

Date: August 15, 2016

To: Emergency Drought Response task Force (HB 4113)

From Clair Klock

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RE: Drought Response

Chairs Roblan, Helm and task force members:

I come to you today wearing 2 hats. One for the Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District as a semi-retired conservation specialist and one as a retired farmer with 35 year as owner/operator in berries and tree fruits. We still owe and live on the farm.

I have listened to almost all of the audio of the previous 2 meetings and looked at the PowerPoint presentations. Let me say that at times it was extremely difficult at time to understand comment because some people did not speak directly into the microphone.

From my conservation specialist position, our main charge is water quality. I have also witnessed firsthand the effects of 5 groundwater limited areas in the county on small and large farms, rural and urban residents. This is one reason I became a rainwater harvesting specialist and advocate for it's use as a agricultural water source. I have served on the board and still active with the American Rainwater Catchment System Association (ARCSA).

Wearing my private hat as a farmer, I deal with the problem my small farm has with a well that initially came in at 9 gallon/min in 1982 and now produces about 2 gallons per minute. I have researched the cost of putting in a well below the first basaltic layer and the process of procuring a new water right that comes with it. We have the space to do a 2 acre foot pond or an acre/foot silo rainwater tank, but lack the money to make it happen. I would like nothing better than to leave the water in the ground to feed the stream that runs across the salmon spawning beds on the Sandy River.

I did get a 50% cost-share grant from the East Multnomah SWCD to put in a rainwater system for my container yard that was irrigated with municipal water. The first year in operation we went from 44,000 gallon to 0 from the municipal system. This can be done on a larger scale. An additional benefit of rainwater harvesting systems can be used for stormwater control and groundwater recharge. As a private citizen I have a number of questions for the task force.

1. How can we manage a resource that we don't measure? We need to meter all groundwater wells or static level in each hydrologic area? This mean municipal - small and large, industrial - small and large and agricultural - small and large.
2. How can we know that users are not exceeding their water right without metering it? The technology is available to better manage water. Water Management magazine has articles in every issue describing systems that have had make incredible water saving.
3. I think back to the Prineville area in August of last year. When we talk about Emergency Drought is everyone problem - why do I see dry lawns in the Willamette Valley non drought areas, when the municipal and residential areas in Eastern Oregon and Washington has green lawns with water rolling into the streets.
4. And finally - Why are we still giving out water rights when the legislature has set up a task force to solve the water quantity problem?

Thank you for your time.