

HB 3099 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Action Date: 03/30/23

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 9-0-0-0

Yeas: 9 - Boice, Gamba, Hartman, Helm, Levy B, Marsh, McLain, Owens, Scharf

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/9, 3/30

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Oregon Consensus at Portland State University (Oregon Consensus) and Oregon State University (OSU) to establish a collaborative process for developing a shared understanding of water management in the Chewaucan River watershed (watershed) and identifying broadly supported actions related to the watershed. Specifies that identified actions must meet water needs for agricultural operations, communities, Lake Abert, wet meadows and fish and wildlife; address the ecological health of Lake Abert and the entire watershed; and consider social, economic, and environmental benefits and impacts. Specifies guidelines within which the collaborative process must operate and requires the process to be developed in consultation with the Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD), and affected federally recognized Indian tribes. Requires that the collaborative process may not delay or preclude agency activities including those related to water right management and water-related data collection and analysis. Requires that the process may not interfere with activities of private landowners allowed under state water laws, including applying for new, transferred, or modified water rights. Repeals provisions related to the collaborative process for developing a shared understanding of water management in the watershed on June 30, 2025. Directs ODFW and OWRD, or relevant contracting parties, to undertake certain activities related to the watershed and Lake Abert, including data collection and analysis related to the watershed's hydrological system and water budget and the presence, distribution, and water needs of fish and wildlife. Directs ODFW and OWRD to support collaborative processes, public participation and the resolution of complex issues related to water management. Appropriates \$420,000 General Fund moneys to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for distribution to Oregon Consensus and \$150,000 General Fund moneys to OSU. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Bipartisan nature of the bill
- Importance of collaboration between stakeholders
- Importance of the intergenerational effort behind the measure

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

The Chewaucan River watershed is located in Southern Oregon and consists of 651 square miles of forest, marsh, and rural ranch land. It includes parts of the Fremont-Winema National Forest, Bureau of Land Management land, as well as private property. The Chewaucan River's headwaters originate in the east drainage of the Gearheart

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Mountain Wilderness and the river empties into Lake Abert located in Lake County.

House Bill 3099 A directs Oregon Consensus at Portland State University (Oregon Consensus) and Oregon State University (OSU) to establish a collaborative process for developing a shared understanding of water management in the Chewaucan River watershed and identifying broadly supported actions related to the watershed using a process that neither delays nor precludes water management-related agency activities or interfere with activities of private landowners allowed under state water laws. The measure also appropriates \$420,000 General Fund moneys to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for distribution to Oregon Consensus and \$150,000 General Fund moneys to OSU.