



Oregon Water Supply and Conservation Initiative February 14, 2008 Update

The Water Resources Department has begun a series of important data collection efforts, known as the Oregon Water Supply and Conservation Initiative (OWSCI). The Department has selected a private contractor to manage two of the five components, and Department staff members are managing the remainder. This report provides an update on the Initiative thus far.

The 2007 Oregon Legislature approved this Initiative, providing \$750,000 to begin data collection efforts that will help the Water Resources Department more effectively manage and plan Oregon's water resources. The Initiative has five components:

- 1) a state-wide water demand assessment
- 2) an inventory of potential conservation projects
- 3) an inventory of potential above- and below-ground storage projects
- 4) grant funding for community and regional planning efforts, and
- 5) a continuation of the Department's basin yield analyses (not yet funded).

Components #1 and #2: The Department has selected HDR Inc., a private contractor, to manage the data collection and processing work in the first two components. This project team has met with a peer review group and stakeholder groups during the past two months to develop and refine the methodology required to calculate overall water demands now, in the year 2025, and the year 2050. The project team will collect data across all water-use sectors—municipal, domestic (wells), self-supplied industrial, agricultural, hydropower, and instream—and the Department will display resulting demand assessments by county or by basin on its website. During Spring 2008 the project team will conduct a series of stakeholder workshops throughout the state: March 4-Salem; March 7-Medford; March 18-Bend; and March 19-Pendleton. These workshops are designed to disseminate information about the Initiative and describe how it fits into the Department's long-term water supply strategy. The workshops will also kick-off the data collection efforts. The contractor's work is scheduled for completion on June 30, 2008, with initial demand forecasts available on the Department web site by the end of the year.

Component #3: WRD staff has already begun a statewide inventory of potential above- and below-ground storage sites. The above-ground efforts began with a letter to local and federal partners, asking them if they knew of reservoir sites that had the potential for expansion or construction. WRD staff met with the Water Policy Committee of the Association of Oregon Counties on February 18 to request assistance with data collection. WRD will collect as much information as possible (e.g., local hydrology, topography, site characteristics) and post them on an interactive map on the Department web site.

Similarly, the below-ground portion of the project began with a review of potential aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) and aquifer recharge (AR) sites that might serve municipal drinking

water needs. The focus of this work is on describing the hydrological and geological characteristics of possible sites. Again, the Department will post potential sites and their descriptions to an interactive map, and plans to complete all work on this Component by the end of 2008.

Component #4: WRD has \$150,000 available for grants. These funds are available on a competitive basis to communities and regions in need of financial resources to further their long-term water supply planning efforts. The Department opened the application process in January, and applications must be received by March 15, 2008 to be considered for funding. The Department will announce awards by April 15, 2008. Funding recipients must provide a progress report by September 15, 2008 with a final report to the Department by November 15, 2008.

Component #5 remains unfunded and work on this component will likely begin after 2008.

Data collection efforts under the Oregon Water Supply and Conservation Initiative are well underway and scheduled for completion at the end of the 2008. The information gleaned from the Initiative will serve as early steps in Oregon's long-term water supply strategy.

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