



Oregon's 2025 Integrated Water Resources Strategy

September 2025



Office of Governor
TINA KOTEK



A Message from Governor Kotek

Dear Oregonians:

There is no more essential public resource than water.

Access to safe, clean drinking water should be a given for all Oregonians in every part of the state. The reality of growing water scarcity requires increased urgency in addressing water management and policy.

Our most vulnerable communities, our working and natural lands, our fish and wildlife, and our rivers, lakes and streams all face an existential threat, as the relentless march of climate change and other challenges test our resolve to protect that which sustains us.

Our state's Integrated Water Resources Strategy is the roadmap to both increasing our understanding of our water resources and improving the State's capacity to manage water. With water allocation and management policies in particular, there are many challenges – both with resource limitations, and with long-held practices and expectations that are now colliding with very real constraints on our existing water supply.

In the face of these pressing challenges, we must act—decisively, urgently, and in true partnership to protect and sustainably manage our surface- and groundwater reserves for generations to come. This Strategy charts a proactive pathway forward to advance strategic actions that will improve management of Oregon's water resources for the benefit of our communities, environment and the economy.

As stewards of our air, water, and landscapes, we cannot stand idly by and watch our beautiful and productive landscapes deteriorate in front of us. It is incumbent on us to act boldly, embrace creative, new solutions, and take strong action to enhance the resiliency of our natural resources and communities. The actions laid out in this Strategy are critical to achieving our shared goals and advancing water security for all Oregonians.



Governor Tina Kotek

The Integrated Water Resources Strategy

Water is a public resource essential to Oregon's communities, ecosystems, and economy. In 2009, the Oregon Legislature recognized that the protection and management of water and responsible use of public funds requires an integrated strategy, and directed the state to develop an Integrated Water Resources Strategy (Strategy).

The first Strategy, released in 2012, inspired many improvements in water resources data collection, management, planning, and funding for water projects.

The impact of climate change on our water has grown exponentially since 2012. **The 2025 Strategy elevates the role of climate change and identifies actions needed for mitigation, adaptation and resilience.**

The fundamental purpose of the Strategy remains the same: to better understand and meet Oregon's instream and out-of-stream water needs — environmental and consumptive — including water quantity, water quality, and ecosystem needs. The 2025 Strategy updates the wording of some objectives, critical issues, and adds two new actions, identifying areas where incentives or new policies could serve as powerful tools for progress.

This document serves as the introduction of the state's 2025 Integrated Water Resources Strategy.



KEY MILESTONES

2009

State directed to develop Strategy

2012

State releases first Strategy

2017

State releases second Strategy

2025

State releases third Strategy

The Future of Oregon's Water



The state of Oregon faces water shortages, declining water quality, and increasing climate impacts. This threatens our ability to have enough clean water for our people, our economy, and our environment, now and for generations to come.

The choices we make today will determine the legacy we leave for future generations.

For the long-term health and sustainability of Oregon's communities, ecosystems, and economy, we must act in thoughtful coordination on the immediate steps we can take today in preparation for a future of water scarcity.

100,000
miles of rivers
and streams

360
miles of
coastline

95%
of fresh water is
groundwater

An Outcomes-Driven Approach



To make progress in a resource-constrained environment, we must focus on a select number of actions.

Governor Kotek directed the 2025 Strategy to articulate clear outcomes that will best serve the water needs and interests of all Oregonians.

State agencies identified three priority areas, inspired by recent conversations with federally recognized sovereign tribal nations, communities impacted by groundwater contamination in the Umatilla Basin, dry domestic well issues in several basins, increasing water scarcity that impacts people, species, and ecosystems, and statewide effects of climate change.

Each priority area includes several tasks that require coordination across multiple agencies. There are 15 priority tasks summarized below, with more detail provided in Appendix E.

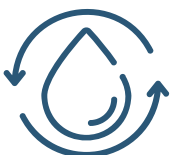
Priority Actions: *Act, Assist, and Adapt*



Priority 1: Act with Urgency to Protect Instream and Out-of-Stream Uses



Priority 2: Assist the State and Communities to Prepare for Water Scarcity



Priority 3: Adapt to Water Scarcity by Stretching our Water Supplies

A Future of Water Security

Key: IWRS Actions Appendix Reference



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

8C, 10E,
10F, 13B

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

8C, 10F,
13B

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

10F, 11A-E,
13B-C

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

11A-4E,
12A-C,
13B, 13C

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

10F, 13B

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

1A, 3A,
13B

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

1C, 13B

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

1A-D,
2A-C,
13B

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

9A, 9E,
13B

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

6A, 13B

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

10B, 10C,
10F, 13B,
13C

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

7A, 9A,
10A, 13B,
13C

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

11A-E, 12A,
13B, 13C

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

10C

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

10F, 13B