



Water Supply Development Funding

FUNDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WATER SUPPLY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS



OUR MISSION

To serve the public by practicing and promoting responsible water management through two key goals:

- (1) to directly address Oregon's water supply needs, and
- (2) to restore and protect streamflows and watersheds in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of Oregon's ecosystems, economy, and quality of life.

Background

For much of Oregon, access to high quality water supply is key to successful economic development. Through discussions with partners, the Water Resources Department has identified potential opportunities to invest in and help develop new water resources projects throughout the state to benefit both instream and out-of-stream uses.

Although other western states have long had funding in place allowing the state to take an active role in the development of water supply, the State of Oregon does not have a funding program in place to pursue such opportunities.

The establishment of a water supply development account would improve the state's ability to assess, plan, and develop new multi-purpose storage, including above and below-ground storage; to improve or expand operations of existing storage facilities; to implement conservation projects; or to facilitate other actions designed to provide access to new water supplies for instream and out-of-stream uses in Oregon.

The Oregon Water Resources Department is requesting \$10 million in funding through Lottery Revenue Bonds to implement water supply development projects.

Initial Projects

During the first year of the biennium, the Department envisions using \$2 million for the engineering and feasibility studies needed in the short term, in order to queue up projects for implementation / construction in subsequent years. The list of potential projects falls into five primary categories. Any one of the projects in these categories could easily cost \$500K for an engineering or feasibility study, and more to implement in the long-term.

- 1) **Options identified as part of the 2012-13 Columbia River-Umatilla Solutions Taskforce (CRUST).** Convened by the Governor's Office as an Oregon Solutions Project, the CRUST spent considerable time in 2012-13 developing options for future water supplies to meet Oregon's instream and out-of-stream water needs. Nine options were identified, three of which



specifically involved development of additional water storage capacity. They are: implementing / completing the Umatilla Basin Aquifer Recovery Project; repairing the dam at Wallowa Lake; and constructing a new reservoir in Juniper Canyon.

- 2) **Irrigation Piping and Lining Projects.** Irrigation districts statewide are working to increase water efficiency by enclosing or lining their open, rock or dirt-lined irrigation canals. Currently, some irrigation systems experience significant water loss through leaky canals, and several irrigation districts are making a concerted effort to pipe or line these conveyance systems.
- 3) **Water Storage (Canada-Oregon-Washington).** Early discussions are underway among a Canadian firm and the states of Oregon and Washington, regarding a potential partnership for water storage development in Canada. Such an effort could help meet critical water needs in both Eastern Washington and Oregon's Umatilla Basin.
- 4) **Willamette Basin Long-Term Reservoir Study.** The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation holds water right certificates to store water in 13 U.S. Army Corps reservoirs in the Willamette River Basin, yet water-use contracts represent less than 5 percent of the total storage volume. A goal of the Reservoir Study is to determine the feasibility of broadening the permitted uses of water to support a full range of beneficial uses—including anadromous fishery and water quality needs, municipal and industrial water supply needs, agricultural needs, and recreational needs. The Study would help quantify these needs in more detail and develop operational agreements for the reservoirs during low-flow years.
- 5) **Deschutes Basin Study.** Deschutes Basin stakeholders are requesting a cost-match to participate in the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Basin Study Program, which would facilitate the preparation of a Deschutes Basin Study. This study will build upon the years of investment already made by the Deschutes Basin in regional water planning. The completed basin study will be a critical document, enabling collaborative projects that meet instream, urban, and agricultural water needs to move forward.

Contact

Brenda Bateman, Senior Policy Coordinator
Oregon Water Resources Department
Brenda.O.Bateman@state.or.us
503-986-0879
www.wrd.state.or.us