



NETWORK of OREGON
WATERSHED COUNCILS

March 2nd, 2023

To: The Oregon Legislature House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Re: **Support** for **HB3163**, Relating to a water-planning fund; declaring an emergency.

Greetings, Chair Helm:

The [Network of Oregon Watershed Councils](#) (NOWC) represents 55 **watershed councils** statewide, which are local, community-based, non-regulatory groups that assess and monitor environmental conditions, and conduct voluntary conservation projects to restore/enhance the waters and lands for native species and people.

Each watershed council is familiar with their particular ecological habitats' features, and works to understand and address specific challenges, usually focusing on rivers or creeks and the lands that drain into them. Watershed councils are led by boards of directors that bring many local interests to the table, such as landowners, companies/industries, municipal/state agencies, elected officials, and community members.

NOWC supports HB3163 as a valuable funding mechanism for place-based water planning. This bill would support communities across Oregon to come together and create effective and equitable plans for long-term climate resiliency. It would provide staff capacity and resources to conduct research, establish common metrics, develop shared datasets, and participate in community-led processes – all of which are essential for understanding our local water situations and identifying strategic solutions.

Thank you for your consideration,

Vanessa Green
Executive Director
Network of Oregon Watershed Councils
ed@oregonwatersheds.org