

Representative Helm, Co-Chair
HALNRW Committee
Oregon State Legislature



Representative Owens, Co-Chair
HALNRW Committee
Oregon State Legislature

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

January 29, 2026

RE: Anticipated Amendments to House Bill 4004 (HALNRW Committee Bill)

As noted during the meeting of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water on January 13th, 2026, House Bill 4004 was introduced as a committee bill for consideration of several components related to natural resources. In addition to the content of the bill as introduced, the co-chairs expect to propose amendments for consideration as described below.

This advisory summary is provided to help increase notice and awareness, above and beyond relevant legislative requirements. It is hoped that the additional information will be useful and appreciated. Formal amendments will be posted when procedurally possible, following the official commencement of the 2026 Legislative Session.

Forest Special Assessments

Existing content of HB 4004 regarding forest special assessments will continue to be considered, including any amendments that could be proposed for that section.

OWRD Engineer Experience

An amendment is anticipated that would direct the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) to employ a registered engineer experienced in water-related engineering to carry out OWRD's functions, replacing an existing requirement that the agency director or principal assistant be such an engineer. OWRD has noted that this adjustment would be beneficial as practical realities about when and where such experience is needed have changed over time.

Technical Fix in OWRD Process Improvements

An amendment is anticipated with a technical correction to ensure the timeline language for a proposed final order on a water right or permit is internally consistent, as intended and passed in previous 2025 process improvements legislation.

OWRD Authority for Limited Extensions

An amendment would authorize OWRD to grant one extension of time not exceeding 10 years to permit holders to complete construction and apply water beneficially, if the Department can determine that development delays under the water right permit resulted from delays in permit issuance by another local, state, or federal government or from appeals of local, state, or federal decisions on a permit. This provision would apply to all permits that are not municipal, quasi-municipal, group domestic, and group domestic expanded uses, which are categories that already have pathways to request an extension.

OSMB Clarification

An amendment would clarify that the state definition of boat does not include combinations of floatation devices such as innertubes. This is consistent with recent legislative intent in 2025 and ensures people will know they do not need waterway access permits for these floatation devices.