Place-Based Integrated Water Resources Planning

DRAFT Guidance for Planning Step 5

Plan Adoption and Implementation

September 13, 2019

OREGON

WATER RESOURCES
DEPARTMENT

Water is a finite resource with growing demands; water scarcity is a reality in Oregon. Water-related decisions should rest on a thorough analysis of supply, the demand/need for water, the potential for increasing efficiencies and conservation, and alternative ways to meet these demands.

Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy Policy Advisory Group (2016)

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Introduction

Planning Step 5, Plan Adoption and Implementation, is about bringing all the planning work accomplished during Planning Steps 1 through 4 together into a concise, *place-based integrated water resources plan* (the "Plan") that is locally-developed and adopted, state-recognized, and actionable. The Plan should tell a compelling story about the critical water issues in the planning area, the vision for the future, recommended actions, and a strategy for implementation.

This guidance is intended to assist in drafting the Plan and to explain the process for state agency review and formal recognition of the Plan by the Oregon Water Resources Commission (the "Commission"). This guidance includes the following sections:

- Purpose and Value of a Plan. This section briefly describes the purpose and value of a completed Plan.

- Developing the Plan. This section describes the need for a clear process and work plan, how the Plan can be developed using existing work products, the required Plan contents, other considerations, and the importance of gaining support for the Plan.

- State Agency Review of DRAFT Final Plan. This section describes the review team composition, review steps and timeline, criteria for Final Draft Plan review by state agency reviewers, outcomes of the state agency review, and Final Plan adoption by the planning group.

- Commission Recognition of Final Plan. This section describes the process and purpose of seeking recognition by the Commission of the locally-adopted Final Plan including the steps for Commission recognition and factors the Commission will consider.

- Appendix A. Example Plan Template. This appendix provides one example of how a planning group could organize their Plan. Groups are not required to use this template.

- Appendix B. State Agency Review Criteria. This appendix describes criteria state agencies will use to review the Final Draft Plan and includes the worksheet agency reviewers will use as well as draft templates for conveying results. The criteria are based on the 2015 Draft Place-Based Planning Guidelines and the statewide Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) Guiding Principles.

- Appendix C. Links to Relevant Funding Programs. As planning groups consider Plan implementation they may wish to see if any of these funding programs might be a good fit for their recommended actions.

Purpose and Value of a Plan

The purpose of a Plan is to communicate and engage a variety of audiences – water partners, the general public, potential funders, and decision-makers – about the community's water resources situation, critical water issues, its shared vision and goals, recommended actions, and a strategy for implementing the Plan.

The Plan can have significant value in several important ways:

- Competitive Edge for Funding Opportunities. State-recognized Plans built through a locally-led, collaborative process describe recommended actions that may be attractive investment opportunities for funding programs offered by state and federal agencies, philanthropic organizations, partners, local government, the state legislature, and others.

- Relationship Development. Developing the Plan has brought diverse water interests together, provided new opportunities for dialogue about difficult water issues, and built new levels of cooperation, trust, and respect for diverse perspectives about the different values of water. These relationships can have positive effects for many years, especially as the group transitions from planning to implementation of the Plan.

- Shared Vision for Action. Most communities in Oregon have not previously developed such a deep, common understanding of their local water resources and of the water challenges they face, and then developed actions to address those challenges. Being better informed and having a vision and Plan for a better future can lead to improved cooperation and proactive solutions to complex water challenges.

- Communication Tool. A Plan containing consensus-based solutions/strategies that are broadly supported by diverse interests is a powerful tool for communicating to decision-makers and the public what you need to succeed. The Plan will communicate to decision-makers - local, state, and federal - the community's vision and the financial and technical resources, and cooperation, needed to achieve that vision.

- Alignment of Plan with the Statewide Integrated Water Resources Strategy. The Plan should identify which of the planning group's recommended actions are consistent with IWRS recommended actions and will help the state achieve its 50-year vision of "…maintaining healthy water resources to meet the needs of Oregonians and Oregon's environment for generations to come." The Plan will also inform updates to the statewide IWRS and highlight opportunities for achieving statewide IWRS goals at the local level. It can help ensure alignment between local, state and federal actions that affect water management.

Developing the Plan

Utilize existing work products to develop the Plan. Summarize the planning effort into an accessible and readable document using planning step deliverables, reports, or other materials developed during the planning process. The executive summaries or conclusion sections of the planning step deliverables - modified and supplemented with key figures, graphs, maps, and tables - can be used to develop the majority of the Plan.

Establish a Clear Process and a Work Plan

As with previous planning steps, it is important to have a clear work plan for the progress and timing of work to complete Planning Step 5. The work plan should describe the scope and flow of work, responsibilities among participants, the timeline, work products the stakeholders will be asked to review, and key decision points.

If the planning group is interested in having state recognition of their Plan , then the group should include a state agency review in its process and work plan. That state agency review occurs when the Plan is nearly final, but still in draft form (meaning that it can be revised if necessary), a "Final Draft Plan." More information on that review and the time required is included later in this guidance.

Required Plan Contents

This section describes the required contents for the Plan. Plans do not have to follow this exact order and may contain additional or modified sections. These topics mirror the review criteria that will be used during the interagency review process. The topics should look familiar as almost all will have been covered in Planning Steps 1 through 4. Planning groups can use these topics as the primary Plan sections as shown in the example Plan template in Appendix A. Or groups can structure their Plan differently. Regardless of Plan organization, if a planning group seeks to have a *state-recognized place-based integrated water resources plan* then it must include these contents and meet the criteria covered in Appendix B.

- Executive Summary. An executive summary is a short overview of the main points of the longer Plan. It often includes the most important points or take-aways that the author wants to communicate, including key findings, conclusions, recommendations, justifications, and next steps. An executive summary can be a useful communication tool for those readers who are either not likely to read the entire Plan or to pique their interest in reading further.

- Planning Purpose. This should include a description of why the group undertook place-based water planning, the original issues the planning was initiated to address, and early organizers of the effort. The letter of interest, governance agreement and outreach materials may be good sources of this background information.

- Scope of the Plan. This should include a description of the planning area and the scope of the planning effort. The section should describe significant water features, water users or interests, key drivers and significant features, and a map of the planning area showing major streams, roads, cities, political boundaries, watershed boundaries, and any other geographic features you want to highlight. This should also include the planning timeframe that was used. It can also include a description of elements of water planning that were determined to be outside the scope of the planning effort.

- Plan Development Process, Outreach, and Participants. This content area may include information from the governance agreement, organizational structure, decision-making process, the planning group's vision or mission, the governance agreement signatories and other participants in the planning process. Additionally, this portion of the Plan might describe outreach efforts taken to achieve a *balanced representation of interests* and the results of that outreach. It could include a description of how the group worked to ensure an *open and transparent public process that fosters meaningful public participation*. Information on this topic may be found in materials developed during Planning Step 1 and/or in a Communication and Outreach Plan. This section could also include a description of the process that was used for Final Plan adoption.

- Understanding Water Resources Quantity, Quality, and Ecological Issues. This topic was the focus of Planning Step 2. Summarize the key information from Planning Step 2, which may include a summary of the status of water quantity, water quality, and ecological issues and the results and conclusions from the analysis completed. This should be a high level summary of the findings. Additional technical information can be included as an appendix or a reference to a stand alone document such as the Planning Step 2 materials.

- Current and Future Water Needs and Vulnerabilities. This topic covers the planning work and the results from Planning Step 3. Summarize key information about the instream and out-of-stream water needs/demands and vulnerabilities associated with a changing climate. Methods used to develop current and future needs can be included as an appendix or a reference to a stand alone document such as the Planning Step 3 materials.

- Data Gaps Identified. Data gaps should be identified and the planning group may also consider including a description of how data gaps impacted various aspects of the planning. Data gaps may be considered as a type of critical water issue. Data gaps may need proposed solutions or recommended actions to address them. However, in some

cases identifying the data gaps, even without a proposed solution, will be important to inform others, such as state agencies, of the need.

- Critical Water Issues. By the end of Planning Step 3 or early in Step 4, the planning group identified a set of critical water issues. These critical water issues should be described as well as the information and method used to identify them as critical water issues. The Plan should be as specific about the scope and scale of the critical water issues as the supporting information will allow. It may also be beneficial to include goals and metrics that the group can use to determine when they have been successful at addressing a critical water issue.

- Solutions or Recommended Actions. The "solutions" (or "strategies") should be described and related specifically to how they will solve a critical water issue or fill a data gap. The Planning Step 4 guidance provided this definition of **solutions:** *"the strategies, practices, programs, projects, studies, management actions, and other efforts taken to address a critical water issue*." In the 2017 Statewide IWRS, solutions proposed for implementation are termed "recommended actions." It would be beneficial to also describe the decision support system or process used to evaluate, select, or prioritize recommended actions.

- Plan Implementation Strategy. This section should describe the strategy for implementing the Plan. To the extent possible, the implementation strategy should describe which recommended actions will have initial focus, what feasibility studies or funding is needed to implement various aspects of the Plan, and the timeline for Plan implementation. It should also address who will lead various aspects of Plan implementation and what resources are needed to keep the planning group coordinated during implementation. One approach could be an implementation team coordinated by a project manager, and semi-annual stakeholder meetings where interested parties are updated on progress, help draft funding proposals, visit project sites, or review other work products. Keeping the planning group or core team working together, to some extent, and supporting each other over a sustained timeframe will be critical to the success of Plan implementation.

Other Plan Development Considerations

In addition to the required contents above, there are other topics or issues the planning group might consider during Plan development:

- Document Length. There is no prescribed length for a Plan, however a Plan should not be a voluminous collection of documents previously developed during the planning process. *The Plan should be a summary of the key conclusions, findings, and*

recommendations from the planning process. The planning group will need to balance the need to include enough information to make a compelling case for Plan implementation, but not too much information that will lose the reader. If additional supporting information is needed, consider including it as an appendix or referring the reader to another document.

- Audience. A Plan often has many audiences such as water partners, the general public, potential funders, and decision-makers. The planning group might consider who its primary audiences are and structure the Plan organization and content to speak to those audiences. For instance, if a group intends to pursue funding from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), it could be worthwhile to include plan components that would make the group eligible for OWEB funds.

- Visuals. Visuals such as maps, figures, graphs, diagrams, and pictures can be powerful ways to communicate information and increase the visual appeal and readability of your Plan.

- Supporting materials. As mentioned previously, these Plans can have a lot of value. But that does not mean they are always the best tool for communicating key information from the Plan or planning process. Other materials such as brochures, videos, one-pagers, or story maps may be more effective at communicating some aspects of the Plan to different audiences. These are not required, but the planning group might consider how supporting materials would add value. These materials could be developed as part of the early stages of Plan implementation.

- Setting Plan up for success. The time, energy, and thought invested in the planning process along with all the items listed above will help set the Plan up for success. Other ways the planning group can set the Plan up for success include: 1) telling a clear and compelling story that can be understood by both the planning group and others who have not been involved in the planning process, 2) clearly identifying immediate next steps to facilitate the transition to plan implementation, and 3) being thoughtful about wrestling with tough or complex issues versus deferring them to a later date (it may be tempting to quickly write up a plan, but it may be worth spending extra time to work through potential barriers to successful implementation).

Partner Review of Draft Plan and Public Support

Though planning groups will take different approaches to involving partners or participants in drafting the Plan, it is important that participants have a meaningful way to contribute so they are well-informed and invested in the Plan's contents and can support the Plan. Some

participants may need time to review the Draft Plan several times through or have other people within their organizations review the Draft Plan. Some audiences will benefit from a presentation of the Draft Plan including time for discussion and/or review of the entire Draft Plan. Allow adequate time for review, but also have clear deadlines so the group can meet it's agreed-upon deadlines. Once the feedback is returned, the planning group can decide what changes are needed to address any concerns and improve the Draft Plan to gain broad support.

It is recommended that the group do a self-assessment using the criteria in Appendix B in the final stages of plan development. The group can use the self-assessment to determine if any modifications are needed before the Final Draft Plan is submitted for the state agency review.

Once the planning participants have reached consensus on the Final Draft Plan as defined by the governance agreement, a broader community outreach effort should be undertaken to inform the public at large, obtain their feedback, and gain their support. This should not be the first time the broader community hears about the planning effort. The group may consider doing a public review process concurrently with the state agency review.

State Agency Review of Final Draft Plan

The 2015 Draft Guidelines state that the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) will conduct a state agency review of each Plan during the final stages of Plan development with the state IWRS Project Team Agencies: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The state agency review team will include a combination of policy staff, who are generally based in agency headquarters, and regional field staff who may be more familiar with the planning group submitting the Final Draft Plan.

The primary purpose of the state agency review is to make a recommendation to the Commission as to whether a Plan was developed in a manner consistent with the 2015 Draft Guidelines and statewide IWRS principles and should be recognized by the Commission.

State Agency Review Participants

Different agencies will bring different areas of expertise to the review. Table 1 highlights the expertise and focus of the IWRS Project Team Agencies. In some cases, it may be helpful to consult other agencies with other areas of expertise. Table 2 provides a list of other potential reviewers that OWRD may consult or invite to participate in the review process as needed. If a planning group wants OWRD to invite any particular agency beyond the IWRS Project Team, then they should let their designated Planning Coordinator know so he/she can reach out to the other state agency and invite them to participate.

Table 1. IWRS partner agencies that will participate in the state agency review

Agency	Area of Water Expertise and Review Focus
Oregon Water Resources Department	Water quantity/supply, water availability, water rights, water use
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality	Water quality
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	Ecology, instream water use and demands, water quality
Oregon Department of Agriculture	Agricultural water use and demands

Table 2. Additional reviewers that may be consulted in the state agency review

Agency	Area of Expertise and Review Focus
Oregon Health Authority	Public health and public water supply systems
Oregon Climate Change Research Institute	Climate change, vulnerabilities
Regional Solutions	Regional priorities, economic development
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board	Watershed restoration
Oregon Department of Energy	Water and energy nexus
Department of Land Conservation and Development	Land use planning
Department of State Lands	Wetlands
Oregon State Marine Board	Boater recreation
Infrastructure Finance Authority	Infrastructure funding

State Agency Review Steps and Timeline

OWRD will coordinate the state agency review process which may require approximately 90 days from submission of a Final Draft Plan to OWRD to the results being communicated and discussed with the Convener(s) as shown in Table 3 below. OWRD will keep the conveners apprised of progress during the review process. If the planning group incorporates changes based on results of the state agency review, it may take OWRD another 30 days to review and verify the changes in consulation with the reviewers. The exact timeline of the state agency review will depend on staff workload and capacity at the time of the request, and the length of the Plan.

If desired, the planning group may want to deliver a presentation to the interagency review team about their planning process and plan. A presentation to the agencies should be considered and in the group's review process and schedule and should be communicated to agencies as early as possible. Requesting a presentation may increase the length of time required for the review, with an in-person meeting in the basin requiring more time to schedule than a conference call/webinar. State agencies will do their best to participate in such a presentation, but may not be able to attend depending on timing and resource availability.

Table 3. State Agency Review Steps and Timeline

State Agency Review Steps	Estimated Timeline
Final Draft Plan submitted to OWRD Planning Coordinator*	Day 1
State agencies complete their review using guidance criteria	Day 60
State agency review team meeting to discuss and develop recommendation	Day 70
Consolidated comments sent to Convener(s)	Day 80
Review team follow-up call or meeting with Convener(s)	Day 90
Opportunity for planning group to revise Final Draft Plan (if needed)	TBD

*Provide advanced notice if possible to assist in scheduling.

State Agency Review Criteria

The criteria developed to assist the state agency review team are included in Appendix B. The state agency review team will review the Plan using the criteria to answer questions divided into three major categories: plan development, plan content, and plan implementation. The questions and criteria were developed primarily to assess whether the Plan includes the required Plan contents and demonstrates it was developed in a manner consistent with the 2015 Draft Guidelines and statewide IWRS principles. These criteria will also help the reviewers check if the Final Draft Plan includes the information needed to have the value described above.

Although there are aspects of the state agency review that require an assessment of the technical work quality, the state agency review will not include a comprehensive review of all technical work performed during the planning process. Planning groups are responsible for assuring the quality and accuracy of technical work conducted during each planning step.

Outcomes of the State Agency Review Process

OWRD will manage the state agency review process and communicate the review results in writing to the convener(s) describing what, if any, changes or improvements the planning group must make to their Final Draft Plan before the state agency team can provide an affirmative recommendation to the Commission. OWRD will be judicious in requesting changes and will only request changes that are essential to ensuring the Final Plan is consistent with the 2015 Draft Guidelines and IWRS Principles. Consolidated review team feedback will be provided in two categories: 1) required changes needed for an affirmative review team recommendation to the Commission, and 2) suggested changes that may help improve the Plan.

The state agency review can add value to the Plan, especially if any actions will necessitate working with state agencies during implementation. State agency reviewers will be reviewing the Plan consistent with the criteria in Appendix B, but will also be looking for opportunities to

strengthen the Plan by proactively identifying potential barriers and challenges and ways they may be able to support implementation.

Agencies may provide other comments for consideration of the planning group as they finalize the Plan and transition to implementation. Agencies may consider writing a letter of support for the Plan, which could form part of the package of information presented to the Commission. Each agency is welcome to determine the intent and content of their support letter. Content can range from general support for the Plan to identification of specific support that the agency may be able to offer. Agencies may consider highlighting any funding or other opportunities they offer that possibly could support Plan implementation.

State agency review and Commission recognition does not:
- Legally bind the State to perform any activity;
- Obligate the State to provide financial assistance for any activity;
- Obligate the State to rely on or utilize any analysis performed in the planning process;
- Indicate all the Plan contents are technically accurate as technical accuracy is the responsibility of the planning groups; and
- Indicate that a proposed action has been approved or is being directly promoted by OWRD or other agencies.

Adoption of Final Plan by Planning Group

The planning group should formally adopt its Final Plan after the state agency review is complete, and the planning group has made any revisions required or recommended by the state agencies. The group should follow the decision-making process outlined in their governance agreement to formally adopt the Final Plan. Following adoption of the Final Plan, the Convener can make arrangements with the OWRD Planning Coordinator to present the Final Plan to the Commission for state-recognition at a regularly-scheduled Commission meeting.

Commission Recognition of Final Plan

This section describes the process of seeking state recognition and the role of the Commission in recognizing the Final Plan. It is not required that a Plan be recognized by the Commission and each planning group can decide whether it desires such state recognition. Commission meetings are held four times a year and it generally takes two months advanced notice to be placed on the agenda.

Steps for Commission Recognition

If a planning group would like the Commission to formally recognize the Final Plan, the process will follow these steps:

1. State agency review results in a recommendation that the Final Draft Plan be recognized;
2. Planning Group adopts a Final Plan;
3. Convener(s) work with Planning Coordinators to request time on a regular Commission agenda;
4. Public notification of the Final Plan on the Commission agenda;
5. Posting of Final Plan, staff report and PowerPoint on OWRD's website;
6. Convener(s) present Final Plan to the Commission;
7. Public comments to the Commission at the meeting; and
8. Commission discussion, motion and decision.

Factors in Commission Recognition

The Commission will make a decision after considering the following factors:

- The Convener(s) presentation of the Final Plan;
- The state agency review team recommendation;
- The Commissioners' review of the Final Plan;
- Letters of support from partners, state agencies and others[1]; and
- Public comments received prior to or during the Commission meeting.

State-recognized Plans will be memorialized by the Commission in a formal resolution signed by the Commissioners. The resolution will recognize that the Plan was developed following the 2015 Draft Guidelines and statewide IWRS principles and will recognize the value of the Plan and its implementation in helping to meet Oregon's instream and out-of-stream water needs.

Plan Updates and Subsequent State Recognition

It is up to the planning group to decide if, when, and/or how frequently it would like to revisit and/or revise their Plan. This could include a specific process or criteria for determining when the plan needs to be revised or updated. The planning groups may choose to periodically update the Commission on progress and accomplishments, needs, and Plan revisions as they implement their Plans. The planning group may consider seeking state recognition again when the Plan is substantially changed.

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[1] Letters of support are great ways for planning partners and other to express support for a plan to the Commission. However, they are not required to receive state recognition.

Appendix A. Example Plan Template

Executive Summary

Introduction

Planning Purpose

Geographic Scope

Plan Organization

Chapter 1: The Planning Process (Planning Step 1)

Planning Participants

Governance and Organizational Structure

Public Outreach

Collaborative, Open and Transparent Public Process

Chapter 2: Water Resources (Planning Step 2)

Water Resource Supply

Water Quality

Ecological Issues

Data Gaps

Chapter 3: Current Uses and Future Water Demands (Planning Step 3)

Instream Demands

Out of Stream Demands

Data Gaps

Natural Hazards and Climate Change

Chapter 4: Critical Water Issues and Recommended Actions (Planning Step 4)

Critical Water Issues (including data gaps)

Solutions Considered

Recommended Actions

Chapter 5: Plan Implementation Strategy (Planning Step 5)

Priority Actions

Timeline

Resource Needs

Implementation Team

Keeping the Public Engaged

Appendices: References, Acronyms, Acknowledgements, Signatory Page

Appendix B. State Agency Review Criteria

State Agency Review Criteria

The state agency review criteria are organized into three categories: plan development, plan content, and plan implementation. Each criterion includes one or more questions for the reviewers to address as well as examples of what indicators demonstrate that a Plan has met the criteria.

Plan Development

One of the key differences between place-based water planning and other forms of planning is the process by which a plan is developed. A place-based integrated water resources plan ("Plan") is developed through a five-step process that is locally-led and collaborative, voluntary and not regulatory, done in partnership with the state, and conducted through an open and transparent process (among additional planning principles). As such, the first component of the state agency review is to reflect on whether the plan was developed using a process consistent with the Guidelines and IWRS Guiding Principles. A Plan should describe how it was developed. That description should provide insights into whether the plan development criteria are satisfied. The review of Plan development is optional for all agency reviewers with the exception of OWRD. Input from other agencies is welcome, but not required.

Balanced Representation of Interests

Review Question: Did a balanced representation of interests participate in the development of the plan?

The first step of place-based water planning is to develop a collaborative and inclusive process that includes a balanced representation of interests to the best extent possible. This includes instream and out-of-stream interests from various levels of government, tribes, stakeholders, and private and non-profit sectors. Indication of a balanced representation of interests includes:

- Documentation of outreach to and active participation of representatives of all levels of government, private and non-profit sectors, tribes, stakeholders, and the public
- Process for engaging all interests in a fair and balanced manner
- Active participation from instream and out-of-stream interests
- Balanced attention given to instream and out-of-stream needs
- In the event some water sectors did not actively participate, then a description of efforts made to engage that sector should be provided

Indication that a planning process did not include a balanced representation of interests includes:

- Planning group membership is dominated by one sector or interest
- Either instream or out-of-stream needs were not identified by the plan or were significantly out of balance

- Recommended actions or solutions are focused on only one sector

Collaborative and Integrated Process

Review Question: Was a collaborative and integrative process used to develop the plan?

A Plan must be developed through a structure and process that fosters collaboration, bringing together various interests to work toward the common purpose of meeting the instream and out-of-stream water needs of the community, cultures, economy, and environment. Indication of a collaborative and integrated process includes:

- A structured decision-making process for reaching consensus
- A description of any conflict resolution efforts or processes used during plan development (i.e., how did the planning group work through conflicts or disagreements?)

Indication that the Plan was not developed through a collaborative or integrated process includes:

- Products or documentation developed by different sectors or interests that were not integrated together to form a shared understanding
- Decisions to adopt the plan or interim work products were not done in accordance with the planning groups' adopted governance agreement

Public Process

Review Question: Was the plan developed using an open and transparent public process that provided opportunities for meaningful public involvement?

Throughout the planning process, the planning groups should have provided the public with opportunities for meaningful engagement, where the public could affect the outcomes of the planning process. Reviewers should note if a public process was evident and documented within the submitted Plan. Indication of an open and transparent process includes:

- The make-up of the planning group participants – was the public invited to participate in meetings, planning discussions, and/or plan development?
- Public notices of meetings that demonstrate considerable effort to engage the public
- Opportunity for public comment or input into any reports produced by the planning process as well as opportunity for comment and input into the plan itself
- Were meetings accessible in both scheduled times and location

Indication that the Plan was not developed through a public process includes:

- Plan development occurred behind closed doors
- The public was not invited or was excluded from participation
- Minimal public meetings were held
- Public input was not sought at key steps in plan development

- Outreach efforts were not documented in the Plan

Plan Content

This section is largely documentation of work done during planning steps 2, 3 and 4.

Scope of Planning Effort

Review Question: Does the plan identify the scope of the planning effort?

A Plan must define the area or "place" to which it applies. Reviewers will look to see if the plan defines the geographic boundaries of the planning areas as well as the temporal scale. Indication of a defined scope includes:
- A map and description of the planning area including characteristics such as terrain, population centers, major roads, river systems, etc.
- A list of watersheds, sub-watersheds, and aquifers included in the planning area
- Inclusion of a planning timeframe/horizon (i.e., 20 years? 50 years?)

Indication of an undefined geographic scope:
- Lack of a map and any clear description of the planning area's geographic boundaries
- Inconsistent watersheds or aquifers described within the plan
- No consideration of a planning timeframe

Understanding Water Resources Supply, Quality, and Ecological Issues

Central Review Questions:
- *Does the plan document an understanding of the water resource supply, quality, and ecological issues in the planning area?*
- *Does the plan document this understanding for both groundwater and surface water?*

A Plan should include a high-level summary of the efforts made to describe and assess current water supplies, water quality, and the status of ecosystem health to determine any existing challenges and potential opportunities. Reviewers should comment on the completeness of work that resulted from this Step, including whether the group identified existing challenges and potential opportunities.

Indication of an understanding of water resource supply, quality, and ecological issues includes:
- A description of the current and expected future water supply in the planning area, including groundwater and surface water
- A description of the current and future water quality in the planning area, including groundwater and surface water
- A description of the current and future ecological issues in the planning area, including groundwater and surface water
- Identification of relevant gaps in data and information

Indication of a lack of understanding of the water resource supply, quality, and ecological issues includes:

- Exclusion of water supply, water quality, or ecological issues from the plan (note: in some cases the information needed is not available; acknowledging a data gap is an acceptable way to meet this plan requirement)
- Inclusion of raw data or information without any analysis or synthesis to draw conclusions about the status of water in the planning area and what challenges or opportunities the area has as a result of that status

Current and Future Water Needs

Review Question: Does the Plan document the current and future instream and out-of-stream water needs of the planning area?

The Plan should summarize how much water is needed to meet current and future water needs-both instream and out-of-stream. Plans should address how climate change, population growth, and land use affect water resources and the ability to meet these water needs within the community. Meeting water needs should be considered within the context of specific watersheds, accounting for the hydrological, geological, biological, climatic, socio-economic, cultural, legal, and political conditions of a community. Reviewers should comment on the completeness of work that resulted from this Step, including whether comparable effort and treatment was given to defining instream and out-of-stream needs. Indication that a Plan documents current and future water needs includes:

- A list of critical water issues in the planning area
- Identification of water needs relative to the planning timeframe
- Descriptions of current and future consumptive water needs for different out-of-stream uses, including municipal, industrial, and agricultural
- Descriptions of current and future instream needs for different uses, including fish and wildlife, ecological functions, water quality, recreation and scenic uses, and cultural significance
- Descriptions of how climate change, population growth, and land use affect water resources and the ability to meet these needs within the community
- Identification of times and locations where water needs are not met or are likely not to be met in the future
- Identification of data and information gaps and uncertainties

Indication that a plan did not sufficiently document current and future needs includes:
- Failure to document both instream and out-of-stream needs
- Failure to document future needs
- No description of coming pressures (e.g., climate change, population growth, etc.)

Compliance with State Law

Review Task: Identify any plan content that may not be in compliance with state law particular to your agency.

A Plan cannot change existing laws or jeopardize existing water rights. A group can identify that a solution requires that a law be changed; however, the plan does not carry the weight of law. Reviewers should note those proposed activities that may be perceived as changing laws or jeopardizing existing water rights. All solutions and approaches should be legal according to state and federal law and policies, though the review team only includes state agency representatives who may not have sufficient expertise to assess compliance with federal law. Any apparently illegal activities should be identified for the group. Indication that a plan complies with state laws and policies includes:

- Proposed solutions acknowledge authorities of existing agencies and mechanisms for pursuing permits or other regulatory approvals needed
- Identification of legal barriers that might interfere with a proposed solution

> **Proposing Statute, Rule, and/or Policy Changes in a Plan**
>
> It is not illegal to propose pursuing a change in law or policy. Oregon's laws have evolved over time and will continue to evolve. However, that does not mean that changing the law will be easy or successful.
>
> For those reasons, the IWRS recommends pursuing solutions that have an established legal process whenever possible. However, planning groups can include recommendations to pursue changes in statute, rule, or policy. Please remember that a state agency recommendation to accept a Plan is not an agency endorsement of a proposed law change or proposed solution.

Indication that a Plan does not comply with state laws and policies includes identification of illegal solutions, or solutions where the state lacks the authority to facilitate or assist them without acknowledgment that a statute, rule, or policy change is required.

NOTE: The state agency review does not constitute a full legal review – actions not identified here may not have had enough detail associated in order to determine their legality.

Solutions or Recommended Actions

Review Questions:
- *Does the plan identify solutions or recommended actions that address the critical water issues identified during the planning process?*
- *Does the plan identify integrated solutions to the extent practical?*
- *Do the solutions identified adhere to the IWRS Guiding Principles listed in Appendix C?*
- *Does the plan include recommendations for addressing information/data gaps?*

Plans should include a suite of solutions or recommended actions to address the community's water-related challenges with the goal of meeting both instream and out-of-stream needs. Solutions can include methods for addressing existing data and analysis gaps. Table B.1 lists the sub-criteria for evaluating the plan's proposed solutions and recommended actions against the IWRS Guiding Principles.

Table B.1. IWRS Guiding Principles Relevant to Solutions or Recommended Actions

Principle	Positive Indicators	Indicators of plan deficiency
Integration	• To the extent possible, solutions work to address multiple needs • Solutions recognize the relationship between water quantity, water quality, and ecosystem needs	• There is no evidence of an attempt to integrate solutions, where practical
Balanced	• The suite of solutions listed work to address both instream and out-of-stream needs	• Solutions only address instream or out-of-stream needs (not both) or are disproportionally focused on one or the other
Enhance sustainability	• Solutions seek to improve sustainable management of water resources by balancing the needs of Oregon's environment, economy, and communities	• Solutions only address the needs of one group • Solutions are not forward looking; acknowledging climate change and population growth
Accountable and enforceable actions	• Actions comply with existing state laws and policies • Actions include measures of success	• Solutions are illegal* • If feasible, solutions include a description of how success may be measured
Science-based, flexible approaches	• Solutions are based on or supported by on best available science and local input	• Solutions do not accurately reflect or respond to best available science as documented in background information/best available science reflected in the supporting documentation
Streamlined	• To the extent possible, the plan avoids recommendations that are overly complicated, legalistic, or administrative	• The suite of solutions is mostly comprised of projects which are difficult to understand or seem infeasible
Reasonable cost	• Plans weigh the costs and benefits to determine whether one approach is better than another, or whether an approach is worth pursuing • Solutions may reduce the costs of delivering services to the state's residents, without neglecting social and environmental costs	• Solution prioritization does not consider estimated cost

Addresses In-stream and Out-of-Stream Needs

Review Question: Does the plan consider both instream and out-of-stream needs?

Planning groups should quantify current and future instream and out-of-stream water needs in the planning area, keeping in mind that such needs encompass water quantity, quality and ecosystem needs. While the instream and out-of-stream water needs may not be equal, consideration of water needs and solutions should be balanced. Indication that a Plan does give a balanced consideration of needs includes:

- Information about the water needs for the water sectors: agriculture, municipal, instream and ecology, and industry
- Engagement from multiple interests representing each water sector
- Solutions are considered and/or included for each water sector throughout the planning area

Indication that the Plan does not give balanced consideration includes:

- A plan focused primarily on one primary sector with little or no information about the water needs of other sectors
- Recommended actions or solutions are focused to primarily benefit one water sector

NOTE: It is possible that NO critical water issues were identified for a water sector in the planning area.

Validity of Information

Review Question: Is the Plan based on accurate, appropriate, and adequate information in the characterization of the water resources, identification of critical issues, and selection of solutions?

Decisions should be based on best available science, accurate information, and local input. Having a balanced representation of interests involved in the planning process and including the state as a partner will help ensure information presented in the Plan is reviewed, well-vetted, and verified. Critical water issues in the Plan should be substantiated by data or information in the plan. Recommended actions or solutions should correspond to the identified critical water issues. Indication of the validity of information includes:

- Citation of data sources
- A description of appropriate technical approaches used to analyze the data or information demonstrates the appropriation information, data, and analyses were used
- Inclusion of assumptions and description of appropriate use of technical information
- Inclusion of data gaps and how the gaps affect planning
- Critical issues and solutions identified in the plan are supported by appropriate data and information

Indication that the Plan is not based on accurate, appropriate, and adequate information includes:

- Invalid information may be outdated
- Data inappropriate for the purpose described, of the wrong scale or precision
- Conflicting data and information in the plan
- Critical issues or recommended actions are not supported by the appropriate data or information

Comprehensive assessments of the technical information used in the Plan do not fall under the scope of the state agency review.

Plan Adoption and Implementation

Planning Step 5 of Place-based water planning is to "Adopt and implement a place-based integrated water resources plan." Plan adoption by the planning group is not the end of the process, but signals a shift to a new phase: plan implementation. This review category seeks to discern whether the Plan looks ahead towards implementation and is set up for success. While the success of Plan implementation is dependent on a number of factors, (many outside of the planning group's control) the state agency review will help discern whether the Plan is well-positioned for implementation, to the extent feasible.

Plan Adoption by Planning Group

Review Question: Does the planning group have a sound process for Final Plan adoption?

If plan adoption by the planning group is rushed or does not follow a good process, then the value of the Plan may be reduced in the eyes of partners or funders. This could negatively impact future Plan implementation. The state agency review of the Plan happens shortly before Final Plan adoption. This allows for the planning group to consider and incorporate feedback from the state agency review prior to planning partner adoption of the Final Plan. Reviewers should determine if the group has a sound approach for formally adopting the Plan that is consistent with the collaborative process adopted by the planning group. Indication of a sound approach for Final Plan adoption:

- An explanation of the process the planning group will use to adopt or approve the Final Plan
- A reliance on the consensus-based decision making process identified by the planning group and documented in their governance agreement
- Indication that the approach for plan adoption was clearly communicated to planning group partners

Indication of a poor adoption approach includes:

- No opportunity for planning group partners to express concern or provide critical feedback on the Plan
- Inadequate time for partners to review the Plan

- Disregard for decision-making approaches previously adopted by the planning group (e.g., switching from a consensus or consensus minus 1 approach to simple voting majority)

Plan Implementation Strategy

Review Question: Does the Plan propose a clear strategy for implementation?

The Plan should describe how it will be implemented, who will be responsible for implementation, and how implementation will be coordinated and funded. The Plan should have a high likelihood of leading to the implementation of local solutions.

Indication of a strategy for implementation includes:
- Identification of next steps for some or all of the solutions or recommended actions listed in the Plan, including those that are complex and may require additional feasibility or review
- Identification of roles in plan implementation, including who might pursue different solutions or efforts to fill information gaps
- Identification of barriers to solutions or plan implementation and a path forward for addressing those barriers
- Prioritization of proposed solutions and proposed sequence of implementation
- Timelines for plan implementation
- The plan is formatted in a way that allows for easy use in seeking support and funds
- The plan explains how partners and others may use the plan (or alternatively how it should not be used)
- Identification of a timeline for plan revision or amendment

Indication that a Plan does not include an implementation strategy includes:
- Vague, unclear, or no next steps described
- No explanation of who is responsible for plan implementation (note: a general statement that partners or planning group members will individually implement pieces is acceptable, but some level of coordination and communication about progress and success should be evident)
- No acknowledgement of a change in roles and responsibilities as the Plan moves from planning to implementation

Agency Review Worksheet

Instructions: Read through the submitted Plan and review it considering the questions about plan development, content, and implementation below. Check whether the Plan meets these criteria or does not meet the criteria. Include comments about how the Plan did or did not meet the criteria. Please be thoughtful and constructive in your feedback.

Plan Development (Optional for other than OWRD)

Category	Review Question	Yes	No
Balanced Representation of Interests	Did a balanced representation of interests participate in the development of the plan?		
Collaborative and Integrated Process	Was a collaborative and integrated process used to develop the plan?		
Public Process	Was the plan developed using an open and transparent public process that fostered public participation?		
OWRD Consultation	Was the plan developed in consultation with OWRD?		

Reviewer Comments on Plan Content

Plan Content

Category	Review Question	Yes	No
Scope of Planning Effort	Does the Plan identify the scope of the planning effort, including geographic area?		
Understanding Water Resource Supply, Quality, & Ecological Issues	Does the Plan document an understanding of the water resource supply, quality, and ecological issues in the planning area?		
	Does the Plan document this understanding for both groundwater and surface water?		
Current and Future Water Needs	Does the Plan document the current and future instream and out-of-stream water needs of the planning area?		
Solutions or Recommended Actions	Does the Plan identify solutions or recommended actions that respond to or address the critical water issues identified during the planning process?		
	Does the Plan identify integrated solutions to the extent practical?		
	Do the solutions identified adhere to the IWRS Guiding Principles?		
Addresses In-stream and Out-of-Stream Needs	Does the Plan consider current and future instream and out-of-stream needs in a balanced manner?		

| Validity of Information | Is the Plan based on accurate, appropriate, and adequate information in the characterization of the water resources, identification of critical issues, and selection of solutions? | | |
| Information and data gaps | Does the Plan clearly identify information and data gaps? | | |

Reviewer Comments on Plan Content (including compliance with State law)

Plan Adoption and Implementation Strategy

Category	**Review Question**	**Yes**	**No**
Plan Adoption by Planning Group	Does the planning group have a sound process for final review and adoption of the Final Plan?		
Implementation Strategy	Does the Plan propose a strategy or approach for implementation?		

Reviewer Comments on Plan Content

Template for Communicating Inter-Agency Review Results

Below are two draft templates for letters OWRD may use to communicate the results of the state agency review to the planning group. OWRD and its partner agencies may amend this template and tailor any letter to the specific plan being reviewed. These templates are provided to provide some information as to what a planning group can expect to receive as a result of the state agency review.

Letter Template for Recommended Plan

Dear [Insert Convener(s)] and members of [insert planning group name],

Thank you for your submission of the Final Draft of your Place-Based Integrated Water Resources Plan for the [insert planning area]. The Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) Agency Project Team (the Oregon Water Resources Department, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife) reviewed your plan and determined that it adheres to the 2015 Draft Place-based water planning Guidelines and IWRS Guiding Principles. Therefore, the agencies recommend the Oregon Water Resources Commission (Commission) recognize your plan as Place-Based Integrated Water Resources Plan.

In addition to their recommendation that the Commission recognize your plan, the agencies offer the following feedback for your consideration.

Recommended Revisions
[The letter may include recommended changes to the plan that would strengthen or improve the plan, but are not required for recognition by the Commission.]

Strengths of the Plan
[The letter may also include a summary of the plan strengths.]

Other Agency Comments
[The letter may also provide other comments related to plan development, content, or implementation. For example, it may identify shared goals of the plan and an agency.]

We commend your hard work in developing an Integrated Water Resource Plan and we look forward to working with you to coordinate a presentation of your plan to the Commission who will decide whether to formally recognize your plan. Please contact [insert contact person] at [insert contact information] to discuss the Commission schedule and when you might be to present your plan to the Commission.

Sincerely,

[insert name]
Planning Coordinator, Oregon Water Resources Department

Letter Template for Plan That Is Not Recommended

Dear [Insert Convener(s)] and members of [insert planning group name],

Thank you for your submission of the Final Draft of your Place-Based Integrated Water Resources Plan for the [insert planning area]. The Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) Agency Project Team (the Oregon Water Resources Department, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife) reviewed your plan and determined that it currently does not adhere to the 2015 Draft Place-based water planning Guidelines (Guidelines) and/or IWRS Guiding Principles. Therefore, the agencies recommend that you continue to work through your planning process to address the items listed below. In addition to those changes that are required, the agencies provided other feedback, including recommended changes as well as strengths of the Plan.

Required Changes to Demonstrate Adherence to Guidelines and IWRS Guiding Principles
[The letter will describe why they found that the plan did not adhere to the Guidelines or IWRS Guiding Principles and offer suggestions for how the planning group might address the issue.]

Recommended Revisions
[The letter may include recommended changes to the plan that would strengthen or improve the plan, but are not required for recognition by the Commission.]

Strengths of the Plan
[The letter may also include a summary of the plan strengths.]

Other Agency Comments
[The letter may also provide other comments related to plan development, content, or implementation. For example, it may identify shared goals of a plan and an agency.]

If you have any questions about this feedback, please contact me at [insert contact information]. Place-based water planning is done in partnership with the State and we would like to work with you to address these items so that a revised plan can be recommended to the Oregon Water Resources Commission (Commission) for recognition as a Place-Based Integrated Water Resources Plan. We commend your hard work to develop an Integrated Water Resources Plan and look forward to working with you to revise your plan so that it adheres to the 2015 Draft Place-based water planning Guidelines and IWRS Guiding Principles.

Sincerely,

[insert name]
Planning Coordinator, Oregon Water Resources Department

Appendix C. Links to Relevant Funding Programs (Forthcoming)