



SB 51

Testimony of Kimberley Priestley WaterWatch of Oregon

Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources January 24, 2019

Founded in 1985, WaterWatch is a non-profit river conservation group dedicated to the protection and restoration of natural flows in Oregon's rivers. We work to ensure that enough water is protected in Oregon's rivers to sustain fish, wildlife, recreation and other public uses of Oregon's rivers, lakes and streams. We also work for balanced water laws and policies. WaterWatch has members across Oregon who care deeply about our rivers, their inhabitants and the effects of water laws and policies on these resources.

WaterWatch supports SB 51

What SB 51 does: SB 51 grants the Oregon Water Resources Department clear authority to allow changes to the character of use of water stored in a storage project.

WaterWatch supports SB 51: Allowing a change in the character or "type" of use of water that is already stored is something that benefits all water users, whether city, farmer or fish. The water is already stored; SB 51 simply allows flexibility as to how that stored water is used. The OWRD has long allowed changes in character of use of stored water, and SB 51 will simply clarify that authority.

We urge the committee to support this very narrow change to existing law.

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