Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy

Framework

Goal 1: Improve Our Understanding of Oregon's Water Resources

Understand Water Resources Today

- Further Understand Limited Water Supplies & Systems *(groundwater, surface water and their interaction)*
- Improve Water Quality & Water Quantity Information
- Further Understand Our Water Management Institutions

Understanding Water Resources / Supplies / Institutions

- 1a. Conduct additional groundwater investigations
- 1b. Improve water resource data collection and monitoring
- 1c. Coordinate inter-agency data collection, processing, and use in decision-making

OBJECTIVES

CRITICAL ISSUES

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Goal 1 (continued)

Understand Instream and Out-of-Stream Needs

- Further Define Out-of-Stream Needs / Demands *(i.e., diverted water)*
- Further Define Instream Needs / Demands *(i.e., left-in-place water)*

Understanding Oregon's Out-of-Stream Needs/Demands

- 2a. Update long-term water demand forecasts 🕮
- 2b. Improve water-use measurement & reporting
- 2c. Determine pre-1909 water right claims
- 2d. Update water right records with contact information
- 2e. Update Oregon's water-related permitting guide

Understanding Oregon's Instream Needs/Demands

- 3a. Determine flows needed (quality & quantity) to support instream needs 🕮
- 3b. Determine needs of groundwater dependent ecosystems 🕮

Goal 1 (continued)

Understand the Coming Pressures That Affect Our Needs and Supplies

- Economic Development
- Water & Energy Nexus
- Water & Land Use Nexus
- Population Growth
- Climate Change
- Infrastructure
- Education & Outreach

The Water-Energy Nexus

- 4a. Analyze the effects on water from energy development projects & policies 🕮
- 4b. Take advantage of existing infrastructure to develop hydroelectric power
- 4c. Promote strategies that increase/integrate energy & water savings 🕮

Climate Change

- 5a. Support continued basin-scale climate change research efforts 🕮
- 5b. Assist with climate change adaptation and resiliency strategies 🕮

Economic Development & Population Growth

(See Actions 2.A. and 3.A.)

The Water and Land Use Nexus

- 6a. Improve integration of water Information into land use planning (& vice versa)
- 6b. Update state agency coordination plans
- 6c. Encourage low-impact development practices 🕮

Infrastructure

- 7a. Develop and upgrade water & wastewater infrastructure
- 7b. Encourage regional (sub-basin) approaches to water and wastewater systems

Education and Outreach

- 8a. Support Oregon's K-12 environmental literacy plan
- 8b. Provide education and training for Oregon's next generation of water experts 🕮
- 8c. Promote community education and training opportunities 🕮
- 8d. Identify ongoing water-related research needs 🕮

Goal 2: Meet Oregon's Water Resource Needs

Meet Oregon's Instream and Out-of-Stream Needs

- Place-Based Efforts
- Water Management & Development
- Healthy Ecosystems
- Public Health
- Funding

Place-Based Efforts

- 9a. Undertake place-based integrated, water resources planning
- 9b. Coordinate implementation of existing natural resource plans
- 9c. Partner with federal agencies, tribes, and neighboring states in long-term water resources management

Water Management & Development

- 10a. Improve water-use efficiency and water conservation 🕮
- 10b. Improve access to built storage 🕮
- 10c. Encourage additional water reuse projects 🕮
- 10d. Reach environmental outcomes with non- regulatory alternatives 🕮
- 10e. Authorize and fund a water supply development program

Healthy Ecosystems

- 11a. Improve watershed health, resiliency, and capacity for natural storage
- 11b. Develop additional instream protections
- 11c. Prevent and eradicate invasive species
- 11d. Protect and restore instream habitat and habitat access for fish & wildlife

Public Health

- 12a. Ensure the safety of Oregon's drinking water
- 12b. Reduce the use of and exposure to toxics and other pollutants
- 12c. Implement water quality pollution control plans

Funding

- 13a. Fund development & implementation of Oregon's IWRS
- 13b. Fund water resources management at the state level
- 13c. Fund communities needing feasibility studies for water conservation, storage, and reuse projects

KEY: 🕮 Ongoing need for applied research

THE COMMISSION'S VISION FOR THE STRATEGY

A statewide integrated water resources strategy will bring various sectors and interests together to work toward the common purpose of maintaining healthy water resources to meet the needs of Oregonians and Oregon's environment for generations to come.

THE POLICY ADVISORY GROUP'S VISION FOR THE STRATEGY

Everywhere in our State, we see healthy waters, able to sustain a healthy economy, environment, and cultures & communities.
Healthy waters...are abundant and clean. A healthy economy...is a diverse and balanced economy, nurturing and employing the State's natural resources and human capital to meet evolving local and global needs, including a desirable quality of life in urban and rural areas. A healthy environment...includes fully functioning ecosystems, including headwaters, river systems, wetlands, forests, floodplains, estuaries, and aquifers. Healthy cultures and communities... depend on adequate and reliable water supplies to sustain public health, safety, nourishment, recreation, sport, and other quality of life needs.

PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE THE STRATEGY

Accountable and Enforceable Actions: Ensure that actions comply with existing water laws and policies. Actions should include better measurement and enforcement tools to ensure desired results.

Balance: The Strategy must balance current and future instream and out-of-stream needs supplied by all water systems (above ground and below ground). Actions should consider and balance tradeoffs between ecosystem benefits and traditional management of water supplies.

Collaboration: Support formation of regional, coordinated, and collaborative partnerships that include representatives of all levels of government, private and non-profit sectors, tribes, stakeholders, and the public. Collaborate in ways that help agencies cut across silos.

Conflict Resolution: Be cognizant of and work to address longstanding conflicts.

Facilitation by the State: The State should provide direction and maintain authority for local planning and implementation. Where appropriate, the State sets the framework, provides tools, and defines the direction.

Incentives: Where appropriate, utilize incentive-based approaches. These could be funding, technical assistance, partnerships / shared resources, regulatory flexibility, or other incentives.

Implementation: Actions should empower Oregonians to implement local solutions; recognize regional differences, while supporting the statewide strategy and resources. Take into account the success of existing plans, tools, data, and programs; do not lose commonsense approach; develop actions that are measurable, attainable, and effective.

Interconnection/Integration: Recognize that many actions (e.g. land-use actions) in some way affect water resources (quality and/or quantity); recognize the relationship between water quantity and water quality; integrate participation of agencies and parties.

Public Process: Employ an open, transparent process that fosters public participation and supports social equity, fairness, and environmental justice. Advocate for all Oregonians.

Reasonable Cost: Weigh the cost of an approach with its benefits to determine whether one approach is better than another, or whether an approach is worth pursuing at all. Actions should focus on reducing the costs of delivering services to the state's residents, without neglecting social and environmental costs.

Science-based, Flexible Approaches: Base decisions on best available science and local input. Employ an iterative process that includes" lessons learned" from the previous round. Establish a policy framework that is flexible. Build in mechanisms that allow for learning, adaptation, and innovative ideas or approaches.

Streamlining: Streamline processes without circumventing the law or cutting corners. Avoid recommendations that are overly complicated, legalistic, or administrative.

Sustainability: Ensure that actions sustain water resources by balancing the needs of Oregon's environment, economy, and communities.

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

An iterative process will help us evaluate whether the recommended actions meet the goals and objectives defined above. The process will include monitoring the implementation of recommended actions, a commitment to resolving conflicts that arise during the course of implementation, providing feedback on any successes or shortcomings, and evolving or adapting to new information or resources. As we learn lessons from the first round of implementation, we can adjust the Strategy as needed through formal adoption every five years.