



# Feasibility Study Grant Program

HELPING OREGON COMMUNITIES EVALUATE WATER RESOURCES 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

Oregon is facing increasing water demand and increasingly scarce water supplies. To adequately meet Oregon's diverse water demands now and into the future, Oregonians must use their water wisely and efficiently. That means looking more closely at innovative water conservation and reuse programs and environmentally sound storage projects.

The Water Conservation, Reuse and Storage Grant Program, established by Senate Bill 1069 (2008), is designed to fund the qualifying costs of planning studies that evaluate the feasibility of developing water conservation, reuse, or storage projects. Results of the Program range from direct implementation of projects to phased programs carried out over a period of years. Some projects are self-funded and others have been awarded additional implementation grants or loans by state, federal, or other partners.

## Grant Awards to Date

Since 2008, the Program has awarded 54 grants statewide for a total of over \$3.16 million. The grant awards cover a broad geographic area and range from under \$5,000 to just over \$250,000 each. During the 2013-2015 biennium, the Water Resources Commission awarded 15 grants totaling approximately \$750,000.

## Examples of Recent Feasibility Studies

### Grande Ronde Model Watershed

The feasibility study considered whether artificial recharge and aquifer storage options are available in the upper Grande Ronde Valley. The goals were to determine feasible ways to augment late season streamflows and to help mitigate declining groundwater tables in the upper Grande Ronde Valley. The study recommended that a recharge and recovery project would have a high likelihood of success with significant benefits to streamflow during critical times of the year. Implementation discussions are underway with financing from the U.S. Bonneville Power Administration.

### City of Hillsboro/City of Beaverton

The study provided an estimate of potential water savings that could be achieved through the implementation of six variations of a WaterSense® Rebate Program. This study assisted in program and policy revisions aimed at reducing the overall per capita demand on the water system. The study helped facilitate greater water conservation efforts. The City of Beaverton now has a rebate program in place for customers to purchase water-efficient clothes washers.

## Oregon's Long Term Strategy

Feasibility studies are important for determining various aspects of water supply projects. As recommended in Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy (Recommended Action 13.C.), Oregon should commit to helping local communities bridge the funding gap by continuing to provide modest grants for evaluating the feasibility of water conservation, storage, and reuse projects.

## Contact

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## 2013-2105 Grant Awards

### Conservation

\$6,818	Arnold Irrigation District
\$17,401	Central Oregon Irrigation District
\$35,000	Hood River SWCD & EFID
\$30,000	Irrigation Canal Co. & Union SWCD

### Storage

\$32,000	City of Astoria
\$31,500	East Valley Water District
\$86,200	Fifteen Mile Watershed Council
\$32,000	Hood River SWCD & FID
\$250,000	City of Newport
\$33,000	SPF Water Engineering & Crater Lake
\$90,103	Walla Walla Watershed Council (2)

### Reuse

\$40,000	City of Halfway
\$48,456	OSU/Benton County/Corvallis

## Project Highlight: From Studies to Implementation

Central Oregon Irrigation District used a 2009 Grant Award to assess the feasibility of lining or piping a section of its I-Lateral canal, which serves approximately 1,700 acres in Alfalfa, Oregon. This water conservation study determined it was cost effective to pipe or line a 1.5 mile section of the I-Lateral. It is estimated that up to 4.5 cubic feet per second (cfs) of water could be conserved, of which at least 2.25 cfs could be permanently converted to instream water rights in the Deschutes River through use of the Allocation of Conserved Water Program. Construction recently began on this water conservation project. The District hired a local pipe supply company and brought on temporary staff, as well as contracted services with a neighboring irrigation district, bringing economic benefits to Central Oregon.



**"We really see this program as a great asset to Oregon."**

~ Laura Wollam, Water Use Specialist, Central Oregon Irrigation District

Photo: L. Wollam, COID.