

House Bill 2581

Sponsored by Representative WILDE (Presession filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Makes findings regarding Columbia River Basin.

Directs Water Resources Department to aggressively pursue development of Columbia River Basin water resources including establishing goal to increase new water available for agricultural appropriation within Columbia River Basin by 100,000 acre-feet by certain date. Requires annual report to Legislative Assembly regarding progress toward goal.

Declares emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to Columbia River Basin water; and declaring an emergency.

3 Whereas Oregon benefits greatly from production in the agricultural industry; and

4 Whereas Oregon has an interest in maintaining its aquifers and maintaining sufficient flows in
5 its rivers; and

6 Whereas Oregon has an interest in ensuring and improving upon the wise and efficient use of
7 its water resources; and

8 Whereas Oregon needs to increase the amount of acreage used for agricultural production,
9 particularly in the Columbia River Basin; and

10 Whereas an increase in agricultural production will result in new jobs and economic activity in
11 Oregon; and

12 Whereas the Legislative Assembly desires that the Water Resources Department prioritize the
13 development of water supply enhancement to ensure that Oregon realizes benefits from agriculture,
14 to protect Oregon interests regarding aquifers, river flows and water uses and to meet the need for
15 increased agricultural production; now, therefore,

16 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

17 **SECTION 1. The Legislative Assembly finds and declares that:**

18 **(1) It is the policy of this state to enhance the available supply of water in this state from**
19 **Columbia River Basin sources for consumptive and in-stream uses in order to promote the**
20 **economic welfare of the state.**

21 **(2) Columbia River Basin water supports irrigated agriculture, which is a traded sector**
22 **export industry that generates revenue from outside the state, resulting in substantial eco-**
23 **nomical benefits to residents of this state.**

24 **(3) An increase in agricultural production will result in new jobs and economic activity**
25 **in this state, but the ability to increase agricultural production is limited by a lack of avail-**
26 **able Columbia River Basin water during the summer irrigation season.**

27 **(4) During the dry summer months, consumptive and in-stream needs in the Columbia**
28 **River Basin sometimes go unsatisfied.**

29 **(5) This state must enhance its available water supplies by increasing the storage of**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 Columbia River Basin waters outside of the irrigation season for use in meeting consumptive
2 and in-stream needs during the dry summer months.

3 **SECTION 2.** (1) The Water Resources Department shall, in cooperation with other state
4 agencies, aggressively pursue the development of new water supplies for consumptive and
5 in-stream uses by the storage, conservation and reuse of Columbia River Basin waters, in-
6 cluding but not limited to establishing a goal of increasing the amount of new water available
7 for agricultural appropriation within the Columbia River Basin by a minimum of 100,000
8 acre-feet above 2018 levels.

9 (2) In carrying out this section, the department and the state agencies cooperating with
10 the department shall consider new mitigation options for new surface water diversions.

11 **SECTION 3.** (1) The Water Resources Department may take all actions necessary and
12 proper to achieve the goal of a 100,000 acre-feet increase in new water available for agricul-
13 tural appropriation within the Columbia River Basin as described in section 2 of this 2019
14 Act by December 31, 2025.

15 (2) The department shall report annually to the Legislative Assembly regarding progress
16 toward meeting the goal of a 100,000 acre-feet increase described in subsection (1) of this
17 section. The department shall make the final report under this subsection in the year that
18 the department achieves the minimum 100,000 acre-feet increase or 2026, whichever occurs
19 first.

20 **SECTION 4.** This 2019 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
21 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2019 Act takes effect
22 on its passage.
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