



Oregon

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Testimony for Senate Bill 1567

Senate Committee on Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs

Senator James Manning, Chair

Submitted by: Bryn Hudson, Legislative Coordinator

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 1567, which directs the Oregon Water Resources Department to implement the Walla Walla 2050 Plan.

Walla Walla 2050 Plan

The Walla Walla Basin in northeastern Oregon supports communities, industries, farms, fish, and wildlife in Washington and Oregon, as well as for sovereign tribal nations. Due to the complexity of the basin and declining surface and groundwater levels, the Walla Walla Water 2050 Strategic Plan was launched in 2021 to improve streamflows and water supplies in the Walla Walla River Basin over the next 30 years.

The Washington Department of Ecology-Office of Columbia River, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Oregon Water Resources Department, local governments in both Washington and Oregon, community members, and other stakeholders have helped develop recommendations for the Plan.

Senate Bill 1567 Summary

SB 1567 directs the Department to collaborate with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and the State of Washington to implement the Walla Walla Water 2050 Strategic Plan.

The bill declares that it's the Legislature's intent that Oregon will share in the cost of implementing the Plan, subject to the availability of funds. It requires that at least one-half of total costs of plan implementation will be funded through federal, private, or other nonstate sources. The bill does not commit the amount, source and timing of funding.

The bill also allows state agencies to fund the study, design, engineering and construction of projects located wholly or partially in the State of Washington that implement the objectives of the Walla Walla Water 2050 Strategic Plan if the projects benefit in-stream, out-of-stream or groundwater demands in Oregon.

Lastly, the bill includes requirements for the Department to periodically report to the Walla Walla River Basin Advisory Committee, and to submit a report to a legislative committee with recommendations for a legal and regulatory framework to promote equitable allocation, distribution and management of developed water resources and water supplies resulting from projects undertaken under the Walla Walla Water 2050 Strategic Plan by June 30, 2026.

In 2023, the Washington Legislative Assembly approved similar legislation in the form of [House Bill 1322](#).

Oregon's continued collaboration with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and the Washington Department of Ecology will be important to helping the communities in the Walla Walla Basin meet their instream and out of stream needs.