

September 3, 2019

Memo

To: State Board of Agriculture
From: Alexis Taylor, Director, Oregon Department of Agriculture
Subject: Oregon's 100-Year Water Investment Vision

As many of you may remember, the Governor's office announced Oregon's 100-Year Water Investment Vision in 2018. Recently, the Governor's office tasked Meta Loftsgaarden, Executive Director of OWEB, to continue to help lead this effort. The next phase of the Water Vision will be focused on gathering information. This summer and fall, the project team will be listening, learning and gathering information from a broad base of Oregonians - including the BOA. The team will be engaging interested stakeholders in a variety of ways – through interviews with organizations that represent the diversity of Oregonians, through workshops to help refine our data and information needs, and through academies that help refine the goals of the Water Vision.

More information about the Water Vision is now available online at www.OregonWaterVision.org.

On Friday, September 27th, during the board meeting Stephanie Page will discuss the Water Vision, however, for that discussion I am requesting **you review the attached document and come ready to discuss the below questions:**

1. The goals of the Governor's 100-Year Water Vision are as follows:

- Health: Secure, safe, accessible, and healthy water for current and future Oregonians.
- Economy: Adequate and clean ground and surface water to support economic vitality for all Oregonians.
- Environment: Access for native fish and wildlife to the cool, clean water they need to thrive.
- Safety: Resilient water supply and flood protection systems that can face natural hazards such as floods and drought.

QUESTION: Do these goals represent your relationship to and usage of water? If not, what goals do you feel are missing? Are there changes to the current wording which you would recommend?

2. The overarching problem statement regarding the state's water infrastructure is: Oregon's water infrastructure has served us well, but is showing its age. We have under-invested in natural and built infrastructure to meet the needs of a vibrant 21st century Oregon. Additional specific challenges are also identified. They include:

- Without modern water supply systems and access to water in emergencies, Oregonians risk not having water available when it's needed for healthy people and communities, and a strong economy.
- Without resilient built and natural systems that keep our water cool and clean, our residents - and our fish and wildlife - are increasingly vulnerable to the health risks associated with lack of access to clean water.
- Without upgraded levees, dams, tide gates and the natural protection of wetlands and estuaries, our communities are less safe, and at increased risk of damage from catastrophic flooding.

- Without concerted investments so all Oregonians can access clean and adequate water, many disproportionately impacted communities will fall further behind in addressing their water needs.
- Without strong community capacity and connected ways to make strategic water investment decisions at the local, regional, and state levels, local communities will not be prepared to take advantage of large-scale water infrastructure funding opportunities.
- Without the latest water data needed to make effective decisions, and intentional approaches to test new ideas, water systems will perennially fall short to provide for Oregon's water needs.

QUESTION: Do the identified problems reflect the concerns you have surrounding the future of you or your community's water security? If not, what problems do you feel are missing, or what changes do you suggest in the current wording?

3. QUESTION: What are your thoughts on how to conduct stakeholder engagement so that we are inclusive of diverse perspectives and needs within Oregon agriculture and food industries?

4. QUESTION: This is a continuous listening and learning process and this will not be your only opportunity to provide feedback, however, please share any other thoughts that you have about Oregon's 100-Year Water Vision.



Oregon's 100-Year Water Vision

Preparing a Secure, Safe, and Resilient Water Future for All Oregonians

Vision

To address changes in climate and population dynamics, Oregon will steward its water resources to ensure clean and abundant water for our people, our economy and our environment, now and for future generations. Strategic investments will result in resilient natural and built water systems across the state to support safe and healthy communities, vibrant local economies and a healthy environment.

Premise

Many areas of Oregon are known for clean and reliable water. This is due to both favorable climate and the infrastructure we built in the 19th and 20th centuries to effectively move water from its source to where it is used.

As has been identified in Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy, three forces combine to place significant stress on Oregon's water:

- 1) Climate change and associated increases in fire, drought and flooding,
- 2) A half century of underinvestment in built and natural water infrastructure, and
- 3) Our changing population and associated development – growing in some areas, shrinking in others.

These factors impact the quality and quantity of water for our communities, including water in our rivers, lakes, reservoirs and aquifers. Simply put, if we are not willing to roll up our sleeves and work together to invest in our natural and built water systems, we place the safety of our communities, the health of our people and environment, and Oregon's economic future at risk.

Goals

◆ **Health**

Secure, safe, accessible, and healthy water for current and future Oregonians.

◆ **Economy**

Adequate and clean ground and surface water to support economic vitality for all Oregonians.

◆ **Environment**

Adequate cool, clean water for native fish and wildlife to thrive, and healthy watersheds that can store and filter water naturally.

◆ **Safety**

Resilient water supply and flood protection systems that can face natural hazards like earthquakes, floods and drought.

Problem Statement

Oregon's water infrastructure has served us well, but is showing its age. We have underinvested in natural and built infrastructure to meet current challenges and have not adapted systems to meet the needs of a vibrant Oregon for the next 100 years.

- ✓ Without modern water supply systems and water conservation approaches that combine to provide reliable access to water, including in emergencies, Oregonians risk not having water available when it's needed for healthy people and communities, food production, and a thriving economy.
- ✓ Without resilient built and natural infrastructure that provides cool and clean water across all Oregon watersheds, our people – and our fish and wildlife – are increasingly vulnerable to the health risks associated with lack of access to adequate, clean water.
- ✓ Without upgraded levees, dams, stormwater systems, tide gates and the natural protection of wetlands and estuaries, our communities will be less safe and at increased risk of damage and economic hardship from localized and catastrophic flooding.
- ✓ Without access to relevant water data for effective decision-making, cross-agency coordination, and intentional approaches to test new ideas, built and natural water systems will perennially fall short of providing for Oregon's in-stream and out-of-stream water needs.
- ✓ Without strong capacity across all Oregon communities to plan for their water future, and effective ways to ensure strategic water investment decisions are coordinated across and between local, regional, state and federal agencies, communities will not be prepared to take advantage of large-scale water infrastructure funding opportunities or collaborative and innovative partnerships.
- ✓ Without coordinated built and natural water infrastructure investments, Oregonians - including those in disproportionately impacted and rural communities – may be unable to access adequate clean water and return it to our rivers for downstream users, fish, and wildlife.

Our Shared Water Future

Oregon's water future is already being shaped by climate and population changes. How we choose to steward our water resources now will determine if we pass a legacy of clean and abundant water to future generations of Oregonians so they can enjoy a vibrant economy and live in a quality environment. The investments we make now in natural and built water infrastructure will support a prosperous Oregon in the 21st century and beyond.