



SYBIL ACKERMAN-MUNSON
CONSULTANT, ACKERMAN-MUNSON STRATEGIES LLC

Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

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I am pleased to offer testimony representing Resources Legacy Fund (RLF). RLF is a nonprofit organization that works closely with philanthropists to conserve land, water, and ocean resources while advancing healthy communities and social equity. Since its founding, RLF has helped to generate more than \$26 billion for water, land, and ocean conservation in California and across the United States. RLF efforts include increasing public awareness for funding to improve water quality and quantity, watershed protection and restoration in Oregon that address critical needs to protect watersheds and provide for healthy communities.

RLF commissioned a poll in 2018 that found Oregonians are concerned about water quantity and quality. The poll confirmed 87% of Oregonians want to protect water quality in rivers, lakes, and streams. In addition, 85% were concerned with the contamination of groundwater and 81% wanted an adequate water supply in the future (See Appendix A).

Increased funding for Oregon's water needs is overdue. Oregon's changing climate is causing water shortages and pressure on our current infrastructure and ecological systems. With the current funding level, Oregon is often unable to respond in a proactive and resilient way. Simply put, Oregon's aging infrastructure is not up to the challenge and more funding is needed to help communities proactively build resiliency into their systems.

Stakeholders, legislators, and agencies are considering the form and function of a substantial conversation in 2019-2021 that will consider the needs at the local and regional level for water funding. To ensure the conversation moves forward productively, decision makers will need funding from the legislature in 2019 to collect and assess water needs to help identify solutions that can serve as models for future funding.

In summary, the 2019 -2021 biennium must build the momentum. To be successful, agencies need to compile the information necessary to help stakeholders and decision-makers craft a funding package that is responsive to the true needs and priorities of Oregon. RLF therefore supports the Governor's water funding policy option package (pops) before you today. These pops allow the natural resources agencies to gather the information needed to determine the highest priorities for new funding.

RLF supports the pops as offered by Governor Brown in her GRB memo dated December 17, 2018 and attached in Appendix B to this testimony.

Pops that deserve special attention include:

Water Resources Pop # 104 – Business Case for Water

\$100,000 of the funding provided in pop #104 is for a water infrastructure business case analysis. This is important to allow Water Resources to consider the best water funding strategies that will produce a positive return on investment. It will also consider the consequences to Oregon if no funding is created to fund water infrastructure needs.

Water Resources Pop # 101 – Place-Based Planning

\$980,000 will support place-based planning in Harney-Malheur Lake, Lower John Day, Mid-Coast, and Upper Grand Ronde. These four communities are developing an important model of community decision-making and project prioritization.

Water Resources Pop # 102 – Groundwater

\$2.8 million to support groundwater data, management, and protection. More resources are needed to identify groundwater levels and capacity to support communities in responding to the complex issues associated with allocating limited groundwater supplies in certain regions.

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Pop # 161 – Data and inventory

\$250,000 for DEQ to partner with Water Resources Department and Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to fund a comprehensive inventory of existing water infrastructure systems and future wastewater/stormwater infrastructure needs.

Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) Pop # 310 – Watershed restoration

\$463,000 to expand work with partner agencies and organizations in small agricultural watersheds. This will expand on a successful project to support voluntary landowner efforts to improve water quality and serve as a potential example for future funding.

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Pop # 130 – Conservation Policy and Strategy Coordination

\$325,000 to contract services for conservation policy and strategic coordination through OWEB.

Thank you for considering this request to support the Governor's water pops.

Sincerely,

Sybil Ackerman-Munson

Sybil Ackerman-Munson, Consultant, on behalf of Resources Legacy Fund

Bipartisan Research Team



Dave Metz – FM3

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) – a national Democratic opinion research firm with offices in Oakland, Los Angeles and Madison, Wisconsin – has specialized in public policy oriented opinion research since 1981. The firm has assisted hundreds of political campaigns at every level of the ballot – from President to City Council – with opinion research and strategic guidance. FM3 also provides research and strategic consulting to public agencies, businesses and public interest organizations nationwide.



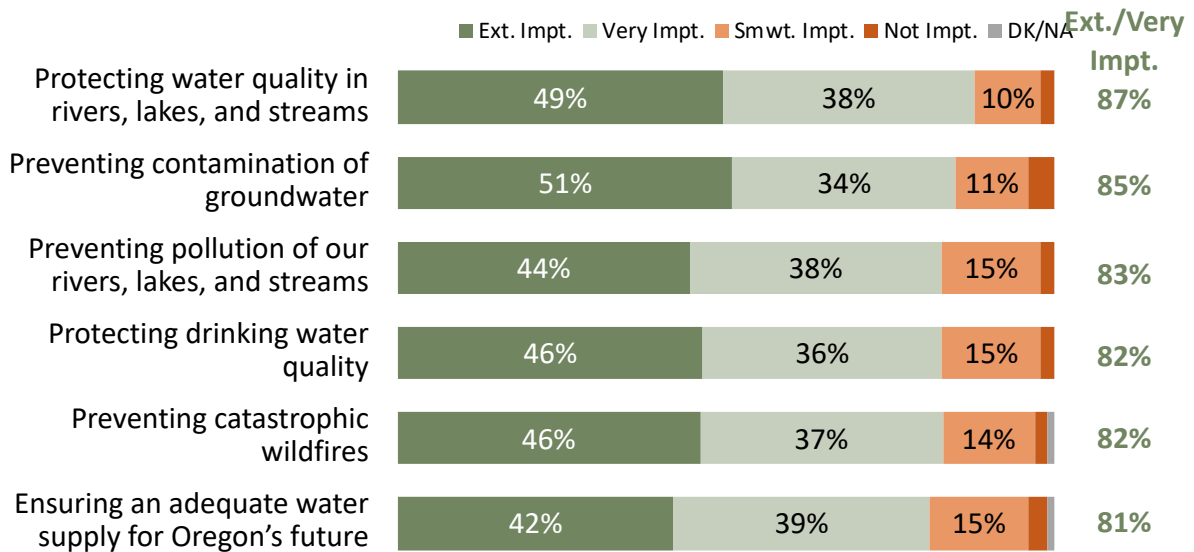
Lori Weigel - POS

Public Opinion Strategies (POS) is the largest Republican polling firm in the country. Since the firm's founding in 1991, they have completed more than 10,000 research projects, interviewing more than five million Americans across the United States. Media outlets, such as *The Wall Street Journal*, NBC News, CNBC, and National Public Radio, rely on Public Opinion Strategies to conduct their polling. The firm conducts polling on behalf of hundreds of political campaigns, as well as trade associations, not-for-profit organizations, government entities and industry coalitions throughout the nation.

As a bipartisan team, FM3 and Public Opinion Strategies have researched a wide range of issues for nearly a decade, in particular on conservation-related initiatives and policies. Together, the two firms have jointly conducted research on behalf of political campaigns, businesses, not-for-profit organizations and public agencies in 44 states and nationally.

Protecting water quality and preventing contamination are top priorities.

I am going to read you a list of specific ways that additional funding for conservation could be invested in Oregon. Please tell me how important each of these potential projects is to you: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important.



Appendix B: A Secure and Resilient Water Future for All Oregonians

Oregon has a reputation as a wet state, but changing climate and shifts in population have tested the limits of our water resources. Safe, secure and reliable water is essential to the health of our communities and our economies. Protecting clean water at its source reduces the cost of water treatment and reduces risk to public health. Reliable water provides surety for economic investment in business and industry, particularly rural businesses such as agriculture and food processing. Governor Brown’s budget invests nearly \$120 million (including \$109 million in Special Public Works Fund and Regional Infrastructure Fund lottery bonding) for a secure and resilient water future, including:

Statewide Inventories and Assessments

To strategically invest in built and natural infrastructure we must better understand Oregon’s resiliency to drought and floods and the ability for communities, industries and fish and wildlife to access clean water. Governor Brown’s budget invests in the following areas to ensure we have the best information available to identify our priorities:

- \$2.8 million for groundwater data, management, and protection through WRD. ¹
- \$250,000 for DEQ in partnership with WRD and OWEB, to fund a comprehensive inventory of existing water infrastructure systems and future wastewater/stormwater infrastructure needs. ²
- \$380,000 to ODFW for implementation of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy. ³
- \$325,000 in contracted services funding for conservation policy and strategic coordination through OWEB. ⁴

Addressing Vulnerable Communities and Systems

Communities around the state have constrained water quality and quantity due to geography, aging systems and/or site-specific conditions. Governor Brown’s budget supports investments to address the following issues:

- \$1.0 million per year from increase in fee revenue to OHA to support adequate regulation of all public drinking water systems. ⁵
- \$600,000 to WRD to fund assessments of dams, dam safety task force and water infrastructure business case analysis. ⁶
- \$4.6 million to DEQ to address the ongoing water permitting backlog. ⁷
- \$250,000 to address nitrate issues in the Lower Umatilla GWMA through ODA. ⁸
- \$100,000 focused on Klamath Basin agricultural water quality monitoring through ODA. ⁹
- \$640,000 to DEQ for watershed restoration efforts in preparation for Klamath dam removals planned for 2021. ¹⁰
- \$1 million to ODFW to increase ability to implement the Oregon Conservation Strategy. ¹¹

¹ WRD POP 102 Groundwater Data, Management, and Protection

² DEQ POP 161 Water Infrastructure Needs

³ ODFW POP 123 IWRS implementation

⁴ OWEB POP 130 Conservation Policy and Strategy Coordination

⁵ OHA LC 386 Revision of Drinking Water Fee Authority

⁶ WRD POP 104 Dam Safety

⁷ DEQ POP 127 Permit Backlog

⁸ ODA POP 350 LUBGWMA

⁹ ODA POP 330 Klamath Ag WQ Monitoring

¹⁰ DEQ POP 126 Klamath Basin Water Quality Improvements

¹¹ ODFW POP 114 Oregon Conservation Strategy

- \$199,000 from the CWSRF Administrative Fund, for loan servicing and financial management of DEQ’s Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan program.¹²
- \$500,000 limitation to DEQ for procurement of loan management software to replace manual and outdated business practices¹³.
- \$463,000 to ODA to expand work with partner agencies and organizations in small agricultural watersheds.¹⁴

Facilitating Solutions for a Secure Water Future

Strategic investments will result in resilient natural and built water infrastructure systems across the state to support communities, local economies and environmental needs. Governor Brown’s budget invests in local planning, design, and implementation to support social, economic and environmental improvements throughout Oregon as follows:

- \$15.0 million in Lottery Revenue Bond proceeds plus \$278,000 to WRD for cost of issuance, to provide grants and loans for water supply projects to meet instream and out-of-stream water needs¹⁵.
- \$980,000 to WRD to support Place Based Planning in Harney- Malheur Lake, Lower John Day, Mid-Coast and Upper Grande Ronde. ¹⁶
- \$79.45 million Special Public Works Fund lottery bonding through BusOr eligible to support loans for public water infrastructure.¹⁷
- \$15.0 million Regional Infrastructure Fund lottery bonding to BusOr to provide grants and loans eligible to support water focused Regional Solutions projects.¹⁸
- \$754,000 to WRD to support water management in the field. ¹⁹
- \$400,000 to ODF to determine an optimal and sustainable organizational structure and fire funding approach to address increasingly severe fire seasons, which impact communities and associated water and other infrastructure.²⁰
- \$294,000 to ODA to support a natural resources federal grant coordinator. ²¹
- \$273,000 to DLCDD to update Oregon’s Climate Change Adaptation Framework. ²²

¹² DEQ POP 125 Effectively Managing the CWSRF Loan Portfolio

¹³ DEQ POP 163 Clean Water SRF Loan Management Software

¹⁴ ODA POP 310

¹⁵ WRD POP 107

¹⁶ WRD POP 101 Place Based Planning

¹⁷ BusOr POP 104 SPWF

¹⁸ BusOr POP 110 RIF

¹⁹ WRD POP 106 Water Management in the Field

²⁰ ODF Pkg 090 Analyst Adjustments

²¹ ODA Pkg 090 Analyst Adjustments

²² DLCDD POP 102