

From the desk of Rep. Jules
Bailey

June 19, 2013



OREGON
ASSOCIATION OF
NURSERIES



**We Urge Your Support for HB 2259 to Provide Stable
& Ongoing Funding for Water Rights Transactions**

We are writing to voice our support for HB 2259-B. We are a diverse group of water users, conservation groups, municipalities and water stakeholders with a common goal: to advocate for common sense water policies that move Oregon's economy, communities, and environment toward a secure water future.

With the adoption of Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy in 2012, now is the time to capitalize on momentum and enact water policy for Oregon that creates jobs to help grow our economy, keeps our cities healthy, strengthens vital agricultural production, and protects and enhances our environmental assets. Toward this end, we are focused on three key areas: water supply management, conservation, and water quality.

House Bill 2259 advances these goals by adequately funding the Water Resources Department's water rights transactions. The current transaction fees, last modified in 2009, are scheduled to sunset in 2013. If this were to occur, fees would revert back to 2003 levels, which would substantially decrease staff and increase backloads and processing time.

The adjustments proposed in HB 2259 increase transaction fees for the Department in order to maintain service levels while supporting the Department in their effort to address the continued backlog of transaction requests. The proposal restores a 50%/50% balance between income from fees and general fund for the transactions program. The bill also repeals the sunset on future fees, allowing for an annual increase based on the Portland-Salem Consumer Price Index. This will create future certainty to maintain services that are critical to the stakeholders we represent.

Please support HB 2259 to provide adequate funding for processing water rights transactions.

Sincerely,

The Freshwater Trust

The Nature Conservancy

Oregon Environmental Council

Special Districts Association of Oregon

League of Oregon Cities

Oregon Association of Nurseries

Oregon Water Resources Congress