

Rogue River Valley Irrigation District

3139 Merriman Road
5420 Medford, OR 97501

Fax: (541) 773-5420
Email: rrvid@rrvid.org
www.rrvid.org

February 23, 2018

To: Co-Chair Senator Fred Girod, Co-Chair Representative Paul Holvey, and Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction

Re: **SB 5702** - Testimony in Support of funds for the Bradshaw Drop Irrigation Canal Piping Project

Dear Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Committee:

Rogue River Valley Irrigation District (RRVID) is respectfully submitting our request for \$1,895,000 dollars of State funding for the Bradshaw Drop Irrigation Canal Piping Project to greatly improve conservation and water infrastructure. The Bradshaw Drop piping project will pipe 3.3 miles of open irrigation canal with 48-inch diameter high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe, providing pressurized water to patrons of the RRVID. Additionally, piping this stretch of canal will allow RRVID to conserve water and leave 7 cfs in Little Butte Creek for the month of June, enhancing flows for several threatened and endangered species including: Coho; Chinook; summer and winter Steelhead, and Rainbow Trout and Cutthroat Trout. The pressurized water provided to patrons allows for further conservation benefits in that it makes on-farm efficiency improvements possible. On-farm efficiency, conversion from flood to sprinkler irrigation on approximately 775 acres of agricultural land, will eliminate tailwater and prevent associated pollutants from returning to surface streams in the Antelope Creek area of the Little Butte Creek Watershed, improving water quality and aquatic habitat.

Outside of the Columbia River Basin, Little Butte Creek Watershed is believed to have the highest Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast (SONCC) Coho spawning returns of any tributary but this is threatened by limited water quality therefore additional flows play an imperative role in diluting pollutants for increased water quality, sedimentation, bacteria and temperature. In addition to habitat benefits, increased water flow will have positive effects on recreation. Besides the many environmental benefits, this project will also help to address water sustainability from an agricultural standpoint. This project has also been selected as a Water for Irrigation, Streams and Economy (WISE) Demonstration Project. In regard to conserved energy, once the canal is piped the energy savings is estimated at 369,000 kilowatt hours per year. Individual landowners will greatly benefit from the upgrade of a low efficiency flood irrigation system to a high efficiency sprinkler irrigation system. There are many more details of the enormous benefits of the Bradshaw Drop Irrigation Canal Piping Project included and outlined in our Bond Financing Request.

RRVID's Bradshaw Drop Piping Project is an extremely worthwhile project that will provide economic, social and environmental benefits to the local watershed and the users that rely upon it as well as the broader population of Oregon. It will keep valuable water in Little Butte Creek adding both water quality and quantity benefits to the Rogue River Basin. This will benefit the watershed habitat, specifically it will improve habitat for a number of threatened and endangered species.

This type of combined irrigation efficiency and conservation project is also an essential element to implementing Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) and WRD's ongoing efforts to meet Oregon's long-term water needs, both instream and out of stream.

The timing of the approval of our Bond Financing Request is crucial; we have secured \$4,005,922. Rogue River Valley Irrigation District is requesting \$1,895,000 directly from the legislature.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this significant and urgently important issue,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Hampson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Brian Hampson
District Manager
Rogue River Valley Irrigation District
3139 Merriman Road
Medford, Oregon 97504
541-773-6127