

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Item 31: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Oregon Environmental Restoration Program

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Natural Resources Subcommittee
Carrier: Representative Owens

The Natural Resources Subcommittee heard a request from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board on the Oregon Environmental Restoration Program.

SB 1561 passed during the 2024 legislative session and established the Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund to receive Monsanto settlement agreement proceeds and the Oregon Environmental Restoration Council to determine distribution policy and eligible projects. The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board is the fiscal agent charged with distributing proceeds from the statutory funds for approved projects that will support environmental remediation or restoration of harms and contamination. Based on the distribution policy adopted by the council in October 2025, the board will need up to \$35 million in Other Funds expenditure limitation for payments to eligible recipients each biennium.

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means include an increase of \$35,000,000 in Other Funds expenditure limitation for the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2026 legislative session for projects approved by the Oregon Environmental Restoration Council.