Sent Via Electronic Mail: jwmtr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

April 19, 2017

The Honorable Betsy Johnson, State Senator
The Honorable David Gomberg, State Representative
Co-Chairs, Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
State Capital
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 5025 and SB 5530 (Regional Infrastructure Fund)

Dear Co-Chairs Johnson and Gomberg and Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development:
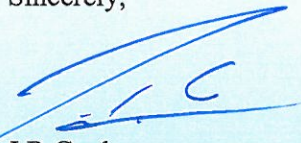
I am writing on behalf of the Northeast Oregon Water Association (NOWA) in support of the Oregon Solutions Regional Infrastructure Fund budget request contained within HB 5025 and SB 5530.

NOWA represents over 40 land owners, agri-businesses, cities, counties, special districts and over 200,000 acres of the value-added irrigated land base in the Umatilla Basin that generates over $2 billion annually in business activity for the State of Oregon. NOWA has been working on a multi-biennium mitigated Columbia River water development and infrastructure investment program utilizing various sources of both public and private capital.

In 2015 the City of Hermiston, a NOWA founding member, received $664,200 from the regional infrastructure fund to complete upgrades to the Port of Umatilla - City of Hermiston Regional Water Delivery System, as a regional rural infrastructure investment priority. The funding received from the Regional Infrastructure Fund enabled the City to complete a component of the necessary infrastructure improvements of the multi-biennium NOWA effort and leveraged the ability for NOWA to begin final work to invest an additional $100 million in regional water supply infrastructure projects.

The Regional Infrastructure Fund is a well administered program and streamlines the ability for viable and necessary rural projects to move from plan to implementation quickly and efficiently. We encourage your support for full funding of this budget request.

Sincerely,

J.R Cook
Founder and Director

CC: NOWA Board