



TUALATIN VALLEY IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildlife
Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 427

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, Senator Girod, Senator Prozanski, Senator Taylor:

I am writing to express my concerns over and opposition to Senate Bill 427. The Tualatin Valley Irrigation District (TVID) is located primarily in Washington County. TVID operates and maintains the Tualatin Project, a United States Bureau of Reclamation project. TVID is in a 50-year repayment contract for the construction of the project. We deliver irrigation water to up to 17,000 acres within the Tualatin Basin. Henry Hagg Lake is the primary source of our water supply and we share the allocation of the stored water with our project partners, the City of Hillsboro – Joint Water Commission (JWC) and Clean Water Services (CWS) for municipal and water quality uses respectively.

TVID has a responsibility to protect our water rights. TVID's primary source of revenue is via assessments on those lands which receive irrigation water from the project. As the county continues to grow at an accelerated rate, TVID lands are getting encroached upon, often being overlooked by regional planning efforts for residential and commercial development. TVID must often transfer water rights off these encroached upon lands and move them elsewhere within the district. TVID relies on the water right transfer process to manage and protect its water rights. Currently, the State of Oregon's Water Resources Department (WRD) may not approve a transfer if the transfer were to either enlarge an existing water right, or cause injury to any other existing water right on the system.

Senate Bill 427 would create an additional standard that would require WRD to determine whether a proposed transfer would result in "diminishment of streamflow". TVID finds this standard overly broad and would likely burden WRD with further analysis on their already at times strained resources. WRD's transfer review process already has significant delays, and the implementation of Senate Bill 427 would likely further compound the transfer process.

TVID asks the Oregon legislature to seek opportunities to increase water right flexibility to ensure irrigation districts, agricultural users, and municipal users can improve operational efficiencies while protecting existing water rights.

TVID asks that you vote against Senate Bill 427.

Thank you

Bobby Nuvolini
District Manager
Tualatin Valley Irrigation District