

HB 2707 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
House Committee On Energy and Environment

Action Date: 04/12/17
Action: Do pass with amendments
and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference. (Printed A-Eng.)
Vote: 8-1-0-0
Yeas: 8 - Barnhart, Bentz, Helm, Holvey, Johnson, Marsh, Power, Smith DB
Nays: 1 - Reschke
Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued
Revenue: No revenue impact
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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Appropriates \$8,200,000 from General Fund to Water Resources Department (Department) for ground water studies and investigations, or other ground water data gathering and analysis needed to assess and manage Oregon's ground water resources in priority basins determined by Department. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Cost of doing adequate ground water studies
- Using a targeted approach to obtain data on priority areas
- Leveraging federal dollars

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Appropriates \$8,200,000 from General Fund to Oregon Water Resources Department (Department) for ground water studies and investigations, or other ground water data gathering and analysis. Removes requirement to conduct studies and investigations in cooperation with the United States Geological Survey.

BACKGROUND:

According to the Oregon Water Resources Department (Department), Oregon currently has 256,800 known wells, and several thousand new wells are built each year. Well uses range from providing drinking water and water for irrigation and industry, to providing information about ground water levels throughout the state. To monitor ground water, the Department has a network of approximately 1,100 observation wells. These wells provide information on current ground water availability and long-term trends. But according to the November, 2016 Secretary of State Audit, these observation wells only provide reliable data for very specific areas and while the hydrologic connection between ground water and surface water is understood, more information is needed in many basins to better understand how ground water use impacts streams, aquifers and other water sources. These studies typically take 5 to 6 years to complete, as all of the data in the basin being studied needs to be compiled, reviewed, and analyzed to monitor surface water or ground water trends. To date, only about one-third of the state has been covered by basin studies.

House Bill 2707A appropriates \$8,200,000 from General Fund to the Department for ground water studies and investigations, or other ground water data gathering and analysis needed to assess and manage Oregon's ground water resources in priority basins.