



**Mayor Charlie Hales**  
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April 16, 2013

Senator Jackie Dingfelder, Chair  
Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Senate Bill 217

Dear Senator Dingfelder and Members of the Committee:

The Portland Water Bureau would like to express its support for SB 217 with the proposed -1 amendment. The amended bill would establish a fair and reasonable Water Right Management Fee to support the critical field and science work of the Oregon Water Resource Department (WRD).

The allocation and enforcement of water rights is one of the most important roles played by WRD. WRD field staff ensures compliance with water rights permits including instream water rights. They gather critical information on water supplies and water use, including groundwater. They work with other agencies to protect water quality. They inspect wells to ensure compliance with laws governing contamination and drawdown. WRD staff also inspect dams statewide and plays other important roles.

The City of Portland benefits from WRD's field services and scientific work. The City of Portland holds groundwater rights, requires minimum flows to protect fish in the Little Sandy River, and benefits from groundwater studies. As a member of the Regional Water Providers Consortium, which collaborates to improve the management of water supplies among Portland metropolitan area water providers, the City of Portland shares the interests of its partners in the many services WRD provides to them. It is also important that the state adequately fund expert WRD field and science staff in order to implement Oregon's much needed Integrated Water Resources Strategy.

The Water Right Management Fee proposal, which includes a cap on total charges to municipalities as well as other users proposed by SB 217 with the -1 amendment, is a fair and reasonable approach to raising much needed revenue for gathering and analyzing water rights information, enforcing water rights rules and allocations, and otherwise maintaining an effective water rights system.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.

Sincerely,

David G. Shaff, Administrator