

## Background

Water is essential for economic growth and development, job creation, and the livelihoods of many farmers and ranchers across the state. In addition, water is necessary for fish and wildlife, recreation, and other instream purposes that are important to Oregonians. Given the importance of water, in order for a region to achieve their vision for the future, they must consider how their water resources needs will be met. Planning is essential to being able to formulate solutions to water challenges that may affect communities, ecosystems, and economic development.

In 2015, the Oregon Legislature authorized the Water Resources Department to pilot the place-based approach to integrated water resources planning. Place-based integrated water resources planning provides an opportunity for communities to work collaboratively, in partnership with the state, to understand their water resources challenges and needs, and identify potential solutions to meet those needs. Building trust and developing long-term relationships are additional benefits that can be realized through place-based strategies; these are important foundations for successful implementation of tangible water resources projects.

The authority for the state to assist groups with place-based planning sunsets in 2019. The Department has been working with four places to pilot place-based planning. At least two of the four groups are not likely to complete plans before the legislation sunsets, and all have expressed a need for assistance in developing a strategy for implementation. Continuing to undertake place-based planning is Recommended Action 9.A of Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy.

## What the bill does

This bill proposes to extend the sunset date to 2023 to allow the state to continue to pilot the place-based approach to water planning. This would allow the Department to provide financial and technical assistance to the communities currently using this approach and allow them to finish their work, completing the pilot phase.

## Contact

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