

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Do Pass and Be Placed on the Consent Calendar
Vote:	7 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Beyer, Burley, Cannon, Jenson, Macpherson, Smith G., Dingfelder
Nays:	-
Exc.:	-
Prepared By:	Cat McGinnis, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	3/5, 3/7

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Extends sunset on pilot project allowing temporary transfer of water rights in Owyhee, Talent and Tualatin Valley irrigation districts to June 30, 2010.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- How participating districts were selected
- Number of temporary water right transfers since pilot inception and duration of transfers
- Number of temporary transfers permitted before permanent transfer required
- How WRD determines if water allocation exceeded during temporary transfer

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: The 2003 Legislature enacted a pilot project allowing for the temporary transfer of water rights between existing water right holders within eligible irrigation district boundaries. The Water Resources Department (WRD) asserted that the pilot project would provide a flexible means to manage water within an irrigation district during periods of drought without increasing the total volume of water allocated. The program allows irrigators to transfer their water rights on an annual basis without being subject to a formal transfer process or assessment of fees. Three irrigation districts qualify and have participated in water right transfers: Owyhee, Talent, and Tualatin Valley. Talent Irrigation District has participated in transfer of water rights in 2005 and 2006. Tualatin Valley Irrigation District participated in transfer of water rights in 2006. A sunset on the project was set for June 30, 2008.

Implementation of the pilot project was delayed so that required rule changes could be implemented by WRD and participating irrigation districts. The department surveyed water masters of participating irrigation districts and reports that there has been no report of injury or enlargement of water usage and no third party complaints.

Senate Bill 89 extends the pilot project to June 30, 2010, and requires the Water Resources Department to report to the Seventy-fifth Legislative Assembly no later than January 31, 2009.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.