



Water Project Grants and Loans Applications

Evaluation Summaries – 2026 Funding Cycle 2

October 14, 2026

Background

The Water Supply Development Account provides grants and loans for water projects that have economic, environmental and social/cultural benefits (ORS 541.651-696).

The application deadline for the second 2026 funding cycle was July 15, 2026. The Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) received twelve complete Water Project Grants and Loans applications requesting a total of \$18,432,120 in grant funding.

Document Description

The following are evaluation summaries for complete grant applications received for the second 2026 Water Project Grants and Loans (WPGL) Funding cycle. The multi-agency Technical Review Team (TRT) provided comments on each application, scored applications based on the criteria identified within the Scoring Criteria document, and made a funding recommendation to OWRD based on that evaluation and available funds. The following evaluation summaries highlight TRT comments gathered by OWRD during the application evaluation process and are prepared for the Commission's consideration and review. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Grants Analyst to request a review meeting and receive additional evaluation feedback. The evaluation summaries are listed in order of the TRT ranking.

The evaluation summary includes a combined public benefit score, which the TRT used to rank proposed projects. A table is also provided that shows a breakdown of the application score by category. An application could score up to 60 points in each of the economic, environmental, and social/cultural public benefit categories. A proposed project could receive up to 20 additional preference points; up to 10 points for legally protecting water instream and up to 10 points for collaboration. Preference points are listed in the "Other" category. There is a maximum public benefit score of 200 points for WPGL projects.

Based on the TRT ranking, the TRT recommends the top five and the seventh ranked projects for funding (Table 1). This funding recommendation considers the public benefits provided by these applications and available funding. OWRD has \$2,007,904 available for immediate award and an additional \$4 million potentially available for provisional award contingent on a spring 2027 lottery revenue bond sale. The WPGL projects not recommended for funding are in Table 2. Two projects are not recommended for funding due to insufficient funds, and four projects are not recommended for funding as they did not achieve the minimum score required in each public benefit category.

Next Steps

OWRD is soliciting public comment on the TRT ranking and funding recommendation through 5 pm on November 4, 2026.

Please submit comments to: OWRD.Grants@water.oregon.gov or Oregon Water Resources Department, Grants Analyst, 725 Summer Street NE, Suite A, Salem, OR 97301.

Public comments submitted on the TRT ranking and funding recommendations will be presented to the Commission who will make a funding decision. The date for the Commission to make its funding decision is December 10-11, 2026.

More Information

If you have questions please contact the Grants Analyst, Louisa Mariki, at 503-979-960 or OWRD.Grants@water.oregon.gov.

Water Project Grants and Loans Applications

Table 1. Applications Recommended for Funding by the Technical Review Team

Project Name	Applicant	County	Grant Funds Requested	Total Project Cost	Total Score
Grave Creek Instream Flow Restoration Transfer	Trout Unlimited	Josephine	\$349,579	\$510,328	64
East Fork Irrigation District Fish Screen Upgrade	Hood River Watershed Group and East Fork Irrigation District	Hood River	\$1,798,600	\$3,969,781	63*
NUID - Lateral 43 Segment 4 Piping	Deschutes River Conservancy and North Unit Irrigation District	Jefferson	\$2,244,112	\$8,511,770	62*
Brock Irrigation Efficiency Project	Trout Unlimited	Wallowa	\$213,340	\$266,675	60*
Swalley Irrigation District - Elder Lateral Piping	Deschutes River Conservancy and Swalley Irrigation District	Deschutes	\$1,077,109	\$4,061,835	56*
Ives Creek Irrigation Efficiency Project	Trout Unlimited	Wheeler	\$226,165	\$282,707	45*
Total			\$5,908,905	\$17,603,096	

* Provisionally recommended, subject to available funding. OWRD has \$2,007,904 available for immediate award and an additional \$4 million potentially available for provisional award contingent on a spring 2027 lottery revenue bond sale.

Table 2. Applications Not Recommended for Funding by the Technical Review Team

Project Name	Applicant	County	Grant Funds Requested	Total Project Cost	Total Score
Grimes Flat Piping Project	Ochoco Irrigation District	Crook	\$4,000,000	\$14,000,000	55^
Willow Creek Rd Rainwater Harvesting & Irrigation	Andrew and Bernadette Haupt	Lane	\$151,766	\$192,436	44^
Banks Redundant Supply and ASR Operations	City of Banks	Washington	\$5,954,000	\$6,663,963	23*
Rudd Farms	Brett Rudd	Union	\$788,861	\$1,051,815	20*
Myrtle Lane Dairy Organic Outreach Program	Myrtle Lane Dairy	Coos	\$1,397,588	\$1,863,450	19*
Corvallis Vineyard Mountain Water System Upgrades	Vineyard Mountain Water and Improvement District	Benton	\$231,000	\$308,000	7*
Total			\$12,523,215	\$24,079,664	

^Not recommended due to insufficient funds.

*Not recommended because it did not meet the minimum public benefit score in one or more categories.

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Overview of Application Scoring

The scoring criteria for applications to the Water Projects Grants and Loans program is based on the public benefits a project is likely to achieve. Projects funded are those which are likely to achieve the greatest public benefits. The change in conditions anticipated to result in public benefits must be described and explained in the project application. When evaluating an application, the TRT examines public benefits in three categories: economic, environmental, and social/cultural. The TRT evaluates and scores each application based on the following questions and determines whether the project would provide exceptional, high, moderate, minor, or no public benefits, or minor or medium negative impacts. See the [Scoring Criteria document](#) for more information.

	Question
Economic Public Benefits	a. Does the project create or retain jobs?
	b. Does the project increase economic activity?
	c. Does the project result in increases in efficiency or innovation?
	d. Does the project result in enhancement of infrastructure, farmland, public resource lands, industrial lands, commercial lands or lands having other key uses?
	e. Does the project enhance economic value associated with tourism or recreational or commercial fishing, with fisheries involving native fish of cultural significance to Indian tribes, or with other economic values resulting from restoring or protecting water instream?
	f. Does the project result in increases in irrigated land for agriculture? (which may include increasing irrigated acres, agricultural economic value, or productivity of irrigated land)
Environmental Public Benefits	a. Does the project result in measurable improvement in protected streamflows?
	b. Does the project result in water conservation?
	c. Does the project result in measurable improvement in groundwater levels that enhances environmental conditions in groundwater restricted areas or other areas?
	d. Does the project result in a measurable improvement in the quality of surface water or groundwater?
	e. Does the project increase ecosystem resiliency to climate change impacts?
	f. Does the project result in improvements that address one or more limiting ecological factors in the project watershed?
Social/Cultural Public Benefits	a. Does the project promote public health, public safety, and local food systems?
	b. Does the project result in measurable improvements in conditions for members of minority or low-income communities, economically distressed rural communities, tribal communities or other communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes?
	c. Does the project promote recreation and scenic values?
	d. Does this project contribute to the body of scientific data publicly available in this state?
	e. Does this project promote state or local priorities, including but not limited to the restoration and protection of native fish species of cultural significance to Indian Tribes?
	f. Does this project promote collaborative basin planning efforts, including but not limited to efforts under Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy?

Grave Creek Instream Flow Restoration Transfer

Applicant Name: Trout Unlimited

County: Josephine

Funding Requested: \$349,579

Total Project Cost: \$510,328

Project Summary: The proposed project would restore streamflow in a critically dewatered reach of Grave Creek in the Rogue River Basin through a permanent transfer of 0.8 cfs instream to benefit ESA-listed SONCC Coho salmon, fall Chinook, summer and winter steelhead, cutthroat trout, and Pacific Lamprey. The transfer would be protected for 15.4 miles of stream and increase current stream flow by 19.4-74.1% during critical low flow months (April 2 to October 31). The confluence of Grave Creek (lower end of protected reach) is in the popular recreation area of the Wild and Scenic reach of the Rogue River. The project would support Leland Ranch and their mission to upgrade irrigation system infrastructure, conserve water, and restore riparian and instream habitat that was impacted by past mining.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

TRT Recommendation: Recommended for Funding

Public Benefit Scores:

Total Score	Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
64	12	22	20	10

Review Summary: The technical review team found that the proposed project offers high environmental, minor economic, and moderately high social/cultural public benefits. The project is expected to enhance public resource lands and the economic value associated with tourism, while also delivering significant environmental gains through instream protections, improved water quality, and addressing limiting ecological factors in the project's watershed. Additionally, the project aligns with regional conservation goals and demonstrates collaborative planning efforts with multiple stakeholders.

Economic Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- Minor public benefit from job creation and retention of one job.
- Minor public benefit from increased economic activity. The technical review team noted that the supporting data did not align with the analysis on the benefits.
- No to minor public benefit from increased efficiency or innovation. The review team noted that potential reinvestment of project proceeds is not assured within the project scope.
- Moderate public benefits from improvements to public resource lands from increased streamflow in Grave Creek.

- e) High public benefit from the enhancement of the economic value associated with tourism from increasing flows and improvements to fish habitat. Grave Creek, a tributary of the Rogue River, supports salmonids, native fish of cultural significance to Tribes.
- f) No public benefit to increases in irrigated land for agriculture.

Environmental Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) High public benefit from legally protecting water instream through an instream transfer. The project would legally protect 0.8 cfs during critical low-flow months (April-October), increasing streamflow by an estimated 19% to 74%.
- b) No public benefit from water conservation. The application does not provide the percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.
- c) Minor public benefit to improvement in groundwater levels. The application identifies potential mechanisms for groundwater improvements, however, there is insufficient information to demonstrate a measurable benefit.
- d) High public benefit from improved water quality. The review team noted year-round temperature concerns in Grave Creek. Protecting instream flows during critical months would provide measurable water-quality improvements, particularly during the October–May spawning season for fish.
- e) High public benefit to increased ecosystem resilience to climate change impacts. The project would increase stream flows, improve dissolved oxygen and decrease water temperature during critical months.
- f) High to exceptional public benefit from addressing limiting ecological factors through the legal protection of water instream. The project would improve water quantity and quality for multiple native aquatic species by providing additional summer flows.

Social/Cultural Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Minor public benefit to public health from improved water quality conditions associated with increased stream flows. The review team noted that additional information would be needed to support the claimed benefits related to the local food system.
- b) Minor public benefit to Oregon’s environmental justice communities. Reviewers noted that recreational fishing is an important economic driver in the area, however, the benefit to environmental justice communities is limited.
- c) Moderate public benefits from recreational and scenic values. Improved water quality and quantity would support fishing, rafting, kayaking, and other outdoor recreation within the Wild and Scenic Rogue River Recreation Area.
- d) No public benefit to the contribution of scientific data.
- e) High to exceptional public benefit resulting from alignment with regional conservation and action plans, including the Rogue Basin Partnerships Strategic Plan. The project directly supports priorities related to native fish and aquatic habitats, including species of cultural significance to Tribes.

- f) High public benefit from collaborative basin planning. The project demonstrates strong coordination with conservation organizations, watershed councils, state and federal agencies, and it aligns with Oregon’s Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) objectives and fish-recovery plans.

East Fork Irrigation District Fish Screen Upgrade

Applicant Name: Hood River Watershed Group and East Fork Irrigation District

County: Hood River

Funding Requested: \$1,798,600

Total Project Cost: \$3,969,781

Project Summary: The proposed project would install five in-channel horizontal fish screens at the East Fork Irrigation District's diversion headworks to replace the current Coanda fish screen that is located 0.43 miles down the canal. This infrastructure improvement would increase efficiencies for diverting irrigation water and protect Endangered Species Act listed lower-Columbia spring Chinook, steelhead and coho by eliminating annual fish stranding and mortality that occurs every fall when the 0.43 miles of canal between the District’s diversion and Coanda fish screen is dewatered. By installing new screens at the point of diversion, 9.8 cfs of water would no longer be used to flush the screens or return fish, which will allow the District to more reliably provide patrons irrigation water. Within the bypass reach, these water savings would increase summer flows by 9.8 cfs and improve water temperature. It is estimated an additional 150-300 juvenile Chinook, steelhead and coho would survive every year.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

TRT Recommendation: Recommended for Funding

Public Benefit Scores:

Total Score	Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
63	27	12	19	5

Review Summary: The technical review team found that the proposed project offers significant economic and minor to moderate environmental, and social/cultural public benefits. The project is expected to improve efficiency, enhance infrastructure, support agricultural productivity and increase the economic value associated with tourism. The project is also expected to provide environmental benefits by improving water quality and addressing limiting ecological factors related to fish mortality, though the ecological improvements are expected to be localized. Additionally, the project aligns with regional conservation goals and demonstrates collaborative partnerships with Tribes.

Economic Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Moderate to high public benefit from the creation of fifteen short-term construction jobs and the potential retention of long-term agricultural employment in the District. The review team noted that additional information would be needed to substantiate the estimate of 650 retained jobs.
- b) Moderate public benefit from increased economic activity. The project would help sustain existing economic activity.
- c) High public benefit from increased efficiency resulting from installing new fish screens. The new screens will eliminate the need to divert water to move fish through the existing downstream screening system, remove the need for labor-intensive fish salvage efforts, decrease fish mortality within the canal, and reduce the amount of sediment entering the irrigation system.
- d) High public benefit as the project would result in the enhancement of infrastructure for the East Fork Irrigation District. The new screens would comply with current state and federal standards.
- e) High public benefit from the enhancement of the economic value associated with tourism and recreational fishing. The review team recognized the importance of tourism to the Hood River County economy. The project would improve fish habitat by maintaining water instream, supporting recreational fishing and Tribal fishing rights.
- f) Moderate public benefit, as the project would increase the economic value of the agricultural lands served by the District and support long-term agricultural productivity.

Environmental Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) No public benefit, as the project does not propose to legally protect water instream.
- b) Minor public benefit in water conservation. The review team noted that water would remain instream rather than be diverted, however, the application does not provide the percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.
- c) No public benefit as the project would not result in a measurable improvement in groundwater levels.
- d) Moderate public benefits from improved water quality. The review team noted that maintaining water in stream would support cooler water temperatures in the affected reach and benefit fish, though these improvements are likely to remain localized.
- e) Moderate public benefits from increased ecosystem resilience to climate change. The review team noted that the application provides broad information on resiliency, making it difficult to attribute specific benefits directly to the project. Maintaining water instream rather than diverting it would, however, contribute to improved resiliency.
- f) High public benefit from addressing limiting ecological factors. The project directly addresses the issue of fish entering the diversion canal by installing screens designed to prevent entrainment, thereby reducing juvenile fish mortality associated with canal entrapment, improving fish passage, and supporting overall water quality.

Social/Cultural Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Moderate public benefit to local food systems as the project would support agricultural production and contribute to fisheries health through improved fish passage and reduced mortality.
- b) Moderate public benefit to Oregon's environmental justice communities. Reviewers noted the project supports agricultural employment for Latino and migrant populations; however, the application did not provide evidence of engagement with these communities. The reviewers also appreciated that the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs (CTWS) submitted a letter of support.
- c) Moderate public benefit from the promotion of recreation and scenic values. The Hood River Valley is a scenic destination, improved water quality and quantity would support fishing, rafting, kayaking, and other outdoor recreation.
- d) No public benefit to the contribution of scientific data.
- e) High public benefit from the promotion of state or local priorities as the project directly supports ecological priorities and salmon and steelhead recovery efforts identified in regional and state plans. The District is collaborating with CTWS through a Memorandum of Understanding that honors Tribal treaty rights by maintaining minimum instream flows.
- f) High public benefit from collaborative basin planning efforts. The project demonstrates coordination and planning with multiple stakeholders and aligns with Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRs) objectives.

NUID - Lateral 43 Segment 4 Piping

Applicant Name: Deschutes River Conservancy and North Unit Irrigation District

County: Jefferson

Funding Requested: \$2,244,112

Total Project Cost: \$8,511,770

Project Summary: The proposed project would pipe 43,575 linear feet of Lateral 43 in North Unit Irrigation District (NUID). The project would convert open canal to HDPE pipe. Segment 4 serves 35 taxlots and 1510.8 acres between Culver and Metolius in Jefferson County. Water conserved from the project (approximately 2.3 cfs) would be protected through OWRD's Water Conservation and Protection Pathway for Irrigation Modernization Projects in the Upper Deschutes Basin. The project would improve water reliability for NUID patrons, who have a junior water right, as well as enhance instream flows in the Upper Deschutes River in the winter months. NUID would release an equivalent amount of the conserved water saved during the winter season in Upper Deschutes River, benefiting the ESA-threatened Oregon spotted frog and state-sensitive Redband trout.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

TRT Recommendation: Recommended for Funding

Public Benefit Scores:

Total Score	Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
62	22	13	17	10

Review Summary: The technical review team found that the proposed project offers high economic and minor to moderate environmental and social/cultural public benefits. The project is expected to improve local economic activity, enhance irrigation efficiency, and support infrastructure improvements. Environmental benefits include instream protections and increased ecosystem resiliency to climate change. Additionally, the project supports Oregon’s environmental justice communities and demonstrates collaborative planning efforts to address long-term water supply needs in the region.

Economic Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Moderate public benefits from job creation and retention. The project is expected to generate 65 temporary jobs and support 20 long-term agricultural jobs through more reliable water supplies.
- b) Moderate public benefit from increased economic activity. The project would increase agricultural yields from more reliable water availability.
- c) High public benefits from increased efficiency. Piping 43,575 feet of Lateral 43 would eliminate conveyance losses, while installing flow meters along the turnouts would improve diversion accuracy and management.
- d) High public benefit from improvements to North Unit Irrigation District’s infrastructure. The project would strengthen the conveyance system and improve water reliability.
- e) Minor public benefit from the enhanced economic value associated with tourism. The review team noted that maintaining instream flows would help restore the natural hydrograph in the Upper Deschutes River; however, the recreational benefits are expected to be limited.
- f) High public benefit to the increase in agricultural economic value through improving water reliability for 1,510.8 acres. The application noted that 40 percent of the District’s fields were fallowed in 2022 due to irrigation water shortages.

Environmental Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) High public benefit from the project’s proposal to release an equivalent amount of the conserved water saved during the winter season in Upper Deschutes River from Wickiup Dam to Lake Billy Chinook via a secondary use right for flow augmentation. This additional instream water would improve habitat conditions for fish and the ESA-listed Oregon spotted frog.
- b) Minor public benefit from water conservation. The application does not provide the percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.
- c) No public benefit related to groundwater level improvements.

- d) Minor to moderate public benefit from improved water quality through reducing return flows containing sediment and other contaminants.
- e) Moderate public benefit from increased ecosystem resiliency to climate change. The project would increase winter instream flows, and shift water toward a more natural hydrologic regime. The review team noted that benefits would occur primarily in winter and that the overall climate-resiliency impact is limited because it does not address rising water temperatures in summer.
- f) Moderate public benefits to limiting ecological factors. Increased winter streamflows would benefit the Oregon spotted frog and certain fish species but would not address summer streamflow.

Social/Cultural Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Moderate public benefit to public safety by piping the canal to reduce the risk of drowning and vehicular accidents. Improved water reliability would also support local agricultural production and food systems.
- b) High public benefit to Oregon's environmental justice communities. The project is in Jefferson County, which has a higher proportion of low-income populations and environmental justice communities, and elevated drought and wildfire risk.
- c) Minor public benefit from the promotion of scenic values. The review team noted that the project would support scenic waterways, but recreational benefits are not expected.
- d) No public benefit to the contribution of scientific data.
- e) Moderate public benefit from alignment with basin planning efforts and state priorities related to restoration and protection of native species, particularly the Oregon spotted frog.
- f) High public benefit from collaborative basin planning demonstrated through intentional coordination among multiple districts in the region to address shared water supply needs.

Brock Irrigation Efficiency Project

Applicant Name: Trout Unlimited

County: Wallowa

Funding Requested: \$213,340

Total Project Cost: \$266,675

Project Summary: The proposed project would convert 53.4 acres of primarily flood-irrigated farmland to a high-efficiency center pivot irrigation system and permanently protect 0.66 cfs of senior water rights May through July in the Lostine River within the Wallowa Basin of northeast Oregon. The irrigation improvements are expected to increase water use efficiency by more than 50%. One hundred percent of the conserved water (0.66 cfs) would be legally protected instream through the Oregon Water Resources Department's Allocation of Conserved Water Program. The Lostine River provides priority habitat for ESA-listed spring/summer Chinook salmon, steelhead,

and bull trout, as well as recently reintroduced coho salmon, and experiences critically low flows due to irrigation withdrawals.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

TRT Recommendation: Recommended for Funding

Public Benefit Scores:

Total Score	Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
60	17	22	13	8

Review Summary: The technical review team found that the proposed project offers high environmental and minor to moderate economic and social/cultural public benefits. The project is expected to improve irrigation efficiency, and support agricultural productivity, while also delivering environmental benefits through water conservation and instream protections during critical summer months. Additionally, the project demonstrates strong alignment with regional conservation goals.

Economic Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) No public benefit from job creation or retention.
- b) Minor public benefit from increased economic activity due to the project's scale.
- c) High public benefit from improved efficiency through conversion from flood-irrigated land to center pivot irrigation, improving water use efficiency by 50%.
- d) Moderate to high public benefit from infrastructure improvements that would improve agricultural productivity, reduce labor costs and water losses.
- e) High public benefit from enhancement of the economic value associated with tourism through enhancing instream flows that support recreational fishing for Chinook salmon, steelhead, and other outdoor activities. The review team also noted that Wallowa County is a popular scenic recreation destination.
- f) Moderate public benefit to the increase in the economic value of irrigated agricultural land by improving water reliability for agricultural production.

Environmental Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Moderate public benefit from legally protecting water instream. One hundred percent of conserved water (0.66 cfs) would be permanently protected instream through OWRD's Allocation of Conserved Water Program.
- b) Exceptional public benefits from water conservation. The conversion from flood to high efficiency center pivot irrigation will increase water use efficiency by 50%.
- c) No public benefit related to groundwater level improvements.
- d) Minor public benefit from improved water quality. Increased summer flows could help regulate temperature, and reduced return flows from flood irrigation could decrease sediment and other contaminants entering surface water.

- e) Moderate public benefit to increased ecosystem resilience through increased summer streamflows that would provide resilience during periods of solar radiation. The review team noted that July low flows are becoming increasingly critical and this project directly benefits this period.
- f) High public benefit from addressing limiting ecological factors through the legal protection of instream water. The project would address a primary limiting factor in this reach, water quantity, by increasing instream flows during the critical summer period.

Social/Cultural Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Minor public benefit to public health, safety, and local food systems. Eliminating flood irrigation would reduce contaminants, but there is no downstream public water system.
- b) Moderate public benefit to Oregon’s environmental justice communities. The project is in a rural and economically depressed region, and the water protected instream would contribute to improved fish habitats that would support culturally important fisheries to the Nez Perce Tribe. The review team noted the absence of support letters from impacted communities.
- c) Minor public benefit from the promotion of recreation and scenic values through increased flows that would enhance fish and wildlife habitat and improve scenic qualities along the Lostine River.
- d) No public benefit to the contribution of scientific data.
- e) High public benefit from alignment with state and local priorities. The project promotes strategies identified in the Grande Ronde Subbasin Plan and the Wallowa Atlas Project to advance irrigation efficiency through conversion to center pivot irrigation.
- f) Moderate public benefit from collaborative basin planning efforts. The review team recognized the project’s collaborative efforts but noted that the application lacked detail about the participating groups and the nature of their involvement.

Swalley Irrigation District - Elder Lateral Piping

Applicant Name: Deschutes River Conservancy and Swalley Irrigation District

County: Deschutes

Funding Requested: \$1,077,109

Total Project Cost: \$4,061,835

Project Summary: The proposed project would pipe approximately 10,057 linear feet of Swalley Irrigation District’s open irrigation canals with HDPE pipe to conserve water lost to seepage. The project would conserve approximately 1.64 cfs of water. Seventy-five percent (395 AF) of the conserved water would be legally protected instream through OWRD’s Allocation of Conserved Water Program. The water conservation achieved by this project would bolster instream flows in the Middle Deschutes during the irrigation season, improve water quality, eliminate water delivery and operational inefficiencies in the District, improve and stabilize agricultural production through water supply reliability, and improve conditions for state-sensitive Redband trout.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

TRT Recommendation: Recommended for Funding

Public Benefit Scores:

Total Score	Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
56	20	13	15	8

Review Summary: The technical review team found that the proposed project offers high economic benefits and minor to moderate environmental, and social/cultural public benefits. The project is expected to enhance irrigation infrastructure and water delivery reliability, while offering environmental benefits through instream protections and supporting aquatic habitat. Additionally, the project aligns with regional conservation goals, has the support of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs (CTWS), and is building on long-term basin planning efforts.

Economic Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Minor public benefit from job creation and retention. The project is expected to generate 30 temporary jobs in construction and related fields during implementation.
- b) Minor public benefit from increased economic activity. The review team found insufficient information in the application to substantiate the claimed economic gains.
- c) High public benefit from improved efficiency through piping 10,057 feet of open canal to conserve water lost to seepage. The project would also increase water delivery efficiency for the District and reduce maintenance costs.
- d) High public benefit from infrastructure improvements that would improve water delivery reliability for patrons, support increased agricultural productivity, and could support potential on-farm improvements by connecting to pressurized water.
- e) Moderate public benefit from enhanced economic value associated with recreation and to native fish of cultural significance to Tribes. Increased flows would benefit Redband trout as well as summer steelhead and Chinook salmon, fish of cultural significance to the CTWS.
- f) Moderate public benefit to the increase in economic value of irrigated agricultural land by improving irrigation reliability for 472 acres through pressurized water delivery.

Environmental Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) High public benefit from legally protecting water instream. Seventy-five percent of conserved water (395-acre ft) would be permanently protected instream through OWRD's Allocation of Conserved Water Program.
- b) Minor public benefit from water conservation. The application does not provide the percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.
- c) No public benefit related to groundwater level improvements.
- d) Moderate public benefit from improved water quality through increased summer flows that would address elevated water temperatures and turbidity concerns. The review team noted

that the small flow increase and existing water allocation conditions make the benefit difficult to quantify.

- e) Moderate public benefits from increased ecosystem resilience to climate change. The review team noted that irrigation-season demand in the Upper Deschutes Basin can exceed available flows, so any additional instream water supports resiliency. However, the flow increase is small, and claims regarding reduced on-farm pumping and related greenhouse-gas reductions were considered speculative.
- f) Moderate public benefits from addressing limiting ecological factors by improving low irrigation-season streamflows and reducing elevated water temperatures that limit aquatic habitat conditions.

Social/Cultural Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Moderate public benefits to public health and safety by reducing drowning risks associated with open canals and potentially improving local food production through increased water availability for irrigation patrons.
- b) Minor public benefit to Oregon's environmental justice communities, with the primary benefits occurring downstream for Tribal communities.
- c) Minor to moderate public benefit for recreational and scenic values. The project would enhance instream flows benefiting scenic values and recreation activities.
- d) No public benefit to the contribution of scientific data.
- e) High public benefit promoting state and local priorities through supporting goals in the Upper Deschutes River Basin Study. The review team noted the project has support from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.
- f) High public benefit from collaborative basin planning. The review team noted that this project builds on long-term basin planning and collaboration to improve water management and instream flows.

Ives Creek Irrigation Efficiency Project

Applicant Name: Trout Unlimited

County: Wheeler

Funding Requested: \$226,165

Total Project Cost: \$282,707

Project Summary: The proposed project would increase efficiency by converting eight wheel lines to two center pivots on 129.18 acres. The project area is located in Spray, Oregon, in Wheeler County within the John Day Watershed. Water would be applied in a more controlled and uniform manner to reduce water loss. One hundred percent of the conserved water (267.775 acre-ft) would be legally protected through OWRD's Allocation of Conserved Water Program. In addition, all water from the Ives Creek water right certificate (107.6 acre-ft) would be permanently protected instream

through an instream transfer. The proposed project would increase flows for ESA-listed summer steelhead, while improving water quality, spawning and rearing habitat, and long-term farm operations.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

TRT Recommendation: Recommended for Funding

Public Benefit Scores:

Total Score	Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
45	12	11	14	8

Review Summary: The technical review team found that the proposed project offers moderate public benefits across economic, environmental, and social/cultural categories. Economic benefits are expected through improved irrigation efficiency and upgraded agricultural infrastructure. Environmental benefits would result from additional instream flow; however, uncertainty about water availability and connectivity to the John Day River may limit measurable outcomes. The project aligns with Tribal and regional conservation priorities and demonstrates strong institutional collaboration.

Economic Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Minor public benefit from job creation and retention. The application identifies 10 jobs but provides limited information about their nature.
- b) Minor to moderate public benefit from increased economic activity from construction and materials acquisition related to project implementation.
- c) Moderate public benefits from improved efficiency through conversion from wheel-lines to center pivot irrigation, resulting in water use efficiencies and reduced maintenance costs.
- d) Moderate public benefit from infrastructure improvements that would improve water delivery and on-farm productivity.
- e) Minor public benefit to the enhancement of economic value associated with recreation or tourism. The project supports instream flows in Ives Creek; however, there is no fishing in the creek and the project's location limits the likelihood that flows would reach the John Day River where most fishing and recreation benefits would occur.
- f) Minor to moderate public benefit to the increase in agricultural value through irrigation upgrades that enhance productivity and land value.

Environmental Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Moderate public benefit from legally protecting water instream. One hundred percent of conserved water (267.775 acre-ft) would be permanently protected instream through OWRD's Allocation of Conserved Water Program. Additionally, all water from the Ives Creek water right (107.6 acre-ft) would be protected through an instream transfer.
- b) Minor public benefit from water conservation. The application does not provide the percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.

- c) No public benefit to groundwater level improvements.
- d) Moderate public benefits from improved water quality through more efficient irrigation that would reduce overland return flows and soil erosion. However, limited information on existing water-quality conditions in the application makes the extent of potential improvements difficult to determine.
- e) Moderate public benefits from increased ecosystem resilience to climate change. Increased instream flows would contribute to restoring a more natural hydrograph and reducing temperatures during critical periods.
- f) Minor public benefit from addressing limiting ecological factors. The additional instream flow may be insufficient to support steelhead and redband trout and is not anticipated to reach the John Day River.

Social/Cultural Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Minor public benefit to public health and of local food systems.
- b) Moderate public benefit to Oregon’s environmental justice communities. The project aligns with priorities for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, which is also providing cash match for the project.
- c) Minor public benefit for recreational and scenic values through the support of broader goals to protect cold water habitats in the lower John Day River. However, Ives Creek does not support significant fishing or other recreational activities.
- d) No public benefit to the contribution of scientific data.
- e) High public benefit from promotion of local and regional priorities on cold water habitat protection outlined in the Oregon Recovery Plan and the John Day Subbasin Plan.
- f) High public benefit from collaborative basin planning. The project demonstrates strong institutional collaboration, including partnerships with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Wheeler County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Grimes Flat Piping Project

Applicant Name: Ochoco Irrigation District

County: Crook

Funding Requested: \$4,000,000

Total Project Cost: \$14,000,000

Project Summary: The goal of the proposed project is to pipe the Grimes Flat laterals, eliminating 4.9 cfs water losses from seepage and evaporation, improving water deliveries to 28 patrons, and conserving water instream in the Crooked River. The project would construct the new Crooked River Pump Station #3, pipe 8.2 miles of the Grimes Flat Pipeline, and install turnouts and meters to deliver reliable irrigation water to 28 turnouts across 1,203 acres. The District would legally

protect 77% of the conserved water (3.8 cfs) instream in the Crooked River through OWRD's Allocation of Conservation Water Program, supporting steelhead and bull trout habitat. The proposed project supports Crook County's agricultural economy, improves drought resilience, and complements other efforts to restore instream flow and benefit steelhead populations in the Crooked River watershed.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

TRT Recommendation: Not Recommended for Funding at this time

Public Benefit Scores:

Total Score	Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
55	24	10	15	6

Review Summary: The technical review team found that the proposed project offers moderate to high public benefits across economic, environmental, and social/cultural categories; however, it is not recommended for funding due to limited available funds. The project is expected to enhance local economic activity, improve irrigation efficiency, and increase irrigated acres. The proposed project would also provide environmental benefits through instream protections and improved water quality; however, these benefits were uncertain because the conserved water right would be junior to the existing irrigation right. Additionally, the project would improve public health and safety and demonstrates collaborative planning with community involvement.

Economic Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Moderate public benefits from job creation and retention. The project is anticipated to generate 127 short-term and 25 permanent jobs.
- b) Moderate to high public benefit from increased economic activity. The project would bring \$14 million into the local economy and improve the long-term viability of farming by delivering more reliable water.
- c) High public benefit from improved efficiency. Piping 8.2 miles of canal would increase irrigation efficiency and eliminate 4.9 cfs of seepage and evaporation losses. The pipeline and pump station would also reduce operations and maintenance costs, estimated at \$25,000 annually.
- d) High public benefit from infrastructure upgrades that would improve conveyance infrastructure and metering while supporting on-farm improvements.
- e) Moderate public benefits from increased stream flows that could enhance the economic value associated with tourism. However, reviewers noted that 3.8 cfs is unlikely to produce measurable changes in flow and public access in the project area is limited.
- f) High public benefit to the increase in irrigated land for agriculture by adding 100 acres of farmland. The project would improve irrigation infrastructure serving 1,103 acres on the Grimes Flat laterals, providing more reliable and partially pressurized water delivery.

Environmental Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Moderate public benefit from legally protecting water instream. Seventy-seven percent of conserved water (3.8 cfs) would be permanently protected instream through OWRD's Allocation of Conserved Water (ACW) Program. Reviewers noted that applicants indicated the conserved water right would be one minute junior to the existing irrigation right rather than sharing its priority date, which reduces the environmental benefit.
- b) Minor public benefit from water conservation. The review team noted that water savings are expected through improved infrastructure and reduced seepage losses, however, the application does not provide the percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.
- c) No public benefit related to groundwater level improvements.
- d) Moderate public benefits from improved water quality. Both Lytle Creek and the Crooked River do not meet water quality standards and additional streamflow could help; however, reviewers questioned the likelihood of improvements due to the proposed junior priority date of the conserved water right.
- e) Minor to moderate public benefit from increased ecosystem resilience to climate change impacts. Additional instream flow during the summer months could improve drought resilience during critical periods for fish; however, reviewers questioned the likelihood of improvements due to the proposed junior priority date of the conserved water right.
- f) Moderate public benefits from addressing limiting ecological factors through the legal protection of water instream supporting aquatic habitats and water quality. Reviewers noted that 3.8 cfs is likely insufficient to produce a measurable improvement.

Social/Cultural Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Moderate public benefit to local food systems through 100 additional acres of irrigated land. The project would also improve public safety by reducing drowning risks associated with open canals.
- b) Moderate public benefit to Oregon's environmental justice communities. The project is located in an area in the 80th percentile for unemployment and reduced quality of life. Improved surface water would benefit the drinking water of downstream communities, including Tribal communities.
- c) Minor public benefit for the promotion of recreation and scenic values. The additional flow is unlikely to produce measurable improvements to recreational activities, and public access to the area is limited.
- d) No public benefit to the contribution of scientific data.
- e) Moderate public benefit from promoting state and local priorities. The application references addressing water quality priorities in the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's 2024 Integrated Report.
- f) Moderate to high public benefit from collaborative basin planning, demonstrated through engagement with multiple institutional stakeholders and the public, and alignment with Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy objectives.

Willow Creek Rd Rainwater Harvesting and Irrigation

Applicant Name: Andrew and Bernadette Haupt

County: Lane

Funding Requested: \$151,766

Total Project Cost: \$192,436

Project Summary: The proposed project would replace summer groundwater pumping with winter rainwater harvesting to irrigate perennial crops on a 13.67-acre farm in the Long Tom River watershed in the Willamette Basin. Runoff from a 3,000-square-foot barn roof would be stored in a 29,093-gallon tank and gravity-fed to drip irrigation serving 4.75 acres of perennial crops (cider apples, wine grapes, chestnuts, hazelnuts, and serviceberries interplanted with native upland prairie and camas), a produce garden, and livestock watering. The project would improve agricultural production on non-prime Exclusive Farm Use farmland while sparing limited groundwater, restore a fragment of imperiled native upland-prairie habitat through the interplanted camas understory, and produce an open, replicable rainwater irrigation model for other western-Oregon small farms.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

TRT Recommendation: Not Recommended for Funding at this time

Public Benefit Scores:

Total Score	Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
44	13	10	16	5

Review Summary: The technical review team found that the proposed project offers moderate public benefits across economic, environmental, and social/cultural categories; however, it is not recommended for funding due to limited available funds. The project would advance innovative irrigation practices, increase irrigated agricultural land, and provide environmental benefits by enhancing ecosystem resiliency and addressing limiting ecological factors through improved native habitats and reduced invasive species. It would also generate scientific data and support regional conservation priorities, including the restoration of culturally and ecologically significant camas. However, the small scale of the project limits the overall public benefits.

Economic Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- Minor public benefit from job creation and retention of two farm jobs.
- Minor public benefit from increased economic activity. The project would infuse \$158,000 into the local economy through materials purchases and construction work.
- High public benefit from increases in innovation through rainwater harvesting and irrigation system improvements that support multi-species perennial production.
- Moderate public benefits from enhancement of irrigation infrastructure improvements that would support the use of a limited area for agricultural production.

- e) No public benefit resulting from enhanced economic value associated with tourism or recreation.
- f) Moderate public benefits to the increase in irrigated land for agriculture. The project would bring previously inactive land into production; however, reviewers noted the limited scale of the project constrains the overall public benefit.

Environmental Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) No public benefit, as the project does not propose to legally protect water instream.
- b) Minor to moderate public benefits from water conservation. The application describes measurable water use for the farm; however, it does not provide the percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.
- c) Minor public benefit to groundwater levels. The application identifies groundwater limitations and proposes a rainwater storage system, but it does not establish a baseline or demonstrate that harvested rainwater would measurably offset groundwater withdrawals.
- d) No public benefit from improved water quality.
- e) Moderate to high public benefit from increased ecosystem resilience to climate change. Through agroforestry, the project would enhance vegetation diversity, shade, and soil moisture, supporting wildlife and pollinators. Reviewers questioned whether the proposed storage capacity would be sufficient to meet irrigation demands during low-rainfall periods.
- f) Moderate public benefits from addressing limiting ecological factors through improved native grassland habitat, providing additional support for pollinators and wildlife, and helping to limit invasive species.

Social/Cultural Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Minor to moderate public benefit to public safety through the installation of a fire-department draft outlet that would provide a water reserve for rural fires response in Lane County.
- b) No public benefit to Oregon's environmental justice communities.
- c) No public benefit for the promotion of recreation and scenic values.
- d) High to exceptional public benefit to the contribution of scientific data. The review team noted that the applicant outlined a plan to collect and publish data on this innovative system.
- e) High public benefit from alignment with regional conservation priorities. The project supports native grassland habitat consistent with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Natural and Working Lands Program and advances the restoration of camas, an ecologically and culturally significant first food for Tribal communities.
- f) High public benefit from collaborative basin planning efforts through defined goals, measurement, and monitoring consistent with broader water-conservation design and evaluation efforts and aligns with the Long Tom Watershed Council. Reviewers noted that while the project's small scale limits basin-wide impact, it provides valuable insight by testing this approach at a smaller scale.

Banks Redundant Supply and ASR Operations

Applicant Name: City of Banks

County: Washington

Funding Requested: \$5,954,000

Total Project Cost: \$6,663,963

Project Summary: The proposed project would develop sufficient redundant water supply from a sustainable groundwater source by installing a new production well with conveyance and implementing Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) at two wells. The proposed project would permit, design, construct, and test a new groundwater source (Well-4) and implement ASR operations at Wells 3 and 4. This infrastructure improvement would provide approximately 300 gallons per minute (0.43 MGD) of new redundant capacity and would store up to 37 million gallons per year of water in the subsurface aquifer to mitigate increased use of the groundwater resource. The project would improve long-term groundwater supply reliability, increase system redundancy, and help meet future water demand associated with population growth.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

TRT Recommendation: Not Recommended for Funding at this time

Public Benefit Scores:

Total Score	Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
23	14	2	6	1

Review Summary: The technical review team found that the proposed project offers moderate economic and limited environmental and social/cultural public benefits. The project did not meet the minimum score of 5 in the environmental public benefit category. As a pilot phase, the project would stimulate local economic activity and support short-term employment; however, many of anticipated public benefits depend on successful implementation of a future phase. The project aligns with local and state water supply and housing goals, including emergency preparedness priorities for the County.

Economic Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- Moderate public benefits from job creation and retention. The project would generate short-term jobs during the pilot construction phase, but reviewers noted that additional job benefits described in the application pertain to a future phase not included in the proposed project.
- Moderate public benefit from increased economic activity. The project would invest approximately \$6.6 million during pilot phase implementation.
- Moderate to high public benefit from improved innovation using Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) to shift water availability across seasons and address water supply needs.

- d) Moderate public benefit from infrastructure improvements that would expand the City's water supply options. The review team noted that broader infrastructure benefits described in the application are contingent on a future project phase.
- e) No public benefit from the enhancement of economic value associated with recreation. Reviewers noted that the claimed benefits are unlikely to be realized during the pilot phase.
- f) No public benefit from the increase in irrigated land for agriculture.

Environmental Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) No public benefit, as the project does not propose to legally protect water instream.
- b) No public benefit in water conservation. The application does not provide the percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.
- c) Minor public benefit from improved groundwater levels. The review team noted that the amount of water recovered and the resulting effects on groundwater levels are uncertain, and the project is primarily intended to support future water supply needs rather than improve groundwater levels.
- d) Minor public benefits to improvements to water quality. Using winter flows for aquifer recharge could reduce reliance on surface water during low-flow summer periods; however, the application does not quantify the expected water quality improvements.
- e) Minor public benefit from increased ecosystem resiliency to climate change impacts. Reduced summer surface-water use is expected to leave more water instream during critical months; however, the application does not quantify the reduction in summer withdrawals.
- f) No public benefits from addressing limiting ecological factors.

Social/Cultural Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Moderate public benefits to public health and safety from a more redundant water supply that would improve the City's resilience to natural disasters, climate-related impacts, and disruptions to surface water diversions.
- b) No public benefit to Oregon's environmental justice communities.
- c) No to minor public benefit for recreation and scenic values. Although the City of Banks provides access to nearby recreational resources, reviewers noted the pilot phase does not include direct improvements to recreational opportunities or scenic values.
- d) No public benefit to the contribution of scientific data. Although the application indicates data will be collected, it is limited to regulatory requirements and lacks a defined plan for public dissemination.
- e) Minor to moderate public benefit from alignment with state and local priorities to reduce reliance on surface water and support housing development. The project also aligns with Washington County's Emergency Operations Plan for preparedness.
- f) Minor public benefit from promoting collaborative basin planning. The review team noted that while the project references actions in the Integrated Water Resources Strategy, it does not describe public engagement processes or provide evidence of collaborative basin-planning efforts.

Rudd Farms

Applicant Name: Brett Rudd

County: Union

Funding Requested: \$788,861

Total Project Cost: \$1,051,815

Project Summary: Rudd Farms, located approximately five miles northeast of La Grande, Oregon, is a family farm that grows peppermint, grass seed, wheat, and alfalfa on approximately 3,000 acres. In 2013, Rudd Farms constructed a 4,000 foot deep well in the Columbia River Basalt Group (CRBG) aquifer, named the "Basalt Well." The proposed project would artificially recharge the CRBG aquifer during the winter with the objective of proactively mitigating future groundwater level declines, maintaining yield in the Basalt Well, and increasing the long-term reliability of groundwater supply from the regional aquifer. The project would recharge the Basalt Well using alluvial groundwater from an existing well during the winter (December to April). The CRBG aquifer is hydraulically isolated from surface water and using the CRBG aquifer for summer irrigation supply would leave more water instream benefitting fish habitat in the Grande Ronde River.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

TRT Recommendation: Not Recommended for Funding at this time

Public Benefit Scores:

Total Score	Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
20	9	2	6	3

Review Summary: The technical review team found that the proposed project offers limited public benefits across economic, environmental, and social/cultural categories and did not meet the minimum score of 5 in the environmental public benefit category. While the project would improve efficiency and infrastructure, it remains in an early testing phase, and the volume of water that could be recharged, recovered, or conserved is uncertain, limiting measurable environmental benefits. The project aligns with regional water-supply planning priorities; however, evidence of public engagement is limited.

Economic Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- Minor public benefit from job retention of eight full time and season farm jobs. Reviewers noted that the project would generate short-term opportunities during project implementation.
- No public benefit from increased economic activity. The application does not demonstrate an increase in economic activity during the proposed pilot testing phase.
- Moderate public benefits from improved efficiency and innovation through testing an aquifer-recharge approach aimed at reducing reliance on surface water and improving water

supply. Reviewers noted that the benefits depend on the success of the pilot phase and future implementation.

- d) Moderate public benefit from infrastructure improvements through enhancements to existing wells and associated water-management infrastructure supporting a farm operation of approximately 3,000 acres.
- e) No public benefit from the enhancement of economic value associated with tourism and recreation.
- f) Minor public benefit to the increase in irrigated land for agriculture. The review team noted that the project could improve water availability for agricultural production, but the extent of the benefit depends on successful pilot testing and future implementation.

Environmental Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) No public benefit, as the project does not propose to legally protect water instream.
- b) No public benefit in water conservation. The application does not provide the percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.
- c) Minor public benefit to groundwater levels. The project aims to address declining groundwater levels by recharging the Columbia River Basal Group aquifer; however, reviewers noted that recharge has not been tested at this site, and the amount that could be recovered or retained remains uncertain.
- d) No to minor public benefit from improved water quality. The application does not demonstrate measurable water quality improvements, though reviewers noted the project could reduce consumptive surface water use if recharge proves successful, which could support water quality improvements
- e) Minor public benefit to ecosystem resilience. The review team noted the project could reduce reliance on surface water during critical periods and store water underground, however, the application provides limited documentation to support these claims during the pilot phase.
- f) No public benefit from addressing limiting ecological factors. Reviewers noted that the claimed benefits depend on successful future AR or ASR operations and related water-management changes, which fall outside the scope of the proposed project.

Social/Cultural Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) No public benefit from the promotion of public health, public safety, or local food systems. The potential benefits described in the application are not clearly demonstrated or directly linked to the proposed pilot phase.
- b) No public benefit to Oregon's environmental justice communities. The claimed benefits to economically distressed rural communities rely on a future phase of the project.
- c) No public benefit from the promotion of recreation and scenic values. Reviewers noted that the Grande Ronde basin is overallocated and the amount of water remaining instream is uncertain and likely to be used by junior users, limiting any measurable benefit.
- d) No to minor public benefit to the contribution of scientific data. The application indicates data will be collected but does not describe how the data would be made publicly available.

- e) Moderate public benefit from alignment with strategies identified in the Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed Partnership Place-Based Integrated Water Resources Plan.
- f) Moderate public benefits from collaborative basin planning. The project addresses water supply concerns identified through basin planning efforts; however, the application provides limited evidence of public involvement or proactive collaboration.

Myrtle Lane Dairy Organic Outreach Program

Applicant Name: Myrtle Lane Dairy

County: Coos

Funding Requested: \$1,397,588

Total Project Cost: \$1,863,450

Project Summary: The proposed project would install nine center-pivot irrigation systems across 205 acres, pipe 1,660 feet of six-inch PVC mainline, install a new 24-inch culvert, and create riparian zones at the corners of the fields where the center pivot irrigation does not reach. The proposed project would improve agricultural production and reduce water use by 31%. The proposed project would improve irrigation efficiency, reduce erosion, stabilize soils, allow for more crop varieties, allow for pollinating habitats, and increase instream flows for ESA-listed Oregon Coast coho salmon in the South Fork Coquille River.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

TRT Recommendation: Not Recommended for Funding at this time

Public Benefit Scores:

Total Score	Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
19	14	5	-1	1

Review Summary: The technical review team found that the proposed project offered moderate public benefits in the economic category, limited benefits in the environmental category, and a minor detriment in the social/cultural category. The project did not meet the minimum score of 5 in the social/cultural public benefit category. While the project would improve irrigation efficiency and runoff management through infrastructure upgrades, the extent of environmental benefits and social/cultural benefits remains uncertain. Reviewers also raised compliance concerns related to manure and pollutant transport affecting domestic wells and nearby surface waters. Reviewers encourage the applicant to consult with relevant state agencies during project design to ensure the project meets minimum compliance standards.

Economic Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Minor public benefit from job creation and retention. The project would create two new jobs, however, reviewers noted that the application provided limited information to support the claim of retaining 10 existing positions.

- b) Moderate public benefit from increased economic activity. The project would expand agricultural production by adding 20 acres for red clover and alfalfa cultivation.
- c) Moderate public benefit from increased efficiency through irrigation improvements. However, the review team noted compliance concerns with existing dairy practices and clarified that actions required for regulatory compliance should not be counted as additional public benefits.
- d) Moderate public benefits from enhanced infrastructure supporting agricultural productivity.
- e) Minor public benefit from enhanced economic value associated with tourism. The potential benefits described in the application are not clearly demonstrated.
- f) Moderate public benefit from the increased agricultural economic value.

Environmental Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) No public benefit, as the project does not propose to legally protect water instream.
- b) Moderate public benefits in water conservation from a 31% decrease in water use. However, reviewers noted that the calculation is based on 107.5 acres, while the application states the irrigation system serves 205 acres.
- c) No public benefit to groundwater level. The application does not provide sufficient information to substantiate the claimed benefits to neighboring residential wells.
- d) No public benefit from improved water quality. The application did not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate measurable improvements beyond addressing existing manure and bacterial contamination concerns noted by reviewers.
- e) Minor public benefit from increased ecosystem resiliency through reduced surface water withdrawals and improved runoff management. However, the application does not quantify increased summer streamflow, making the magnitude of the benefits uncertain.
- f) Minor public benefits from addressing limiting ecological limiting factors through reducing pollutant transport, improving irrigation efficiency, and adding a vegetation buffer to protect nearby aquatic habitats and groundwater resources. However, the review team found the effectiveness uncertain and questioned whether the proposed practices adequately meet applicable requirements.

Social/Cultural Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) Moderate detriment to public health from fecal contamination pathways potentially affecting nearby domestic wells and surface water.
- b) No public benefit to Oregon's environmental justice communities. Although the project supports agricultural activity in an agriculture-dependent community, reviewers noted concerns about potential drinking water contamination that offset these benefits.
- c) No public benefit from the promotion of recreation and scenic values. Although the dairy property provides boat launch access and is in a scenic area, the application does not demonstrate that the proposed project would improve recreational access, scenic resources, or fishing conditions.
- d) No public benefit to the contribution of scientific data.

- e) Minor public benefit from promoting state and local priorities. Improved irrigation efficiency and reduced pollutant transport would support priorities in the Oregon Coast Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU) Strategic Coho Salmon Action Plan. However, the effectiveness of the proposed practices and the resulting environmental benefits have not been demonstrated.
- f) Minor public benefit from collaborative basin planning. The review team found limited collaboration with relevant agencies or a broader basin-planning process.

Corvallis Vineyard Mountain Water System Upgrades

Applicant Name: Vineyard Mountain Water and Improvement District

County: Benton

Funding Requested: \$231,000

Total Project Cost: \$308,000

Project Summary: The proposed project would remediate aging water infrastructure for a community in Corvallis. The remediation efforts would entail replacing a water well, upgrading three exposed air-relief valves that have a risk of freezing or air binding, installing or replacing eight leaking pressure-reducing valves, and lead exceedance work. The proposed project would improve water distribution efficiency and enhance the community's ability to obtain water. The lead exceedance remediation would entail a chemical feed system.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

TRT Recommendation: Not Recommended for Funding at this time

Public Benefit Scores:

Total Score	Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
7	4	0	3	0

Review Summary: The technical review team found that the proposed project offers limited benefits in the economic and social/cultural categories and no benefit in the environmental category. The project did not meet the minimum score of 5 in any public benefit category, and the application provided limited details about potential public benefits. The project would improve water system efficiency and infrastructure while delivering social/cultural benefits through enhanced drinking water quality and system reliability.

Economic Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a) No to minor public benefit from job creation and retention. The application did not demonstrate how the proposed improvements would support job retention.
- b) No public benefit from increased economic activity.
- c) Moderate public benefit from improved efficiency through installation of a pressurized water system. Reviewers noted that the project provides operational enhancements, however, the scale of the anticipated gains is limited.

- d)** Moderate public benefit from infrastructure improvements to the community water system.
- e)** No public benefit resulting in enhancement of economic value associated with tourism.
- f)** No public benefit resulting in increases in irrigated land for agriculture.

Environmental Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a)** No public benefit, as the project does not propose to legally protect water instream.
- b)** No public benefit from water conservation.
- c)** No public benefit related to groundwater level improvements.
- d)** No public benefit from improved water quality. The application did not provide sufficient information to demonstrate a measurable improvement to surface water or groundwater.
- e)** No public benefit to ecosystem resiliency to climate change impacts.
- f)** No public benefit from addressing limiting ecological limiting factors in the project watershed.

Social/Cultural Public Benefits:

The review team found the proposed project would likely result in:

- a)** Moderate public benefits to public health by addressing lead-contaminated drinking water in the community water system.
- b)** No public benefit to Oregon's environmental justice communities.
- c)** No public benefit from the promotion of recreation and scenic values.
- d)** No public benefit to the contribution of scientific data.
- e)** No public benefit from the promotion of state or local priorities.
- f)** No public benefit from the promotion of collaborative basin planning efforts.