

# Senate Bill 846

Sponsored by Senator HANSELL, Representative JENSON

## SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Requires Water Resources Department to establish Umatilla Basin Water Storage Program for developing water supplies in northeastern Oregon. Specifies program design and identifies measures specifically included in program. Requires department to dedicate at least one full-time employee to administration of program during 2013-2015 biennium.

Requires Water Resources Commission to appoint work group to study and make recommendations regarding new office to address water supply issues in northeastern Oregon. Requires work group to report recommendations to 2014 Legislative Assembly. Sunsets work group upon convening of 2015 regular session of Legislative Assembly.

## A BILL FOR AN ACT

1  
2 Relating to northeastern Oregon water supplies.

3 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

4 **SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section, "northeastern Oregon" means Morrow, Umatilla,**  
5 **Union and Wallowa Counties.**

6 **(2) The Water Resources Department shall establish a Umatilla Basin Water Storage**  
7 **Program to support the development of water resources in the Willow Creek, Walla Walla**  
8 **and Umatilla watersheds to increase water supplies in northeastern Oregon and to provide**  
9 **department services as a liaison between parties wishing to engage in water-related trans-**  
10 **actions in the watersheds that may affect water supplies in northeastern Oregon.**

11 **(3) The department shall develop the program in a manner that is designed to increase**  
12 **water supplies in northeastern Oregon through the utilization of Columbia River water for**  
13 **in-stream and out-of-stream uses within the watersheds and in a manner that:**

14 **(a) Maximizes the potential for agricultural development and production;**

15 **(b) Is technically feasible;**

16 **(c) Considers in-stream flow needs for native fish species;**

17 **(d) Promotes regional partnerships between state and local governments and nonprofit**  
18 **organizations;**

19 **(e) Promotes public-private partnerships;**

20 **(f) Actively pursues water development projects; and**

21 **(g) Benefits the state through the integration and coordination of programs.**

22 **(4) Measures for developing water resources in the watersheds under the program may**  
23 **include, but need not be limited to:**

24 **(a) Activities to support basin aquifer recovery projects;**

25 **(b) The repair of dams and other facilities;**

26 **(c) The development of new storage reservoirs;**

27 **(d) Investments in water conservation measures; and**

28 **(e) Engaging in discussions with the states of Washington and Idaho to identify possible**

**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 avenues for interstate cooperation with regard to Columbia River water utilization and joint  
2 investments in water storage and water development projects that have the potential to in-  
3 crease water supplies in northeastern Oregon.

4 **SECTION 2.** For the biennium ending July 1, 2015, the Water Resources Department shall  
5 dedicate at least one full-time employee to carrying out the Umatilla Basin Water Storage  
6 Program described in section 1 of this 2013 Act.

7 **SECTION 3.** (1) As used in this section, “northeastern Oregon” has the meaning given  
8 that term in section 1 of this 2013 Act.

9 (2)(a) The Water Resources Commission shall establish a work group to study and de-  
10 velop recommendations for an office to act as the primary body overseeing the implementa-  
11 tion, support, development and expansion of programs and actions recommended by the  
12 Columbia River-Umatilla Solutions Task Force or other stakeholder groups regarding seeking  
13 solutions to water supply issues impacting the economic development of Columbia River  
14 water within the Umatilla River Basin.

15 (b) In making appointments to the work group, the commission shall give preference to  
16 persons who have served on the Columbia River-Umatilla Solutions Task Force.

17 (3) The work group shall develop recommendations regarding:

18 (a) The structure, composition and authority, and the geographic jurisdiction within  
19 northeastern Oregon, of the office.

20 (b) The projected administrative and funding resource needs of the office.

21 (c) Legal authority that the office may need for the implementation or management of  
22 projects.

23 (d) Short-term and long-term management tools the office may require in order to opti-  
24 mize northeastern Oregon water supplies under the jurisdiction of the office.

25 (e) Amount targets for the use of Columbia River and Snake River waters to develop and  
26 enhance agriculture in the parts of northeastern Oregon within the jurisdiction of the office  
27 while giving due consideration to environmental impacts.

28 (f) Recommendations for a water supply development and management plan for the parts  
29 of northeastern Oregon within the jurisdiction of the office.

30 (4) The work group shall act in close consultation with the office of the Governor.

31 (5) A majority of the members of the work group constitutes a quorum for the trans-  
32 action of business.

33 (6) Official action by the work group requires the approval of a majority of the members  
34 of the work group.

35 (7) The work group shall meet at times and places specified by the commission or by a  
36 majority of the members of the work group.

37 (8) The work group shall submit a report in the manner provided in ORS 192.245, includ-  
38 ing recommendations for legislation, to the 2014 regular session of the Legislative Assembly.

39 (9) The Water Resources Department shall provide staff support to the work group.

40 (10) Members of the work group are not entitled to compensation, but may be reimbursed  
41 for actual and necessary travel and other expenses incurred by them in the performance of  
42 their official duties in the manner and amounts provided for in ORS 292.495. Claims for ex-  
43 penses shall be paid out of funds appropriated to the Water Resources Department for pur-  
44 poses of the work group.

45 **SECTION 4.** Section 3 of this 2013 Act is repealed on the date of the convening of the 2015

1 **regular session of the Legislative Assembly as specified in ORS 171.010.**

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