discretion in determining which categorical exclusion to apply. While the CEs are limited to only 6,000 acres, the bill authorizes the use of CEs to tackle important activities, including addressing insect and disease infestation, reducing hazardous fuel loads, protecting municipal water sources, improving or enhancing critical habitat, increasing water yield, expediting salvage operations in response to catastrophic events, and removing hazardous trees and salvage timber to protect public safety, water supply, or public infrastructure.

### **Support for beginning farmers and ranchers**

American agriculture faces a crisis of attrition. Two-thirds of our farmland is on the cusp of transition as farmers age and retire, and there are few young farmers positioned to manage this resource. Farmers over the age of 65 outnumber farmers under the age of 35 by a margin of 6-to-1, and the number of farmers under the age of 35 grew by only 1% between 2007 and 2012. For college graduates, 71% of whom now graduate with student debt, a farm career is often out of the question. Student debt 1) deters many from considering farm careers; 2) places an often-insurmountable financial burden on young farmers; and 3) prevents young farmers from capitalizing their businesses and purchasing land because they are unable to secure mortgages and operating loans. This farm bill would:

- Reauthorize funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP).
- Allow for more flexible eligibility criteria for FSA farm ownership loans that account for the diverse educational and occupational backgrounds of young farmers.
- Maintain several provisions to help beginning farmers and ranchers establish themselves in agriculture. The bill enhances access to crop insurance and establishes a scholarship program at 1890 Land Grant Institutions designed to assist students interested in careers in agriculture.
- Establish the “Commission on Farm Transitions – Needs for 2050” to examine additional policy changes needed to ensure that the U.S. maintains the safest, most abundant and most affordable food and fiber supply in the world.
- Amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to extend the authority to use 5 percent of EQIP funds for beginning farmers or ranchers.

We are pleased to see that H.R. 2 contains these important provisions that we hope will incentivize more young people to pursue careers in agriculture.

### **Regulatory Relief**

Many of our members are significantly impacted by the court order declaring that certain lawful pesticide applications already regulated under the Federal Insecticide Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) are also subject to Clean Water Act (CWA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

(NPDES) permits issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or delegated states. This situation is the result of a 2009 decision of the 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals that not only ignores Congressional intent but is unprecedented in the four-decade history of the law.

This decision provides virtually no environmental benefit because, in fact, all pesticide applications are already stringently regulated through FIFRA, including applications to and near water. EPA's FIFRA registration program contains specific consideration for such uses. The CWA permits' compliance requirements impose resource and liability burdens on thousands of small farms, water purveyors, and local, state and federal agencies legally responsible for protecting public health. This unnecessarily exposes them to citizen law suits over infractions as minor as simple paperwork violations. Ultimately, we believe that requiring a CWA permit for these already regulated activities actually jeopardizes public health protection and the economy as regulators and businesses expend time and resources to implement and comply with these permits, all for no additional environmental benefits.

That is why we support Sections 9117 and 9118 of H.R. 2 – “Use of Authorized Pesticides/Discharges of Pesticides”, which provides much needed regulatory reform by amending FIFRA and the Clean Water Act to eliminate the duplicative and burdensome NPDES permitting requirement for the use of aquatic herbicides that are permitted and used in conformance with FIFRA.

### **Conclusion**

Our goal at the Family Farm Alliance is to find solutions to Western water conflicts that protect our national ability to feed ourselves, export food to others. Western irrigated agriculture must continue to help America lead the world in agricultural production while finding ways to accommodate the water supply needs of growing urban areas, energy development, recreation, and environmental preservation. Fair, balanced and long-lasting solutions will not come easily – they never have. We look forward to working with your committee and others in Congress to build a 2018 Farm Bill that embeds some of these sensible, workable policies.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (541)-892-6244 or [dankeppen@charter.net](mailto:dankeppen@charter.net) if you have any questions or concerns about our perspective on H.R. 2.

Sincerely,



Dan Keppen  
Executive Director



## Farmers Irrigation District Reservoir Expansion and Pipeline Project Hood River, Oregon



### **Project Funding Overview:**

Farmers Irrigation District (FID) leverages a combination of Federal and State funding programs to implement district infrastructure projects. FID focuses on infrastructure projects that improve energy and water efficiency, decrease operations and maintenance costs, and improve water reliability.

Implementation of the Reservoir Expansion and Pipeline project utilizes a combination of grant and loan funds from the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) Water Supply Development Account and the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) administered by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, in addition to FID funds.

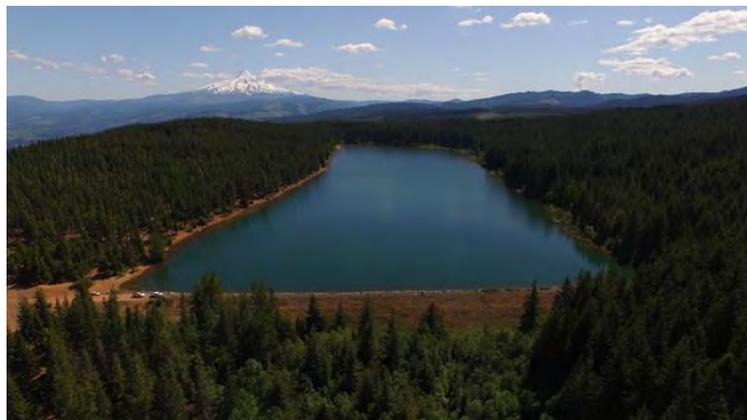
### **2016 Lowline Pipeline Project:**

In 2016, FID replaced 2.2 miles of 30 year old, badly leaking, 37 inch metal pipeline. This section of pipeline is located in a remote area, traversing steep hillsides. Using a combination of OWRD grant funds and CWSRF loan funds, 2.2 miles of new 30 inch fused HDPE pipe was installed, saving between 1.5 and 3 cfs of water. The final project cost was \$1,193,909.00 with \$800,000.00 coming from OWRD grants and \$393,909.00 coming from CWSRF loan funds.

This project will improve operational efficiency, keep more water in Greenpoint Creek, and improve reliability of water delivery. FID executed an Allocation of Conserved Water agreement with OWRD in conjunction with this project.

### **2017 and 2018 Upper Kingsley Reservoir Expansion Project:**

In 1937, FID constructed two reservoirs, an upper reservoir with a 715 acre foot capacity and a lower reservoir with a 288 acre foot capacity. These reservoirs serve the uppermost portion of the District and in drought years, farmers are put on a rotation in order to ensure there is enough water to get through the entire growing season.



This fall, FID will begin an expansion of the Upper Kingsley Reservoir. The expansion project will increase the water surface elevation by 11 feet, allowing storage of an additional 650 acre feet of water. This additional storage will ensure that farmers in the upper part of the District will have enough water to irrigate their crops, even in a drought year. The additional stored water will also provide operational flexibility within FID's system so that less live stream flow will be needed in the late summer, when water in stream is most valuable.

The Upper Kingsley Reservoir Expansion will be funded with a \$2.2 million grant from OWRD and up to \$2 million in loan funds through CWSRF. The reservoir expansion project will provide environmental, operational, and agricultural benefits.

### **Funding Program Benefits:**

The combination of low interest loan and grant funds allow irrigation districts like FID to build water infrastructure projects that have lasting benefits to the District, the agricultural community, the local economy, and the environment. Over the last 30 years, FID has invested over \$50 million in infrastructure projects like these resulting in greatly improved water reliability, decreased water loss, decreased energy consumption, increased energy production, and improved stream flow.

### **Contact:**

Les Perkins - Manager, Farmers Irrigation District  
1985 Country Club Road  
Hood River, OR 97031  
[www.fidhr.org](http://www.fidhr.org)



## THE VIRTUOUS CYCLE OF IRRIGATION MODERNIZATION

The work done by Three Sisters Irrigation District illustrates how irrigation modernization efforts can layer on benefits for any district. The first major step is to get water out of open canals and into pressurized pipes.

- This change eliminates canal seepage and evaporation, resulting in more water that can be delivered to crops as well as left in streams for fish and other aquatic species.
- Pressurized water delivered through pipes allows irrigators to remove pumps, saving energy and related costs.
- If there is excess water pressure in the delivery system, an irrigation district or individual irrigator may consider adding hydropower generation technology. Revenue from power sales can be used to finance additional infrastructure upgrades, canal projects and stabilize water rates for irrigation district patrons.
- Pressurized pipes also reduce time and money needed to maintain and operate aging infrastructure and reduce the risk of canal bank blowouts and other liabilities associated with open ditches.

Together these changes create agricultural security, build drought resilience and strengthen rural economies.



To learn about Energy Trust assistance for small hydropower projects and irrigation modernization efforts, visit [www.energytrust.org](http://www.energytrust.org) or call **503.459.4071**.



# IRRIGATION DISTRICT GROWS THE FLOW

## THREE SISTERS IRRIGATION DISTRICT'S NEW HYDROPOWER PROJECT IMPROVES WATER MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY

Flowing water is a natural energy resource that some irrigation districts are capturing to generate renewable hydropower along with other agricultural, environmental and economic benefits. Energy Trust of Oregon provides resources and cash incentives to help districts and property owners throughout Oregon assess, finance and install small-scale hydropower generation systems.

Many irrigation districts in the state operate aging open canal systems. While districts repair and maintain them, and seek out funding to replace what they can, upgrading these systems is complex and expensive. Three Sisters Irrigation District in central Oregon formed collaborative partnerships to help plan, finance and complete many successful projects that have transformed its leaky, open canal systems to efficient pressurized pipes.

### More water for farms and fish

For more than a decade, Three Sisters has teamed up with government and conservation organizations to invest in irrigation modernization improvements that increase water delivery to farms and ranches, improve stream flow, help restore fish habitat, save energy and produce hydropower.

Working in several project phases, the district has:

- Piped 50 of its 63 miles of open canals, eliminating seepage and evaporation.
- Delivered pressurized water to 75 farms (served by Central Electric Cooperative), eliminating irrigation pumps and saving about 5 million kilowatt hours of electricity annually.
- Increased water delivery to farms by 25 percent.
- Permanently conserved more than 24 cubic feet per second of in-stream water flow in Whyhuchus Creek, the district's water source.
- Restored stream channels to improve habitat.
- Provided upstream and downstream fish passage and installed a Farmers Screen™ to keep fish out of irrigation water.

With key piping phases complete, the district embarked on the Main Canal Pipeline Project, which included installing a \$2.3 million, 700-kilowatt hydroelectric plant at the end of the main pipeline on the Watson Reservoir property. The plant generates about 3.1 million kilowatt hours of electricity annually, enough to power 275 average Oregon homes a year. Operational since 2014, the hydroelectric plant produces revenue from power sales that helps pay back \$2.3 million in loans from Department of Environmental Quality to finance an earlier piping project.



*Marc Thalacker, district manager, stands in front of the new Farmers Screen, a fish screen with no moving parts and no power required. The new screen lowers operations and maintenance costs for the district while enabling upstream and downstream fish passage at their diversion.*



**Pressurized water is its own economic generator. Farmers can remove their pumps and save on energy costs. And with a more secure water supply, they are expanding the variety of their crops, which is a boon for the whole supply chain in our community.**

Marc Thalacker, district manager  
Three Sisters Irrigation District



Three Sisters was resourceful and innovative in securing funding and approvals for the hydropower project. The district used the Hydroelectric Permitting and Interconnection Guidebooks produced by Energy Trust to streamline the permitting process. District staff, who honed skills piping earlier projects, completed much of the construction and performed most of the district's own maintenance, saving millions on project and operations costs. "We may be a little Wild West in our approach," said Marc Thalacker, district manager, "but we produce impressive results with our talented crew." Three Sisters has a plan to pipe and pressurize the entire district by 2020.

### Partners in project planning and finance

Three Sisters collaborated with government, tribal and nonprofit organizations to navigate the complexities of planning, permitting and securing grants and loans for all of its irrigation infrastructure projects over the last decade. Energy Trust supplied \$40,000 in Project Development Assistance for engineering, design and interconnection services. The Deschutes River Conservancy helped the district secure grants for the hydropower project through the Pelton Fund.

A \$1 million incentive from Energy Trust helped pay for the hydroelectric plant. This had the added benefit of helping secure a \$1 million grant from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART program, of which \$719,000 helped fund the hydro facility. "Energy Trust has been a major partner in developing a means to pay for conservation and making renewable energy available in Oregon," said Thalacker. "The incentive was an essential piece in our financing structure."

### Water for the win

Overall, the district's piping and restoration work has conserved 28.2 cubic feet per second of water, enough to fill 24 Olympic-size swimming pools each day during the irrigation season, from April to September. This is a win for agriculture, the local economy and wildlife. More flow in the stream reduces water temperature, improving conditions for steelhead, trout and other native species.

"Whychus Creek was once home to about 40 percent of the potential steelhead production in the upper Deschutes Basin," explained Zachary Tillman, conserved water manager for the Deschutes River Conservancy. "Three Sisters Irrigation District has been a fantastic partner, taking action to secure millions in public funding for projects and restoring water into a creek that was dry in 2000. The first reintroduced adult steelhead returned to the creek in 2012."

From an economic perspective, irrigation system improvements have created construction jobs, boosted crop variety and output, and increased opportunities for renewable energy production. These benefits are a result of a new collaborative approach to managing water. By engaging irrigation districts in early planning for irrigation modernization projects, Energy Trust is opening up long-term opportunities for individual districts and many other organizations to invest in energy and water conservation.



*Pressurized water delivery means this irrigation district patron no longer needs to pump water out of a canal. In fact, the excess pressure at this site may be able to support a small hydro turbine in the future.*

### Three Sisters Irrigation District Irrigation System Modernization Funding Partners

Three Sisters has spent more than \$26 million on irrigation modernization projects, leveraging more than \$15 million in grants from the following funders:

- \$4.11 million from Bureau of Reclamation
- \$3 million from Deschutes River Conservancy
- \$2.77 million from Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- \$2.48 million from Pelton Fund
- \$1.04 million from Energy Trust of Oregon
- \$979,000 from National Resources Conservation Service
- \$263,000 from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- \$85,000 from National Forest Foundation
- \$50,000 from The Nature Conservancy
- \$50,000 from Oregon Conservation Strategy
- \$46,000 from Oregon Governor's Fund

### THREE SISTERS IRRIGATION DISTRICT MAIN CANAL PIPELINE HYDROPOWER PROJECT

#### Overview

- Single 700-kW turbine
- 3.1 million kWh annual generation
- Installed in 2014

#### Benefits

- Renewable energy production
- Revenue helps pay down loan debt and finance additional projects

#### Financial Analysis

- \$2.3 million project cost
- \$1.04 million cash incentive from Energy Trust
- \$719,000 grant from the Bureau of Reclamation
- \$600,000 cash from Three Sisters Irrigation District



## Title Transfer

In 2016, Reclamation encouraged the Tualatin Project repayment partners to reconsider the feasibility of transferring the Tualatin Project major works (Scoggins Dam, Hagg Lake and associated lands) from federal to local ownership. A previous Title Transfer assessment was completed in 2009, but set aside until the costs of the federal seismic obligations were more fully understood. The Partners are prepared to re-examine Title Transfer if there are cost and project delivery benefits to be accrued through local ownership and management of the facilities.



## Washington County, Oregon

With a population of more than 575,000, Washington County is the second-fastest growing county in Oregon, and the economic engine of the state—home to Intel, Nike, SolarWorld, Genetech and a vibrant agricultural economy. Safe, secure and reliable water resources are central to the state and region's economic success and livability. The number of jobs on the westside has more than doubled in the last 20 years, reaching over 285,000. The westside has outpaced the rest of the Portland metro region in economic development and is a net exporter of earnings to the state.

*"Scoggins Dam is a regional asset, and we consider this project critical for meeting water demands in our community, now and for the future."*

Mayor Steve Callaway,  
City of Hillsboro

## Contacts

### Washington County

155 N. First Avenue, Room 300  
Hillsboro, Oregon 97124  
503.846.8681  
Fax: 503.846.4545

*Andy Duyck, Chair*  
Washington County Board  
of Commissioners and  
Clean Water Services  
Board of Directors

### Washington, D.C. Contact

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### Clean Water Services

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vanderplaatt@cleanwaterservices.org

*Mark Jockers*  
Government & Public Affairs Manager  
503.681.4450  
jockersm@cleanwaterservices.org

### Watershed Project Partners

City of Beaverton

*Denny Doyle, Mayor* 503.526.2497

City of Forest Grove

*Pete Truax, Mayor* 503.359.3200

City of Hillsboro

*Steve Callaway, Mayor* 503.681.6219

City of Tigard

*John L. Cook, Mayor* 503.639.4171

City of Tualatin

*Lou Ogden, Mayor* 503.692.2000

Clean Water Services

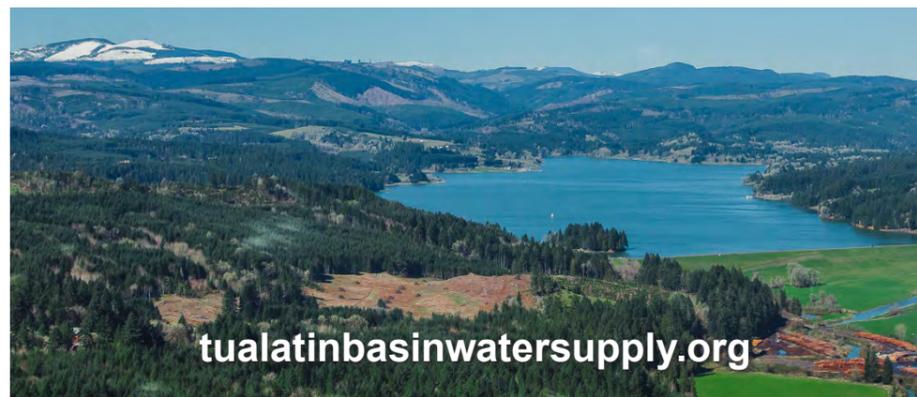
*Andy Duyck, Chair* 503.846.8681

Tualatin Valley Irrigation District

*Jim Love, Chair* 503.357.3118

Bureau of Reclamation

*Mike Relf*  
Pacific Northwest Regional  
Office Acting Manager 208.378.5175



[tualatinbasinwatersupply.org](http://tualatinbasinwatersupply.org)

*"Diversified water sources are vital to ensure a safe, secure and sustainable water supply for the entire region."*

Mayor Denny Doyle,  
City of Beaverton



# Tualatin Basin

WATER SUPPLY PROJECT



Scoggins Dam/  
Hagg Lake

Sustaining Oregon's  
Economy, Watershed  
and Community



Washington County, Oregon

## Leveraging Our Shared Investments for Public Safety and Water Security

Protecting public safety and meeting the region's future water needs are central themes of the Tualatin Basin Water Supply Project. Clean Water Services and the Tualatin Project repayment contractors are working closely with Bureau of Reclamation to ensure dam safety modifications necessary to protect against a major earthquake are promptly addressed while also meeting the long-term municipal, agricultural and environmental water needs of our region.



The sustained and recurring droughts in Oregon and other western states underscore the need to address not only the threat of earthquakes but also the threat of water shortages. The Consolidated Appropriations Action, 2016 (P.L. 114-113) granted Reclamation statutory authority allowing additional benefits, including conservation storage, to be conducted concurrent with dam safety improvements for new or supplementary works. The integration of Scoggins Dam safety modifications and increased storage funded by local beneficiaries will enable federal, state and local agencies to leverage their shared investments in order to protect public safety, secure the region's primary water supply and meet the long-term needs of our community.



## Water is Key to Long-term Regional Vitality

As the economic engine of Oregon, the businesses, farmers and residents of Washington County need dependable, safe and secure fresh water resources to ensure the long-term economic health and livability of our region. Major employers reasonably expect Federal and local authorities to diligently pursue the dam repairs and supply expansion necessary to protect public safety and secure our region's primary source of water.

Concurrent with the Tualatin Basin Water Supply Partners' efforts to secure Scoggins Dam, major municipal water suppliers are planning to expand the Willamette River Treatment Plant to meet increasing community water needs. Together these projects will help secure our future.

*"The region's future is tied to our ability to plan for and deliver fresh, clean water to every home, farm and business while restoring flow to the river."*

Chair Andy Duyck,  
Washington County Commission



## Joint Project Examines Two Locations for Safety Improvements and Water Supply

Reclamation and CWS are working together under the Joint Project authority to simultaneously, consider design concepts to address dam safety and meet water needs. In 2017, Reclamation and CWS are beginning the engineering and environmental review of several options at two primary locations:

- Strengthen the existing dam: Reclamation is leading the engineering and environmental review of strengthening and raising Scoggins Dam in its current location.
- Construct a new downstream dam: CWS is coordinating the engineering and environmental review of the proposed new downstream concrete dam.

The goal of evaluating several concepts is to be sure that all cost-effective approaches have been explored before moving on to more detailed assessments. A downstream replacement structure could significantly reduce project costs for both the federal government and local stakeholders.

## A Shared Commitment to Safe, Secure, Reliable Water Supplies

Federal authorization for the TBWSP was secured in the Energy and Water Development Act, 2004 (P.L. 108-136). Congress has provided \$1.46 million of the authorized \$2.9 million for the federal share of the study. In order to keep the project moving forward, the Partners advance funded the balance of the federal share (\$1.44 million) and invested more than \$15 million to complete the Scoggins Dam Raise Appraisal Study and the environmental review.

The Partners are prepared to move forward on the dam safety and water supply joint project. Under the Contributed Funds Act, Clean Water Services has the resources prepared to:

- Expedite the feasibility and environmental review process;
- Coordinate stakeholder engagement and the public review process;
- Fund the additional benefits analysis, design and construction concurrent with the dam safety improvements.



## Smart Investments Now Will Benefit Entire Region for Generations

The Tualatin Basin Water Supply Project is an investment in the health and sustainability of the region's watershed, economy and community. Direct benefits of the project include:



### Economic Development

Washington County is the economic engine of the state, generating more state revenue than is returned to the area. A reliable, secure and cost-effective water supply is essential to the continued economic health of the region.



### Watershed Health

Sustaining the overall health of the Tualatin River watershed is a primary goal of local water resource agencies. Adequate instream flow is a major factor in maintaining water quality and fish habitat. Two fish species in the Tualatin River are listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act. Restoration of fish habitat will require more water.



### Community Livability

Quality of life is directly related to the region's economy and sustainability. Residents of Washington County value the beauty, quality and recreational opportunities afforded by the area's natural environment. The region must continue to maintain and enhance a distinctive quality of life to attract talented workers.

## Other Project Benefits

Henry Hagg Lake, formed by Scoggins Dam, is a critical component of the region's long-term water supply and a major regional asset. Project benefits of a secure and expanded facility include:

- Public safety and water security
- Agricultural irrigation: Irrigates 17,000 acres of the state's most productive farmland, producing more than 50 different crops
- Water conservation and supply: Provides drinking water for 400,000 people
- Jobs and economy: Supports 283,000 jobs at more than 18,300 businesses in Washington County including Intel, Genentech, SolarWorld and Nike
- Water quality and habitat restoration: Restores flow to the Tualatin River providing critical habitat to fish and wildlife
- Flood management
- Recreation: More than 900,000 visitor days annually





# East Valley Water District: Water Supply Development Project

Marion County, Oregon

East Valley Water District (District) was founded to supply irrigation water to its members' lands in Marion and Clackamas Counties. The District covers over 36,000 acres of high value agricultural land extending from north of Silverton to south of Woodburn and Mollala; between the Pudding River on the west and Cascade Mountain foothills on the east.



## OVERVIEW:



Over three square miles of high value agricultural land is at risk without the development of a safe, sustainable water supply development project.



The District studied over 75 potential sites for the Project. A surface water storage facility on Drift Creek is the most ecologically, socially & economically viable solution.



Project allows the District to provide a sustainable water supply for over 36,000 high value agricultural acres.



Committed to using best available data and science for project planning and implementation.



## OPPORTUNITIES:

- Strategic funding acquisition support
- Additional political and industry support



## CONTACT:

Dave Bielenberg - Chair, Board of Directors  
P.O. Box 1046  
Mt. Angel, Oregon 97362  
Dave.Bielenberg@chsinc.com  
www.eastvalleywd.com

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The District's members are currently served by a combination of individual farm wells and direct withdrawals from local surface waters; both sources are limited and extremely constrained. Over 26,000 acres of the District's service area lie within two Groundwater Limited Areas (GLAs), Mt Angel and Glad Tidings. GLAs are protected from water withdrawals by the Oregon Water Resources Department. Nearly three square miles of high-value irrigated agriculture are at risk without the development of a safe, sustainable water supply development project.

East Valley Water District must develop a supplemental water supply source to provide irrigation water to its members to satisfy current and future demands. The District has studied water needs and alternative sources for over twenty years. Extensive studies determined a surface water storage facility on Drift Creek six miles southeast of Silverton, Oregon is the most viable option to provide a safe, sustainable and economical supply of water to East Valley Water District.

The District studied over 75 potential sites for the project. Stringent screening criteria including evaluation of stream flows, environmental conditions, geological considerations and fault lines deemed Drift Creek as the most viable location for the reservoir. (See Project Map on other side.)

The water supply would provide a sustainable supplemental water supply source to the District's farmers now and into the future. These farmers contribute to the high-value agricultural industry in Marion and Clackamas Counties.

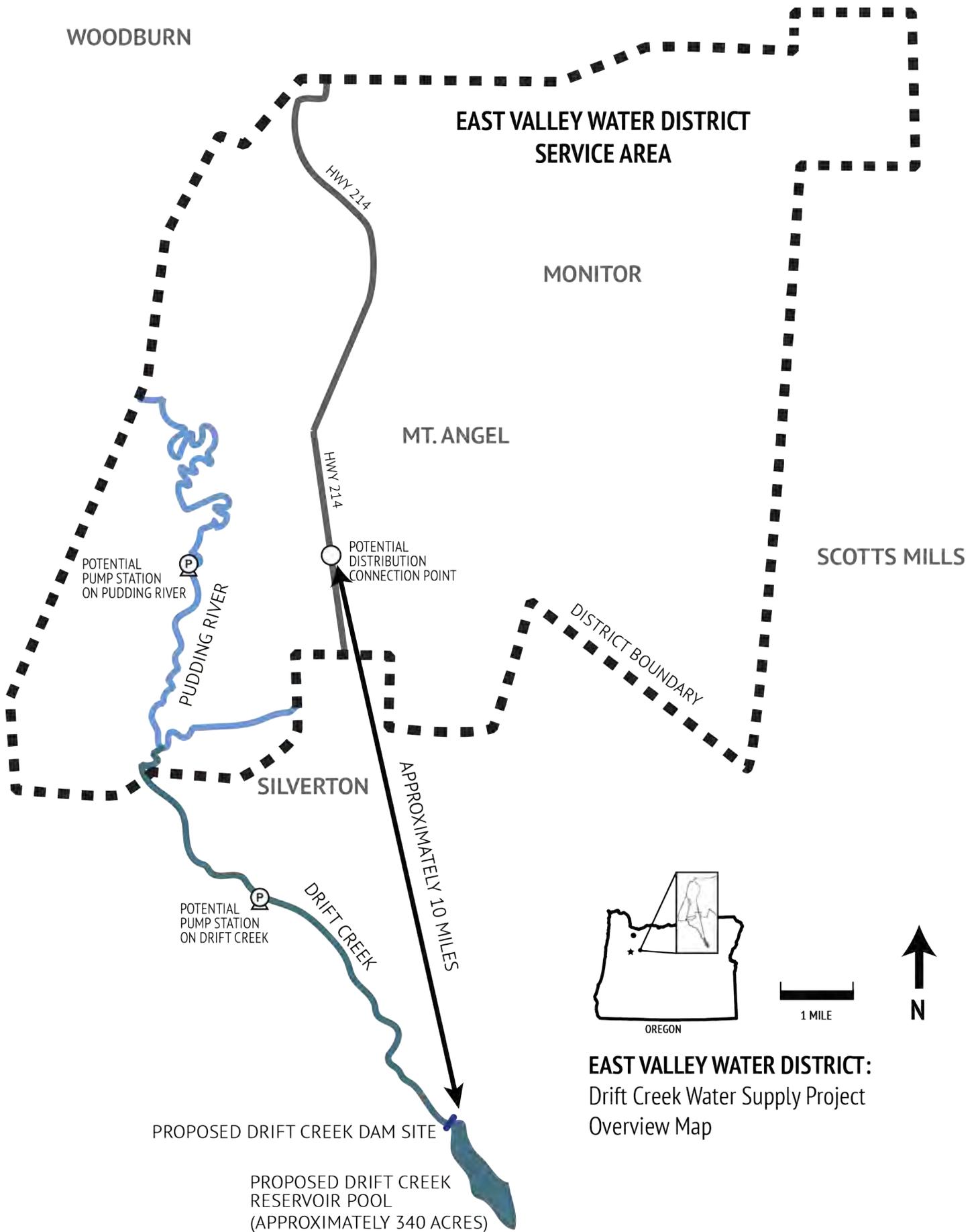
The reservoir has potential to provide benefits beyond a sustainable water supply for District members. Cool water from the base of the reservoir will provide better conditions for fish and wildlife; and potentially mitigate temperature impacts due to climate change. The reservoir will relieve pressure on the groundwater limited areas and over-appropriated surface water sources in the basin. The project also has potential to maintain and create new jobs in the Willamette Valley.

In March 2017, the District purchased 105 acres of land within the reservoir footprint; a major investment for the District and its membership. The property will eventually hold the proposed earthen dam and represents approximately 17% of the reservoir footprint. The property was purchased through an increase in member charges; approved through a unanimous vote of the membership - further demonstrating the commitment of the District to fund and complete this project.

## FUNDING STATUS AND NEED

The District has invested over \$1 million in studies and is now in the process of actively acquiring permits from federal and state agencies to develop the reservoir. This project is a prime example of water supply development for efficient irrigated agriculture that provides social, economic and environmental benefit. Federal and state funding support will be needed to construct and implement this project; and the District urges support infrastructure and water resources funding packages that could aid in this project.

# East Valley Water District Water Supply Development Project Map



**EAST VALLEY WATER DISTRICT:**  
Drift Creek Water Supply Project  
Overview Map



## Active PL 83-566 Funded Conservation Projects

	PROJECT	TOTAL COST	PL 83-566 FUNDS	APPROXIMATE PIPE	WATER SAVED	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
CENTRAL OREGON	Smith Rock & King Way	\$40M	\$17.26M	37,200 ft	31 cfs	March 2022
SWALLEY	Rogers & Rogers Sub	\$2.5M	\$1.89M	16,000 ft	2.3 cfs	March 2019
TUMALO	Tumalo Feed Canal VB	\$9.2M	\$4.84M	14,560 ft	8.35 cfs	March 2019

*These projects enable Central Oregon Irrigation District, Swalley Irrigation District, and Tumalo Irrigation District to convert open irrigation canals to piped and pressurized systems, improving the efficiency of each district for the benefit of local farmers, ranchers, homeowners, and the environment. Transitioning to underground piped systems also allows for water conservation of up to 20% through on-farm efficiencies. On-farm efficiencies are defined as improvements past the point of delivery - including private lateral and on-farm application methods. These projects are critical to conserving and improving the Deschutes River, Little Deschutes River, Tumalo Creek, Crescent Lake, and Crescent Creek, as well as restoring and protecting habitat for Oregon spotted frog, steelhead trout and Chinook salmon.*

**TO LEARN  
MORE**

FCA's Irrigation Modernization Program works with irrigation districts to develop and implement modernization strategies.  
IRRIGATIONMODERNIZATION.FCASOLUTIONS.ORG 541.716.6085 • info@fcasolutions.org

# Sutherlin Water Control District PL 566 Dams Plat 1 Reservoir and Cooper Creek Reservoir

## Plat 1 Reservoir



Minimum Pool: 75 Acre Feet

Normal Irrigation  
Pool: 1330 Acre Feet

Crest of Emergency  
Spillway: 2260 Acre Feet

Length of  
Dam: 1240 Acre Feet

Height of Dam: 33 Feet

Drainage  
Area: 9.0 Square miles

Plat I Reservoir is located 1.5 miles east of the City of Sutherlin. The primary purposes of this reservoir are flood control, irrigation and recreation. Plat I Reservoir is drained to minimum pool from October 15th to February 1st, allowing storage space for the flood water for short periods of time and release of that water slowly over time, to prevent the City of Sutherlin from flooding. During spring and summer, Plat I Reservoir is filled to the irrigation pool. The Irrigation water is delivered to approximately 65 patrons thru 18,000 feet of buried pipeline, irrigating approximately 600 acres of hay, blueberries, orchards, gardens and pasture.

Cooper Creek Reservoir is located 2.5 miles east of the City of Sutherlin. The primary purposes of this reservoir are flood control, municipal and industrial water supply, and recreation. Cooper Creek Reservoir provides additional flood control for the City of Sutherlin. It is drawn down to approximately 2-3 feet below normal pool during the winter months to provide an additional 400-500 acre feet storage capacity for flood events. The reservoir supplies the City of Sutherlin with 500 acre feet of water for its municipal and industrial water needs. The city has just completed construction of a new 7.9 million dollar water treatment plant.

## Cooper Creek Reservoir

Height: 88 Feet

Length: 500 Feet

Normal Pool  
Capacity: 3900 Acre Feet

Additional Flood  
Capacity 930 Acre Feet

Total  
Capacity: 4830 Acre Feet

Drainage  
Area: 4.4 Square miles

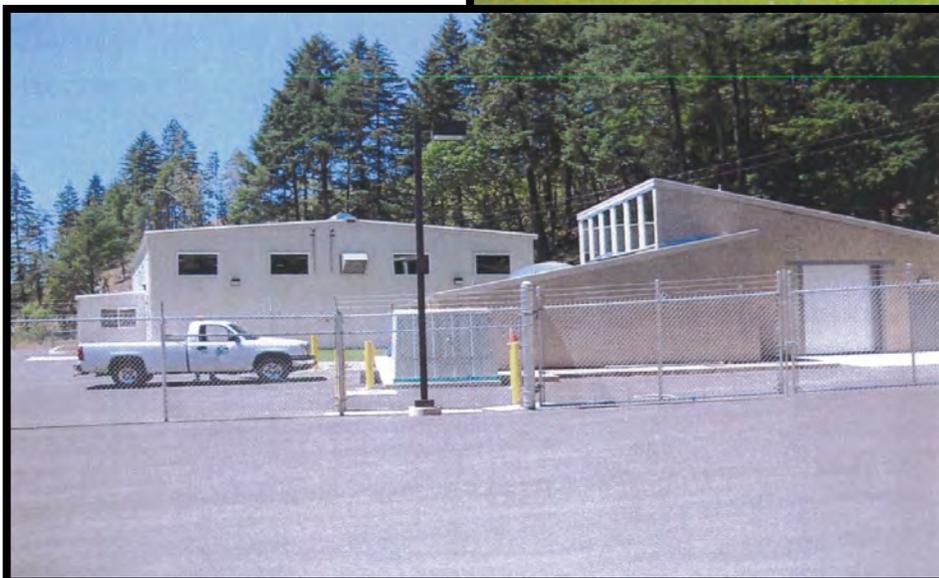


## NRCS Funding for PL-566 Dams

SWCD has two dams built under PL-566 that are reaching 50 years old and while they were built to seismic standards 50 years ago, they do not meet today's seismic standards. To date, SWCD has been authorized to receive funding for planning, design and construction of one of their dams and planning and design on the other. However, SWCD will still need considerable funding dollars to complete construction on the second dam.

SWCD's dams provide multi-purpose storage for the community; they provide flood control, irrigation water, municipal water and recreation. The city of Sutherlin recently invested approximately \$8 million in a water treatment facility after receiving a 30 year note from USDA. Additionally, it is important to note that even a small earthquake has the potential to severely damage the dams and cause intensive flooding and damage in the surrounding area.

Once the planning and design study is complete, SWCD will finally have a realistic idea of what the costs will be to bring the dams up to seismic standards and add another 50-100 years of usable life to them. Today, SWCD believes the total cost will be over \$10 million to complete upgrading both dams to current seismic standards.





# Rogue River Valley Irrigation District *Bradshaw Drop Piping Project*

The Little Butte Creek Watershed is considered one of the prime spawning tributaries for salmoids, especially Coho. In fact, outside the Columbia River Basin, it is believed to have the highest spawning returns of any tributary. However, Little Butte Creek and its tributary, Antelope Creek, are also water quality limited for a variety of factors that negatively impact fish and wildlife. These factors include sedimentation, bacteria and temperature.

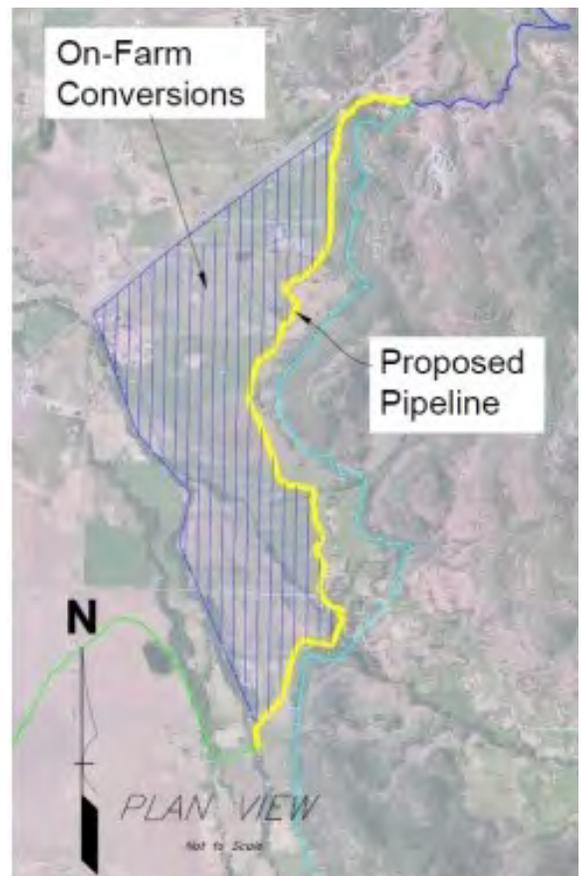
The Rogue River Valley Irrigation District (RRVID) and Medford Irrigation District divert water from Little Butte Creek through a shared canal that then splits at the top of what is known as Bradshaw Drop. The area from Bradshaw Drop to Antelope Creek, which is approximately 3.3 miles and is completely within RRVID’s jurisdiction, is known to have substantial leakage. RRVID has collaborated with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) to leave 7 CFS of water in Little Butte Creek during the month of June in median water years in order to help Coho, but must pipe this stretch of canal to achieve sufficient water savings to leave that water instream.

RRVID has partnered with the Farmer’s Conservation Alliance (FCA) to develop a comprehensive assessment and modernization strategy for the entire irrigation district. Funding

Proposed Project Timeline	
Fall 2018	Begin installation of main pipeline
Fall 2019	Begin on-farm conversions
Date TBD	Potential hydro-power generation

to develop this strategy is provided through the Oregon Energy Trust. The strategy is expected to be completed by March 2018 and will provide a roadmap for the district, baseline engineering data and a funding strategy.

Several other substantial related efforts are occurring in this watershed and in the greater Rogue Basin. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), in partnership with the Jackson Soil & Water Conservation District (JSWCD) wrote a Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS) to specifically impact agricultural-related water quality in



Estimated Budget	
Staff Time and Equipment	\$112,819
Engineering and Construction	\$3,272,880
Supplies	\$2,306,666
Permits and Compliance	\$192,825
Administrative	\$40,622
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,925,813</b>

the Little Butte Creek Watershed; their efforts have focused on flood to sprinkler conversion to eliminate polluted tailwater from returning to streams. This program is in its fifth year and has been successful in achieving its goal. In addition, JSWCD declared the Little Butte Creek Watershed its Oregon Department of Agriculture Focus Area, which has concentrated staff resources and money in that area for a variety of projects that improve soil and water resources. JSWCD has committed to continuing its focus in this area until 2022. The effort of these two programs and the associated monitoring has shown great reduction in surface water pollution.

On a larger basin scale, the Water for Irrigation, Streams and Economy (WISE) is moving forward with the ambitious goal of eventually piping all the irrigation canals within the basin in order to conserve water, protect habitat, improve water quality and increase economic opportunities along with a host of other goals. This project is within the WISE boundaries, and has been designated by the WISE board as a demonstration project showing how the overall WISE project can occur and its benefits.

The Bradshaw Drop piping project, which extends from the top of Bradshaw Drop to the siphon at Antelope Creek, will not only eliminate leakage but put water back instream. The piping of this section will also provide pressurized water to RRVID's patrons within this stretch, many of whom have been unable to convert to sprinkler irrigation because of the cost of bringing electricity to the site. The pressurized water creates a variety of flood to sprinkler irrigation conversion opportunities, which previous work in the watershed has shown has a substantial effect on water quality in nearby streams and rivers.

In addition, the piping project allows the district to pursue hydroelectric energy generation, which may be sold to nearby patrons or put back on the grid. This portion of the project is still being investigated.

Confirmed Funding	
BOR (USFW)	\$3,378,976
Gov. Regional Infrastructure Fund	\$216,454
BOR WaterSMART Grant	\$290,000
RRVID In-Kind	\$120,492
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,005,922</b>
<i>Current Shortfall</i>	<i>\$1,919,891</i>
Pending Funding	
State Lottery Bond	\$1,895,000
OWEB	\$150,000



**Rogue River Valley Irrigation District**  
 3139 Merriman Road, Medford, OR 97501  
 541-773-6127 rrvid@rrvid.org

# WHAT'S AT RISK

THE RISK OF FLOODING ON THE LOWER COLUMBIA RIVER IS REAL



## Jobs & Economy



**\$16 billion**  
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY  
Annually



**50%**  
Region's manufacturing  
& warehouse jobs



**18.4 million**  
PASSENGERS  
Annually at PDX



**3** INTERSTATES  
**2** MAX LINES  
**2** RAILROADS  
**2** AIRPORTS



**\$7.3 billion**  
PROPERTY VALUE

## Drinking Water



**#2** LARGEST SOURCE  
OF DRINKING  
WATER IN OREGON  
#1- Bull Run Reservoir

## Nature & Habitat



Western Painted Turtle  
Western Pond Turtle  
Beaver



**175** SPECIES  
Birds in the watershed



**1.4 million**  
TREES AND SHRUBS  
Planted along entire  
slough by City of  
Portland and Partners

## Recreation & Culture



OVER  
**2,000** ACRES  
Parks, open spaces, and  
recreational areas



**17** MILES  
Marine Drive  
multi-use  
path



**7,500**  
Residents served



**15** MILES  
Water trails for  
canoes and kayaks



Ikea  
Walmart  
Target  
Lowes  
HomeDepot

# LEVEE READY COLUMBIA

Levee Ready Columbia is a partnership of over 20 organizations committed to a collaborative and pro-active approach to flood risk reduction. We are working to ensure that the levee system near the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette Rivers meets federal standards. Levee Ready Columbia advances the safety and stability of existing neighborhoods and economic assets while seeking opportunities to capture other community or environmental benefits.

**Levee Ready Columbia seeks to be selected for a US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) General Investigation New Start Feasibility Study in FY17 Work Plan.** We are confident that such a study will determine that the Columbia Corridor levee system is of national significance, protecting and enabling vital commercial, environmental, and life safety interests.



## What is at stake

Our partnership is working to reduce the risk of flooding for an area that is critical to the regional and statewide economy, environment, and quality of life.

- **Portland International Airport**—Serves 13 million passengers annually, over **90% of all passenger and air cargo** in the Portland metro area, including regional staples like **micro-chips, bikes, beer, and coffee**.
- **The Port of Portland** manages **\$1.6 billion** in marine, aviation, and real estate assets that generate nearly **\$250 million** of annual revenue.
- The 142nd Fighter Wing of the **Air National Guard**
- Three major **interstates** and two freight **railroads**
- **The Columbia South Shore Well Field**. Oregon's second largest source of **drinking water** serving 800,000
- **Middle income jobs** adjacent to portions of **four cities**, three identified as economically distressed
- Over **17% of the future industrial growth capacity** in the region
- **\$16 billion** in annual economic activity, **\$5.5 billion** in property value, and **10% of the jobs** in Multnomah County
- Thousands of **homes, recreational facilities, wetlands,** and wildlife **habitat**

All of these assets lie in a **12,000 acre area** near the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette Rivers. **The Columbia River is the largest river west of the Continental Divide** with a recent history of dramatic flood events. Levee Ready Columbia works under the assumption that **our region will experience another flood**, the only question when.

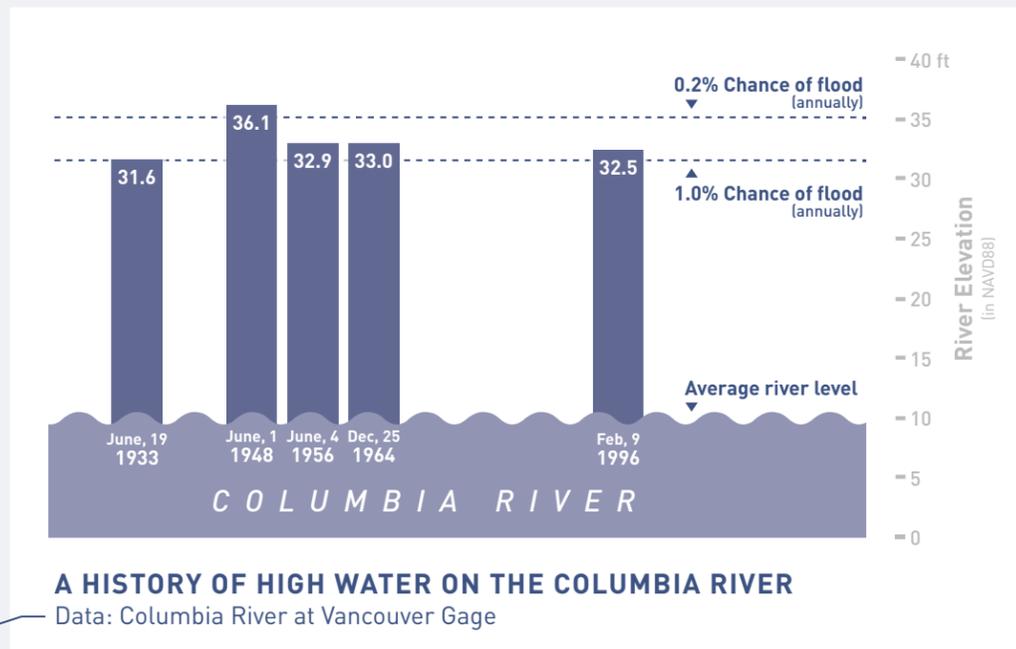
## Levee Ready Columbia Projects

### FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)

**Levee Ready Columbia is working together to ensure the levee system is certified and accredited.** Currently, the system is fully accredited by FEMA. Certification expired in PEN 1 and PEN 2 in 2013 and will expire in MCDD and SDIC by 2017, putting accreditation—and thus the economic future of the region—at risk.

### US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (CORPS)

**Levee Ready Columbia works to keep the Districts active in the Rehabilitation and Inspection Program.** The Districts are currently active in the Corps Rehabilitation and Inspection Program. However, recent inspections of the levees highlighted areas of concern. **Failure to maintain the levees to Corps' standards puts the region, its residents, and the economy at risk.** of losing federal assistance during and after high water events. This may lead to higher costs for flood management in the future.

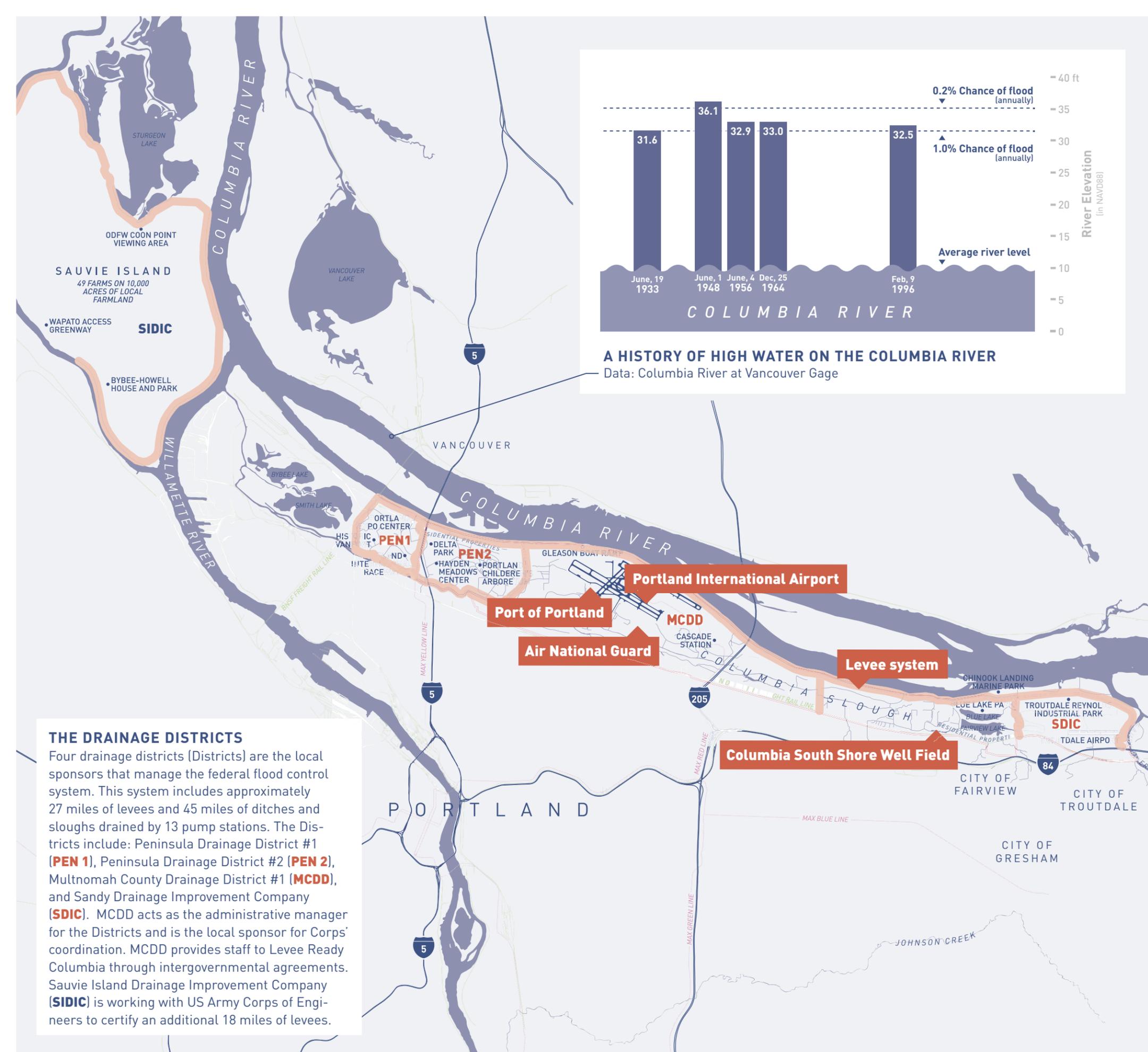


**A HISTORY OF HIGH WATER ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER**

Data: Columbia River at Vancouver Gage

### THE DRAINAGE DISTRICTS

Four drainage districts (Districts) are the local sponsors that manage the federal flood control system. This system includes approximately 27 miles of levees and 45 miles of ditches and sloughs drained by 13 pump stations. The Districts include: Peninsula Drainage District #1 (**PEN 1**), Peninsula Drainage District #2 (**PEN 2**), Multnomah County Drainage District #1 (**MCDD**), and Sandy Drainage Improvement Company (**SDIC**). MCDD acts as the administrative manager for the Districts and is the local sponsor for Corps' coordination. MCDD provides staff to Levee Ready Columbia through intergovernmental agreements. Sauvie Island Drainage Improvement Company (**SDIC**) is working with US Army Corps of Engineers to certify an additional 18 miles of levees.



## Request for support

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Levee Ready Columbia was designated an Oregon Solutions project of the governor's office. It exemplifies the kind of **local, regional, and state partnership** that sets the stage for federal support. Through an **inclusive, collaborative, and transparent** partnership, Levee Ready Columbia is working to **identify our community's diverse needs** and assets, **quantify the risk** of flooding, and **evaluate appropriate methods for reducing future flood risk** and responding to high water events.

### **General Investigations—New Start—Corps FY17 Work Plan**

In the summer of 2015 the Portland Metropolitan Levee System Project received a favorable determination from the Corps through a Section 216 report. This designation makes the project eligible to be listed as a new start study in the Corps FY17 work plan. The annual Corps work plan is highly competitive process with only a handful of new start studies awarded nationwide each year. **The Districts' seek support in the Corps FY17 work plan process to receive a new starts designation and to ensure that Congress continues to provide the Corps the authority to designate new studies.** This study would determine the appropriate level of protection for a consolidated levee system in the Columbia Corridor.

Levee Ready Columbia partners, with your assistance and support, have forged a lasting and constructive relationship with the Corps. Our collective efforts will continue to gain momentum, resulting in levee infrastructure that is resilient and effective in reducing flood risks that threaten industrial, commercial, residential, and community assets in the Portland region. **We look forward to working and partnering with you in the future to achieve this goal.**

### **Contact Information**

Multnomah County Drainage District No. 1  
Reed Wagner, Executive Director  
1880 NE Elrod Drive  
Portland, OR 97211  
503.281.5675  
[www.mcdd.org](http://www.mcdd.org)

## **OUR PARTNERSHIP**

### **Community, Business, and Environmental Groups**

East Columbia Neighborhood Association  
Bridgeton Neighborhood Association  
Columbia Corridor Association  
Audubon Society  
Columbia Slough Watershed Council  
Jubitz Truck Stop

### **Local Government**

City of Portland

- Mayor's Office
- Bureau of Environmental Services
- Bureau of Parks and Recreation
- Water Bureau
- Bureau of Transportation

City of Gresham

City of Fairview

City of Troutdale

Special Districts

- Peninsula Drainage District #1
- Peninsula Drainage District #2
- Multnomah County Drainage District #1
- Sandy Drainage Improvement Company
- Sauvie Island Drainage Improvement Company

### **Regional, State and Federal Government**

Multnomah County

Metro

Port of Portland

Federal Emergency Management Agency

US Army Corps of Engineers

State of Oregon

- Office of the Governor
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
- Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development