



Integrated Water Resources Strategy 2027-2029 Workplan in Action

Overview

Since first adoption in 2012, Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) has focused on understanding and meeting Oregon's instream and out-of-stream water needs, including water quantity, water quality, and ecosystem needs. The IWRS reflects coordinated, cross-agency efforts on the state's most urgent water challenges.

The 2025 IWRS provides a roadmap for addressing water challenges that affect the entire state. State agencies worked with Governor Kotek's office and partners to identify three priority areas to focus the state's limited resources in the coming years. Priorities emerged from conversations with sovereign Tribal nations and urgent water challenges across the state, including groundwater contamination in the Umatilla Basin, dry domestic wells, increasing water scarcity, and climate-driven impacts on communities and ecosystems.

In a supporting effort, Governor Kotek issued Executive Order No. 25-26 on October 21, 2025, which directs state agencies to take urgent action to promote the resilience of our communities and natural and working lands and waters.

[LINK TO FULL IWRS WORKPLAN](#)

IWRS Priority Areas

1.

**Act
with Urgency**
to protect
instream and
out-of-stream
uses

2.

**Assist the
State and
Communities**
to prepare
for water
scarcity

3.

**Adapt to
Water Scarcity**
by stretching
our water
supplies

A Future of Water Security



Act with Urgency to Protect Instream and Out-of-Stream Uses



Assist the State and Communities to Prepare for Water Scarcity



Adapt to Water Scarcity

by Stretching our Water
Supplies

P1.1 Reduce unauthorized water use and gain compliance with other water laws

P1.2 Provide guidance for what constitutes reasonable use of water

P1.3 Increase the use of and develop protections for priority waters and/or watersheds

P1.4 Expand efforts to protect the quality of surface and groundwater sources that provide drinking water

P1.5 Implement improvements to water permitting processes for transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness

P2.1 Increase quality and accessibility of water availability, water use, and water demand information

P2.2 Modernize water data systems and website user interfaces to facilitate wider data sharing

P2.3 Improve understanding of instream and out-of-stream needs through increased completed basin assessments, instream flow studies, and clean water plans

P2.4 Increase the number of communities and Tribes that have completed or are participating in water planning efforts

P2.5 Increase involvement of OWRD in advisory committees for Economic Opportunity Analyses to better align land use planning with water resource goals

P3.1 Increase the pace and scale of water reuse and, aquifer storage, recovery and recharge projects that support resilience and protect the environment

P3.2 Increase the number of water users that are planning/implementing water conservation, efficiency, or modernization efforts

P3.3 Align existing and future agency funding to further instream flow restoration, groundwater recharge, source water protection, and water quality and habitat improvements

P3.4 Identify priority areas for new above and below ground storage

P3.5 Improve water right transfer processing times for lower risk transfers to facilitate the movement of water to high-priority use

IWRS Focal Areas



To make progress in a resource-constrained environment, we must focus our efforts.

State agencies have identified focal areas across the state that showcase how they will implement the overlapping goals from the IWRS and Executive Order 25-26. Agencies will increase the use of existing tools and modify or create new tools to address the specific location's unique conditions.

These focal areas include the Deschutes, Klamath, Umatilla, South Coast/Umpqua and Willamette basins. The highlighted work in these locations illustrates just a portion of the extensive efforts occurring across the state.

100,000
miles of rivers
and streams



Act, Assist, Adapt: Deschutes Basin



The Deschutes Basin has a diversity of landscapes and land uses as well as unique hydrogeology. It has experienced complex modifications and significant population growth, contributing to increased water use and declining habitat for threatened and endangered species.

Agencies will promote resiliency through piloting innovative and flexible water management solutions that provide water security to cities and irrigation districts, restore fish and wildlife habitat, and improve water quality and ecosystem function.

Below are a few of the many priority actions agencies are carrying out in this basin:



Act with Urgency to Protect Instream and Out-of-Stream Uses:

- P1.3 ODEQ and ODFW assist OWRD in updating the Deschutes Groundwater Mitigation Program
- P1.3 ODFW promotes instream flow restoration through water right acquisition and instream transfers/leases



Assist the State and Communities to Prepare for Water Scarcity:

- P2.4 ODEQ, ODFW, and OWRD continue to support water planning efforts, including the Deschutes Basin Water Collaborative
- P2.5 DLCD provides grants and other forms of technical assistance to support local wetland and wildlife inventory updates



Adapt to Water Scarcity by Stretching Our Water Supplies:

- P3.2 ODFW and OWEB support water conservation projects that are paired with protection of instream flow
- P3.5 OWRD coordinates with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs on transfer injury evaluations (per water rights settlement agreement)

Act, Assist, Adapt: Klamath Basin



Source: Adobe Stock

The Klamath Basin is challenged with competing water demands for farmers, Tribes, and threatened and endangered species. The region consistently experiences poor water quality, drought and water scarcity, and harmful algal blooms. Recent dam removals have allowed for the return of salmon to the basin, bringing renewed attention to cross-agency water management and fish screening needs.

Agencies will focus on continued collaboration to implement projects that increase resiliency and improve habitat and water quality conditions.

Below are a few of the many priority actions agencies are carrying out in this basin:



Act with Urgency to Protect Instream and Out-of-Stream Uses:

- P1.1 ODFW collaborates with water users to gain fish passage and fish screening compliance
- P1.1 ODA continues work and support within Strategic Implementation Areas (SIAs) of the Klamath Basin, including outreach and technical assistance provided by Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs)



Assist the State and Communities to Prepare for Water Scarcity:

- P2.4 ODA continues facilitating the Upper Klamath Basin Water Quality workgroup meetings, fostering proactive water quality goal development and actions
- P2.5 DLCD utilizes grants and other forms of technical assistance to support the update of local wetland and wildlife inventories



Adapt to Water Scarcity by Stretching Our Water Supplies:

- P3.3 ODFW scopes future staff position for flow restoration project development
- P3.3 OWEB continues to partner with ODEQ to administer Upper Klamath Water Quality Grant (IM-11) Program

Act, Assist, Adapt: South Coast and Umpqua



This region is characterized by critical water quality issues, including toxic algae blooms, high water temperatures, and sediment.

Agencies will focus efforts to strengthen partnerships and apply flexible implementation strategies that advance habitat conditions and water quality, including flow restoration and protection, riparian enhancement, and floodplain and estuary connectivity, to support the continued recovery of coho salmon and improve resiliency.

Below are a few of the many priority actions agencies are carrying out in this basin:



Act with Urgency to Protect Instream and Out-of-Stream Uses:

- P1.1 ODFW and OWRD develop an Instream Water Right Monitoring and Enforcement Memorandum of Understanding
- P1.3 ODFW implements the Rogue-South Coast Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan



Assist the State and Communities to Prepare for Water Scarcity:

- P2.4 DLCD works with communities to co-develop and implement coastal resilience plans
- P2.4 ODFW and OWRD participate in the South Umpqua River Coho Action Team (SURCAT) to measurably improve coho salmon populations in the basin



Adapt to Water Scarcity by Stretching Our Water Supplies:

- P3.3 ODFW partners with non-governmental organizations to expand flow restoration work
- P3.3 ODFW administers the Private Forest Accord and Oregon Conservation and Restoration Fund grant programs, providing an alternative funding source for flow restoration projects

Act, Assist, Adapt: Umatilla Basin



The Lower Umatilla Basin has ongoing challenges with chronic nitrate contamination of groundwater that is polluting drinking water.

Though the State published the Nitrate Reduction Plan for the Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area (LUBGWMA) in 2024 and is tracking implementation, nitrate contamination is a complex problem with no simple or quick solutions. Agencies will focus efforts on aligning existing tools and resources to reduce nitrate contamination in groundwater to protect public health and the environment.

Below are a few of the many priority actions agencies are carrying out in this basin:



Act with Urgency to Protect Instream and Out-of-Stream Uses:

- P1.3 ODFW promotes instream flow restoration through water right acquisition and instream transfers/leases in the basin
- P1.4 ODA, ODEQ, OHA, and OWRD continue to implement the LUBGWMA Nitrate Reduction Plan



Assist the State and Communities to Prepare for Water Scarcity:

- P2.4 ODEQ, ODFW, and OWRD continue to support water planning in the Walla Walla sub-basin
- P2.5 DLCD supports Tribal engagement and the identification and inventory of Tribal cultural resources to protect those resources



Adapt to Water Scarcity by Stretching Our Water Supplies:

- P3.3 ODEQ continues financing projects that address nitrate and other pollutant concerns in the LUBGWMA through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund
- P3.3 OWEB continues to support Measure 76-eligible activities that enhance water quality

Act, Assist, Adapt: Willamette Basin



The Willamette Basin is Oregon's most populated region, supporting a globally significant economy, diverse agriculture, and major water infrastructure. Ongoing population growth and development continue to increase pressure on water resources and fish and wildlife habitats.

Agencies are working toward protecting natural functions, improving water quality, supporting resilient water supply systems, and ensuring the basin remains a leading producer of high-value crops.

Below are a few of the many priority actions agencies are carrying out in this basin:



Act with Urgency to Protect Instream and Out-of-Stream Uses:

- P1.3 DLCD and DSL partner with OSU to develop local wetland inventories for the basin
- P1.3 ODA identifies tools for best management practices for agricultural production that protect water quality



Assist the State and Communities to Prepare for Water Scarcity:

- P2.1 OWRD continues participation in the Forecast Informed Operations project and federal re-allocation with federal dams and reservoirs
- P2.4 DLCD supports comprehensive planning efforts with local governments, including natural hazard mitigation, housing production, economic development, renewable energy, public infrastructure planning, and agricultural viability



Adapt to Water Scarcity by Stretching Our Water Supplies:

- P3.3 OWEB continues offering Restoration, Monitoring, Water Acquisition, Land Acquisition, and Drinking Water Source Protection grant programs
- P3.4 ODFW and OWRD explore options, including for mitigation, for new storage rights and reservoirs



Oregon's 2025 Integrated Water Resources Strategy

A framework for improving our understanding of Oregon's water resources and meeting our instream and out-of-stream needs, including water quantity, water quality, and ecosystem needs

Goal 1: Improve Our Understanding of Oregon's Water Resources

(1) Understand Oregon's Water Resources

Further Understand Limited Water Supplies and Systems
(groundwater, surface water, and their interaction)

Improve Water Quality and Quantity Information

Further Understand Our Water Management Institutions

Water Resource / Supply Information
1A Improve Water Resource Data Collection and Monitoring
1B Conduct Additional Groundwater Basin Investigations
1C Enhance Interagency Data Coordination
1D Support Basin-Scale Climate Change Research

← Objectives →

← Critical Issues →

← Actions →

Goal 1 (continued)

(2) Understand Instream and Out-of-Stream Needs

Further Define Instream Needs
(i.e., left-in-place water)

Further Define Out-of-Stream Needs / Demands
(i.e. diverted water)

Instream & Ecosystem Water Needs
2A Determine Instream Flow Needs (Quality and Quantity)
2B Determine Needs of Groundwater-Dependent Ecosystems
2C Develop Instream and Ecosystem Water Need Forecasts

Out of Stream Water Needs
3A Improve Water-Use Measurement and Reporting
3B Regularly Update Out-of-Stream Water Demand Forecasts
3C Determine Unadjudicated Water Right Claims
3D Authorize the Update of Water Right Records with Contact Information

Goal 1 (continued)

(3) Understand the Pressures that Affect Our Needs and Supplies

Climate Change

Economic Development

Population Change

Water and Energy

Natural Hazards

Land Use Planning

Water Infrastructure

Education and Outreach

Climate Change
Actions are included throughout the Strategy

Economic Development and Population Change
See Actions 2C and 3B

Water and Energy
4A Analyze the Effects on Water from Energy Development Projects and Policies
4B Develop Non-Traditional Hydroelectric Power
4C Promote Strategies that Increase/Integrate Energy and Water Savings

Natural Hazards
5A Plan and Prepare for Drought and Wildfire Resiliency
5B Plan and Prepare for Flood Events
5C Plan and Prepare for a Cascadia Earthquake and Tsunami Event

Land Use Planning
6A Improve Integration of Water Information and Land Use Planning
6B Encourage Low Impact Development Practices and Green Infrastructure

Water Infrastructure
7A Maintain, Upgrade, Decommission Water and Wastewater Infrastructure
7B Encourage Regional (Sub-Basin) Water and Wastewater Systems
7C Support Dam and Levee Safety

Education and Outreach
8A Support Implementation of K-12 Environmental Literacy Plan
8B Provide Career Training for the Next Generation of Water Professionals
8C Promote Community Education and Outreach
8D Identify Water Research Needs and Partnerships

← Objectives →

← Critical Issues →

← Actions →

Goal 2: Meet Oregon's Water Resource Needs

(4) Meet Oregon's Instream and Out-of-Stream Needs

Water Planning

Water Use and Management

Public Health

Healthy Ecosystems

Clean Water

Funding

Water Planning
9A Support Place-Based Integrated Planning and Other Water Planning Efforts
9B Coordinate Implementation of Natural Resource Plans
9C Partner with Tribes, Federal Agencies, and Neighboring States in Long-Term Water Resources Management
9D Improve State Interagency Coordination
9E Lead Meaningful Community Engagement

Water Use and Management
10A Improve Water-Use Efficiency and Water Conservation
10B Encourage Water Reuse Projects
10C Improve Access to Storage
10D Reach Environmental Outcomes with Non-Regulatory Alternatives
10E Provide an Adequate Field Presence
10F Strengthen & Improve Water Quantity and Water Quality Permitting Programs

Public Health
See Actions 12A through 12C

Healthy Ecosystems
11A Improve Watershed Health, Resiliency, and Capacity for Natural Storage
11B Develop Additional Instream Protections
11C Prevent and Eradicate Invasive Species
11D Protect, Restore, and Provide Access to Instream Habitat for Fish and Wildlife
11E Develop Additional Groundwater Protections

Clean Water
12A Ensure the Safety of Oregon's Drinking Water
12B Reduce the Use of and Exposure to Toxics and Other Pollutants
12C Implement Water Quality Pollution Controls

Funding
13A Fund Development and Implementation of Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy
13B Fund Water Resources Management Activities by State Agencies
13C Invest in Planning, Feasibility Studies, and Water Resource Project Implementation