

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Item 57: Water Resources Department Walla Wall Groundwater Study

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Natural Resources Subcommittee
Carrier: Senator Dembrow

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means recommend including an increase of \$300,000 in Other Funds expenditure limitation and authorizing the establishment of one full-time limited duration position for the Water Resources Department in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2024 legislative session to execute the Walla Walla Groundwater Study agreement with the Washington Department of Ecology.

The groundwater study was started in 2020 by the U.S. Geological Survey to develop an updated, comprehensive understanding of the Walla Walla basin groundwater system for future planning, policy, and management. To support the interstate partnership, the Water Resources Department will hire a limited duration Groundwater Field Technician to assist with collecting and analyzing data to define and characterize the aquifers spanning the Oregon and Washington border. The increase in expenditure limitation will be supported by reimbursement from Washington.

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends approval.