

Water Resources Department

Oregon Plan Measures

February 2003

Oregon Plan measures for the Water Resources Department are listed below – each with a list of actions to achieving the measure. As part of our new approach, watermasters identify four or five actions they will pursue in their high priority watersheds at the beginning of each year. At the end of each year, watermasters describe the progress they made on their action plans, their successes, and barriers to their success. This adaptive management approach will allow greater flexibility for field staff to prioritize their Oregon Plan efforts, simplify reporting requirements, and focus limited staff resources on efforts with the greatest potential benefit for fish.

Measure 1: Water distribution and regulation.

Actions:

- Inventory significant diversions to ensure the adequacy of headgates and measuring devices and to improve distribution lists.
- Perform streamflow monitoring to provide accurate and timely information on the need to distribute water for instream and other water rights.
- Monitor and regulate water uses to identify unauthorized uses and to ensure that the use of water is consistent with state law.
- Perform distribution to provide water rights with the water to which they are entitled.

Measure 2: Fish and fish habitat protection.

Actions:

- Use public interest review on requests for new water uses to assess impacts to fish, consistent with the existing legal framework.
- Review new ground water applications to evaluate impacts to surface flows due to hydraulic connection between surface water and ground water.
- Ensure that instream water rights are protected from injury during water right transfers.
- Expeditiously process applications for new instream water rights and applications for instream leases, transfers, and allocations of conserved water.
- Coordinate with ODFW on enforcement of water right conditions requiring screening of diversion structures.

Measure 3: Promotion of flow restoration.

Actions:

- Identify and support streamflow and fish habitat restoration activities in high priority areas through voluntary efforts.
- Provide technical assistance on water right related issues to support the modification of water diversions to improve fish passage and protection.

- Promote transfers of existing surface water points of diversion to ground water appropriations in areas with unconfined aquifers that are hydraulically connected to the authorized surface water source.
- Promote programs that improve water use efficiency and conservation, including expeditious review of agricultural water supplier and municipal water management and conservation plans.
- Promote and assist with applications for instream transfers, instream leasing, exchanges, substitutions, and allocations of conserved water.

Measure 4: Public outreach and education.

Actions:

- Provide technical support and information to watershed councils and other organizations involved in streamflow and fish habitat restoration.
- Maintain accurate streamflow data and provide the data in a timely manner to researchers and other interested parties.
- Provide readily accessible data via WRD website to support watershed and fish restoration activities.

Measure 5: Improvement of resource understanding.

Actions:

- Maintain and update the water availability model for the consideration of instream water rights and scenic waterway flows.
- Continue ground water investigations to assess stream-aquifer interaction, aquifer hydraulic properties, and aquifer recharge and discharge relationships.
- Work with the Independent Multidisciplinary Science Team; the National Academy of Science; United States Geological Survey; ODFW; and other researchers, educators, and extension entities to ensure that our decisions and management actions reflect the most up-to-date resource information and best available science.