



**Oregon Association of
Conservation Districts**

May 9, 2019

Chair Holvey
Vice Chairs Williamson & Wilson
Members of the House Rules Committee

The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) strongly supports **HCR 33**. We appreciate and share the legislature's vision to commit to a long-range strategy to assure a secure and resilient water supply for the state's long-term future. OACD serves and represents Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, special districts governed by elected boards. The Districts protect and enhance water quality and quantity, soil quality, and habitat by supporting voluntary conservation in partnership with private landowners along with our state and federal partners.

There are 16 million acres of agricultural operations—accounting for half of the private acres in Oregon (2018 USDA Agriculture Overview). These lands are managed for diverse agricultural products that are economically linked to \$50 billion of all Oregon sales and \$22.9 billion of Oregon's net state product. OACD works closely with the Oregon Department of Agriculture and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to implement natural resource programs to ensure clean water and healthy habitat on which our communities and ecosystems thrive. A safe, secure and reliable water supply provides a basis for Oregon's economic success.

Strategic investments benefit water supplies through planning and implementation of projects supporting water infrastructure, including natural and working lands as well as water management and storage. Some of those necessary, identified investments this legislative session include:

- \$1 million to increase implementation of the Oregon Conservation Strategy (ODFW POP 114)
- \$15 million in Lottery Revenue Bond proceeds to provide grants and loans for water supply projects to meet instream and out-of-stream needs (WRD POP 107)
- \$980,000 to support Place Based Planning in Harney-Malheur Lake, Lower John Day, Mid-Coast and Upper Grande Ronde basins (WRD POP 101)
- \$15 million Regional Infrastructure Fund lottery bonding to provide grants and loans to support water focused Regional Solutions projects (BusOr POP 110)
- \$400,000 to determine optimal and sustainable organization structure and fire funding approach to address increasingly severe fire seasons which impact communities and associated water and other infrastructure (ODF POP 090)
- \$463,609 to support Strategic Implementation Areas (SIAs) for water quality management goals of the Oregon Agricultural Water Quality Management Act (ODA POP 310)

- \$780,000 to implement resiliency plans and work with landowners on restoration and mitigation (ODFW POP 123)

In addition, several legislative bills provide tools for further water management and protection on working lands:

- HB 2020 Climate Investment Fund supporting conservation on working lands
- HB 2729 funding the Oregon Agriculture Heritage Program (OAHP) to keep working lands protected as buffers for habitat while assuring continued food production
- HB 2084 extending place-based integrated water resource planning

Your action in supporting HCR 33 and identified funding and legislation as listed above is a major step toward a sustainable water future for generations of Oregonians. Building this collaborative process with your guidance will be a legacy for us all.

We have appreciated the opportunity to be a stakeholder in the 100-Year Water Vision led by the Governor's Natural Resources Policy Director Jason Miner in coordination with the natural resource agency directors. Working together, the stakeholders, the agencies and the legislature can secure a resilient water resource for our state.

Jan Lee, Executive Director

Jan Lee

Oregon Association of Conservation Districts

jan.lee@oacd.org

503.545.9420