

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

**Fiscal:** No Fiscal Impact

**Revenue:** No Revenue Impact

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**Action Date:** 04/20/15

**Action:** Do Pass With Amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

**Meeting Dates:** 03/18, 04/20

**Vote:**

Yeas: 5 - Dembrow, Edwards, Olsen, Prozanski, Thomsen

**Prepared By:** Beth Reiley, Committee Administrator

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Requires Department of Environmental Quality when developing or selecting among methodologies for assessment of waters of state pursuant to sections 303(d) and 305(b) of Federal Water Pollution Control Act to solicit independent scientific and technical input as appropriate; provide adequate public notice and opportunity for public comment on draft assessment methodologies; and provide informational overview of draft assessment methodologies before Environmental Quality Commission (Commission). Requires Commission to provide opportunity for public comment on draft assessment methodologies.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Current process to develop methodologies for implementing water quality standards
- Role of Environmental Quality Commission in developing methodologies
- Public involvement in process

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:**

Replaces measure.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) uses water quality standards to assess whether the quality of Oregon's rivers and lakes is adequate for fish and other aquatic life, recreation, drinking, agriculture, industry and other uses. DEQ also uses the standards as regulatory tools to prevent pollution of the state's waters. The federal Clean Water Act requires states to adopt water quality standards designating beneficial uses of the state's waters and setting criteria designed to protect those uses. States submit their standards to the federal Environmental Protection Agency for approval.

Senate Bill 829A would require DEQ to take certain actions when developing or selecting among methodologies to assess waters of the state pursuant to sections 303(d) and 305(b) of the federal Clean Water Act.