

**OREGON GROUND WATER ASSOCIATION**  
**Testimony on HB 5043**  
**Joint Committee on Ways and Means**  
**Subcommittee on Natural Resources.**  
**March 7, 2019**

The Oregon Ground Water Association was established in 1949, originally as the Oregon Drilling Association, for the purpose of building public goodwill and understanding of the water well drilling industry. Those early objectives have expanded over the years and membership now includes pump contractors, water treatment specialists, technical organizations, consultants, hydrogeologists, engineers, water well constructors, geotechnical drillers, and manufacturers and equipment suppliers to the industry. In 1992, the Association changed its name to the Oregon Ground Water Association to best reflect its ever-expanding mission. The association has been a leader in the implementation of policies including continuing education requirements for well drillers, identification of funding mechanisms to oversee groundwater programs, imaging and electronic filing of well logs, and other policies related to the protection and utilization of the groundwater resource.

OGWA understands the mission of the Oregon Water Resources Department and the monumental tasks associated with fulfilling its mission. We recognize that the Department's staff and resources must be prioritized to address implementation of all facets of Oregon's water laws.

We see the protection of groundwater as one of the primary policy objectives set by the legislature. Package 102, relating to Groundwater Data, Management, and Protection has the potential of supporting that goal.

*Package 102 – Groundwater Data, Management, and Protection*

*Increases the state's understanding of water supplies by allowing the Department to conduct one additional groundwater study at a time, while also preparing other basins for study and conducting more timely groundwater right reviews. The next basin intended for study is the Walla Walla Subbasin. Adds nine positions: OPA 3 public engagement coordinator, NRS 3 well construction specialist, NRS 3 hydrogeologist, NRS 4 hydrogeologist, NRS 3 hydrogeologist groundwater reviewer, NRS 4 hydrologist, ISS 6 database application developer, NRS 2 hydrographer, and a NRS 3 hydrographer. Provides cost-share funding for groundwater study (\$300k), geologic mapping (\$100k), and observation wells (\$400k). Total: \$2,837,027 General Fund; 9 positions. IWRS Recommended Actions: 1.A and 1.B*

While we realize that this subcommittee is not a policy committee, we are requesting a budget note directing the Department to perform a timely technical review of all well logs, as they are submitted, for any construction deficiencies. Such a review would be an efficient and cost effective tool that would support protection and management of Oregon's most valuable natural resource. This practice should be a primary tool utilized in an effective well construction enforcement program, and could contribute greatly to groundwater data collection efforts, groundwater studies, and a better understanding of Oregon's groundwater resource.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide input and are available to respond to questions.