



# Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

## Water Resources Department

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### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** The Water Resources Commission

**FROM:** Phillip C. Ward, Director

**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item A, August 2, 2012  
Water Resources Work Session

#### **Consideration for Adoption: Integrated Water Resources Strategy**

#### **I. Introduction**

During this agenda item, Commission members will consider the Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) for adoption. Formally begun in 2009, the IWRS is an inter-agency effort launched by the Oregon Legislature to better understand and to meet Oregon's water needs.

These efforts have included significant input from the public and from stakeholders. Project staff will provide a review of this three-year effort and will highlight some of the key components of the IWRS.

Topics to be covered include:

- Retrospective of the process
- Presentation of the June 2012 IWRS
- Letters of support from state and federal partners
- Next steps (reserved until Agenda Item B)
- Consideration for adoption

Staff recommends that the Commission reserve time for observations from the public and Commission discussion. This is an action item, in which the Water Resources Commission will be asked to consider the Integrated Water Resources Strategy for adoption.

#### **II. Retrospective of the Process**

Members of the Water Resources Commission have been preparing for the adoption of a state water strategy since 2008, when Commissioners volunteered to sketch out issue papers on a number of water-related topics, to demonstrate the need for strategic thinking in Oregon on water issues.

With resources and direction provided by the Oregon Legislature in 2009, the state agencies, led by the Oregon Water Resources Department, began formal efforts to develop such a Strategy.

<p>Phase I: Setting the Stage (2009)</p>	<p>Phase II: Identifying Water Resource Needs (Spring &amp; Summer 2010)</p>	<p>Phase III: Developing Recommended Actions (2010-2011)</p>	<p>Phase IV: Producing Oregon's 1st Integrated Water Resources Strategy (2012)</p>	<p>Phase V: Implementation and Evaluation (2012-17)</p>
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*Phase I: Setting the Stage.* This Phase, which extended through December 2009, included fundamental activities that continued to be built upon throughout the entire process. This phase involved the development of issue papers, formulation of IWRS objectives, design of the overall process, and organization of a Project Team and three Advisory Groups.

*Phase II: Identifying Water Resource Needs.* This phase ran from January through August 2010 and focused heavily on public input, using a series of 11 Open Houses throughout Oregon and numerous stakeholder and partner meetings, to identify and describe critical issues and potential solutions.

*Phase III: Developing Recommended Actions.* During Phase III, the Oregon Water Resources Department, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Oregon Department of Agriculture provided a progress report to the 76th Legislative Assembly in February 2011. During this Phase, the Project Team also developed draft Recommended Actions with the help of the advisory groups and public comment.

In June 2011 the Project Team released a document describing an initial set of draft recommended actions designed to address the most critical water-related challenges facing Oregon's communities. The document consisted of a series of 12 bulletins that included brief background information and a list of online resources. The Project Team accepted comments on the bulletins through August 31, 2011.

During Fall 2011, the advisory groups continued to work, based in part on public comments received, on identifying and scoping potential recommended actions to address the critical issues. The Project Team produced a December 2011 Discussion Draft for public review and comment.

*Phase IV: Producing Oregon's First Integrated Water Resources Strategy.* Work under Phase IV focused on preparing and submitting Oregon's first Integrated Water Resources Strategy for consideration by the Water Resources Commission. The State's boards and commissions and Federal partners provided letters of endorsement to assist in this effort. Following review and adoption by the Water Resources Commission, the Strategy will be delivered to the Oregon Legislature in time for the 2013 Legislative Session.

*Phase V: Implementation and Evaluation.* This is an iterative process and successfully meeting Oregon's water needs will mean constantly asking "what if" questions and preparing to adapt to changing circumstances and environments. Upon adoption of Oregon's first Integrated Water Resources Strategy, the Project Team plans to embark on a process to implement the recommended actions. The Strategy is due to the Oregon Legislature by December 31, 2012, with five-year updates occurring thereafter.

Legislators, agencies, and partners will also have opportunities during this phase to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the Recommended Actions included in the Strategy. Evaluation includes identifying both the lessons learned and potential modifications to the next iteration.

### **III. Presentation of the June 2012 IWRS**

The June 2012 version of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy was provided to the Water Resources Commission and the public in preparation for this meeting. The full text is available on-line at: [http://www.wrd.state.or.us/owrd/LAW/docs/2012\\_06\\_22\\_draft\\_IWRS.pdf](http://www.wrd.state.or.us/owrd/LAW/docs/2012_06_22_draft_IWRS.pdf).

An Executive Summary is also available:

[http://www.wrd.state.or.us/owrd/LAW/docs/2012\\_06\\_22\\_draft\\_Executive\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.wrd.state.or.us/owrd/LAW/docs/2012_06_22_draft_Executive_Summary.pdf).

The June draft features a number of improvements since the December 2011 Discussion Draft. These improvements are the result of public comments and discussions with the Policy Advisory Group and the Water Resources Commission.

Examples of modifications include:

- Re-organized text along the lines of the four objectives, so that the "strategy" is easier to find
- Removed extraneous background information to get to recommended actions more quickly
- Beefed up the Executive Summary
- Added a Conclusion
- Set a better context and tone, documenting existing Oregon successes in water resources
- Set a better context and tone, starting the discussion with "total water in Oregon," rather than "total water diverted."
- Discussed the valuable contribution agriculture makes to Oregon's economy and the environment
- Discussed the existing conservation successes of Oregon agriculture
- Discussed in more detail the role of federal agencies
- Discussed in more detail the need for storage, water supply development, and instream flows.

### **IV. Letters of Support from State and Federal Partners**

Throughout Spring 2012, Project Staff and Water Resources Commission Chair John Jackson have spent time with Oregon's boards and commissions to notify them of plans to adopt the IWRS in August. The meetings were also designed to present the content and process used in the IWRS and to ask for a letter of endorsement from each entity. These discussions were very

well received. While a number of Boards and Commissions offered additional suggestions for future work, they were also appreciative of the inter-agency collaboration on this project and opportunities for future partnership related to water issues.

Attachment #1 includes letters of endorsement from the following:

State Boards and Commissions:

Board of Agriculture  
Board of Forestry  
Board of Geology  
Drinking Water Advisory Committee (OHA)  
Environmental Quality Commission  
Fish and Wildlife Commission  
Land Conservation & Development Commission  
Parks and Recreation Department  
State Marine Board  
Sustainability Board  
Watershed Enhancement Board

Federal Agencies:

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
U.S. Dept. of Energy, Bonneville Power Administration  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
U.S. Geological Survey  
U.S. Forest Service

**V. Next Steps**

Agenda Item B continues this conversation into the implementation phase, with topics that include:

- The role of IWRS discussions in future WRC meetings.
- Development of an IWRS Workplan for 2012-17, and
- Preparation for the 2013 Legislative Session and subsequent Legislative Sessions.

**VI. Consideration for Adoption**

The authorizing legislation for this effort, HB 3369 (2009), places responsibility for adoption of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy with the Water Resources Commission, after notification of partner boards and commissions. The work of the Strategy has been completed on time and within budget, meeting the specifications set forth in the bill.

The Water Resources Commission has a number of options at this juncture:

- Option 1. Adopt Oregon's first Integrated Water Resources Strategy.
- Option 2. Adopt the Integrated Water Resources Strategy with modifications.
- Option 3. Direct staff to re-visit the document and return in November with a modified Strategy for consideration.

Staff recommends that the Water Resources Commission choose Option 1 and adopt Oregon's first Integrated Water Resources Strategy.

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August 2, 2012  
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Attachment 1: Letters of Endorsement