Water Planning and Related Policy Option Packages

Below is a framework for phases of a successful approach to understand and identify our instream and out-of-stream water needs and challenges and then implement solutions to meet those water needs. Investments are needed at each phase in order to move from data to ideas to implementation.

Orienting Figure 1 – Water Planning and Implementation

- **Foundational work**
  - (data collection, analysis, capacity building)

- **Identify strategies**
  - (develop understanding of water challenges and identify actions in a plan)

- **Refine strategies**
  - (feasibility)

- **Implement strategies**
  - (obtain funds, design, construction, monitoring)
Selected POPs – High Level Description
From Data to Ideas to Implementation of Solutions

POPs for Discussion at Workshop

• **ZC - Providing Accessible Foundational Data for Water Planning:** Staffing resources to provide public access to the WRD data most critical to water planning (estimates of water use and water demand forecasts at the basin or regional planning scale) and improved Water Use Reporting database ($1.05 million; 4 FTE).

• **ZA - Financial Assistance for Water Planning and Coordination of Plan Implementation:** Funding for a new competitive, multi-purpose water planning grant fund for plan development and implementation coordination, designated funding for the four places that piloted place-based planning, and 1 staff person to support those efforts ($2.5 million; 2 FTE, to be paired with Legislative Concept on Water Planning).

• **Z - Basin implementation funding:** For discussion – Should the agency also propose designated funding for implementation of projects identified through collaborative processes such as the Walla Walla, Harney, Midcoast, Deschutes, Upper Grande Ronde, Lower John Day, and Umatilla?

Other-Related POPs

• **T - Moving to Solutions through Basin and Complex Issue Coordination and engaging on Bi-state water management issues:** Senior level staffing to work through complex water management challenges in the Southwest Region, North Central Region, East Region, Klamath/Lake Abert/Summer & Goose Lake Basins, and on bi-state issues ($1.7 million; 6 FTE).

• **U - Funding and support for investments in feasibility studies, water projects, and wells:** Funding for grants for feasibility studies, and for implementation of water projects through competitive grant program ($26.2M), make position permanent to support the new well funds, and funding for online application/grant database for improved applicant/grant experience and reporting on metrics ($27.2 million; 1 FTE).
T - Moving to Solutions through Basin and Complex Issue Coordination and engaging on Bi-state water management issues

Issue Description:
1) Water management is increasing complex with increasing water demands and decreasing or shifting supply expected in the future as a result of climate change or other factors. Staff resources are needed to work with basin interests to pursue solutions to water supply challenges and address an uncertain water future, specifically in the Southwest Region, North Central Region, East Region and Klamath/Lake Abert/Summer & Goose Lake Basin.
2) A recent Supreme Court Decision (Mississippi vs Tennessee) recently pronounced that states should move to achieve “equitable apportionment” of groundwater where aquifers cross state boundaries.
3) WRD has long benefitted from having a Special Assistant to the Director who is a highly experienced senior-level water professional that can provide expert guidance and representation on the most complex and controversial water issues. This position, however, has been unbudgeted.

Proposal: $1.7 million; 6 FTE
1) 4 Permanent NRS 5s - one for each: Southwest Region, North Central Region, East Region and Klamath/Lake Abert/Summer & Goose Lake Basin. These positions would coordinate on complex issues in order to help see progress on solutions to those issues and would complement the work of the existing positions focusing on the Northwest Region and Central Oregon. Staff will engage this work through an equity lens and work to ensure that underrepresented and under-served populations are included in these coordination efforts.
2) 1 NRS 5 Bi-State Water Issues Coordinator: This position will be responsible for coordinating with internal staff, other agencies, and stakeholders to represent Oregon in conversations pertaining to groundwater and surface water resources shared with other states.
3) 1 PEM F Special Assistant to the Director: This position would work on and represent the agency on the most complex and controversial water issues.
4) Placeholder: additional resources for Willamette Reallocation - technical or field staff.

U - Funding and support for investments in feasibility studies, water projects, and wells

Issue Description:
1) Oregon has significant need for investment in water infrastructure that is in need of update, replacement, or new construction to address water needs today. Funding for water supply solutions and the necessary resources to facilitate those investments including Feasibility Study Grants, Water Projects Grants and Loans, Water Well Repair, Replacement and Abandonment have been historically provided by Department funding programs.
2) There have also been additional funding programs added to the Department's purview (e.g., two new domestic well funds) and additional staff are needed to provide timely service to our customers.
3) There is a large need for a grant database.

Proposal: $27.2 million; 1 FTE
1) Request additional funding to be awarded as grants for the following programs:
   o $20M - WPGL (SB 839) - Lottery Revenue Bonds
   o $2M - FSG (SB 1069) - Lottery Revenue Bonds
   o $4M – Well Abandonment, Repair, and Replacement Fund (HB 2145) - General Fund
   o $200K - Harney Well Remediation Fund (HB 3092) - General Fund

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2) 1 FTE NRS 4 Well Fund Coordinator (permanent): Make current limited duration position permanent to operate the Water Well Abandonment Repair and Replacement Fund (HB 2145) and oversee Stage 2 full roll out of program and operate Harney Domestic Well Remediation Fund (HB 3092).

3) $775k: $750K GF one time for grant database development and $25K GF ongoing for maintenance for a combined online application tracking and grant management system that will improve applicant/grantee experience and increase ability to report out on metrics and grant outcomes.

Z - Basin implementation funding

Issue Description: Currently, there no separate designated funding mechanism for implementation of projects identified through collaborative processes such as the Walla Walla, Harney, Midcoast, Deschutes, Upper Grande Ronde, Lower John Day, and Umatilla. Areas that have undertaken collaborative processes are able to apply for grants and loans through existing programs and often are competitive; however, there is not separate specific project implementation funding.

Proposal: This is included for discussion purposes as some areas have expressed a desire for project implementation funding. We are looking to hear from you about whether programs should go through existing funding channels or whether separate funding should be put forward.

POP ZA: Financial Assistance for Water Planning and Coordination of Plan Implementation

Issue Description: Ensuring that they Department can provide a financial assistance program that helps communities understand water resources and water challenges, and then develop strategies or solutions to sustainably meet instream and out of stream water needs is critical. Communities need a flexible planning and coordination fund that can support a variety of planning efforts, including: pre-planning situational assessments, small communities developing Water System Master Plans or Water Management and Conservation Plans, drought contingency planning, integrated water resources planning, and implementation coordination.

Proposal: $2.5 million; 2 FTE (to be paired with Legislative Concept on Water Planning)

1) 1 NRS 4 Planning Coordinator (permanent): This position would work with the existing Planning Coordinator to launch and operate the program. These positions would also develop guidance and assist groups with water planning.

2) 1 FTE NRS 2 Grant Support Specialist (permanent): Add one new position to provide grant administration support (e.g., process requests for funds, provide other support to grantees) for this and other funding opportunities.

3) $1.5 million for multi-purpose planning grant fund and to support grants for water planning around the state.

4) $500K grant funds to support places finishing up development of a place-based integrated water resources plan (Harney) and places in need of coordination funding to support implementation of a state recognized place-based integrated water resources plans (Upper Grande Ronde, Lower John Day, Mid-Coast, and Deschutes are all expected to be in this place by July 2023). This is $50K/year per place. Cash match of at least 25% will be a requirement of state-supported planning so $50,000 a year is not intended to cover all of the planning costs.
**POP ZC: Providing Accessible Foundational Data for Water Planning**

**Issue Description:** Communities doing water planning and pursuing solutions need access to water data and information and have called for improved access to Department data. These data and tools provide inputs for the state’s water data platform ensuring that project meets community needs. The Department does not have readily accessible estimates of water use or water demand forecasts at the basin or regional planning scale; this makes it extremely difficult to plan and prepare for a secure water future. Current data sets are not in useable formats for communities, or are incomplete (e.g., instream demands). This data and analysis were the technical assistance most frequently requested from OWRD by the planning groups and we see it as critical to future planning. Additionally, the Water Use Reporting database requires multiple modifications and additions in order to support public access to the Department’s Water Use data. These modifications require significant time from Information Services (IS) staff.

**Proposal: $1.05 million; 4 FTE**

1) $50k to develop project scopes with input from stakeholders and communities across Oregon as well as for the production of materials, such as outreach materials to raise awareness of the new water rights tools.

2) 2 Information Services (IS) 5 programmers: These positions would develop and maintain technical tools and analysis to support water supply data access and increase accessibility to the data and information necessary for Oregonians to plan for their water future.

3) 1 IS 6 senior programmer: This position would oversee the work team and would work closely with Departments staff, stakeholders, and interested Oregon communities on scoping of products and maintenance plans.

4) 1 NRS 3 hydrologist: This position would develop related hydrologic analysis and work closely with other agency staff on water supply data analysis.

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