

# Oregon's 2024 Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) - Draft Agency Priorities

## Introduction

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- The Governor's Natural Resource Office and six agency directors/representatives met several times in July through September 2024 to discuss water action priorities for the next ~5-7 years
  - Department of Agriculture
  - Department of Environmental Quality
  - Department of Fish & Wildlife
  - Department of Land Conservation & Development
  - Oregon Water Resources Department
  - Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- What actions can the State take to address urgent water quantity, quality, and ecosystem challenges?
- State priorities will be reflected in Draft 2 of the 2024 IWRS, targeted for release in January 2025



# Draft State Agency Priorities

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- The following slides outline draft agency priorities developed by six agencies. Agency acronyms are used on the slides.
  - Department of Agriculture (ODA)
  - Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
  - Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW)
  - Department of Land Conservation & Development (DLCD)
  - Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD)
  - Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB)
- Agency directors will further describe these slides at the November 12, 2024 Public Meeting
- There will be an opportunity for comment during facilitated discussion at the Public Meeting

Agency directors used PowerPoint slides to outline draft priorities. They chose three priority areas (or "buckets") and then listed four types of information; State enterprise efforts, Agency-specific contributions, Support/resources needed, and some additional words to describe the priority bucket. See the template, below.

## **#. Priority Bucket (one of three priority "buckets" or categories chosen by agency directors)**

Most important thing the state should do

State interagency efforts that will have the biggest impact in achieving the goals of the IWRS in the next 5-7 years.

Biggest thing your agency can contribute

What each of the six individual agencies can do that would have the greatest impact on achieving the tasks or actions listed in the blue boxes.

What you need to make that happen

Resources, support from water partners, communities, legislators, etc., and change needed to achieve what is listed in the orange boxes.

Bonus: Language to describe the bucket

Additional descriptive language to describe what falls in this priority bucket.

# 1. Prevent Things From Getting Worse

## Most important thing the state should do

Refine our understanding of what water is available in new climate conditions with the WARS update to avoid harm to other users or ecosystems

Classify basins where water is unavailable for greater transparency

Address factors contributing to nutrient pollution in surface & groundwater; identify risks and prevent pollution in surface & groundwaters

Ensure usability (quality) of water we do have – don't expand or allow practices that contaminate

Don't allow development in places where it can't be managed sustainably (water supply, wastewater, etc)

Engage with Tribes to better understand their water priorities

## Biggest thing your agency can contribute

DEQ: pursue reduction in nutrient and other contaminant loading to aquifers and streams

DLCD: Provide tech assistance and \$ to help cities and counties modify their local codes to: 1) confirm water availability w/ OWRD before approving development, and 2) involve OWRD in public facilities planning.

ODA: reduce nutrient & contaminant loading into surface water and groundwater from ag practices

ODFW: update instream flow targets on large rivers, including storage season, and apply for associated instream water rights

OWEB: Funds restoration and protection projects, monitoring of conditions/trends, tech assistance and engagement

OWRD: Classify streams & aquifers, permit condition enforcement, basin assessments & studies, WARS update, increase awareness of water scarcity

## What you need to make that happen

DEQ: modernize and adequately resource GW Quality Act activities; develop MOUs where appropriate involving agencies with applicable authorities/responsibilities

DLCD: grant funds and FTE to provide technical assistance. Policy question: disallow exempt use wells where water is not available?

ODA: agency staff resources for proactive engagement with partners and ag operators; increased capacity for proactive compliance and technical assistance; capacity funding for SWCDs to assist in outreach and restoration efforts.

ODFW: Develop data collection and analysis partnerships with other state agencies and Tribes to quantify instream needs

OWEB: Funds restoration and protection projects, monitoring of conditions/trends, tech assistance and engagement

OWRD: support to modernize IT systems, conduct basin assessments & studies, update basin rules, complete WARS update, and increase comms capacity

## Bonus: Language to describe the bucket



Urgent actions

Protect quality and quantity for instream and out-of-stream uses

Actions that can "move the needle," have an impact

## 2. Optimize: Highest & Best Use

### Most important thing the state should do

Incentivize water reuse, conservation, and other opportunities to preserve potable water

Increase pace and scale of innovative multi-benefit solutions

Identify and address policy, funding, & capacity barriers across agency boundaries

Enterprise data modernization and management

Engage and incentivize communities to implement practical solutions and solve local issues

Optimize at the right geographic scale for trade-offs, data, innovative solutions, & tailored rules

### Biggest thing your agency can contribute

DEQ: Create predictable and transparent processes that reduce barriers to implementing water reuse efforts; share data modernization approaches with other agencies

DLCD: make involving OWRD one of the conditions for Economic Opportunity grants to local jurisdictions.

ODA: Support ag innovation and water conservation on farm; protect existing resources on ag lands; co-create plans; optimize partnerships to serve farms of all sizes

ODFW: finalize flow restoration prioritization project; refine instream targets; partner on flow restoration efforts in priority basins

OWEB: increase & strategically target water right acquisition and habitat improvement projects in priority areas

OWRD: Modernize transfer process, evaluate water use fee models, clean up unused rights, expand data collection and data systems

### What you need to make that happen

DEQ: leverage existing data systems for centralized capture/sharing of water quality data (e.g. AWQMS); implement recs from Reuse Report

DLCD: local jurisdictions include OWRD in Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA), so it can comment on water availability for different EcDev options

ODA: Elevate ag project funding; increase capacity for innovation, planning, and proactive coordination with OSU, USDA and other entities providing support to ag operators

ODFW: funding for additional instream studies, flow restoration capacity building (NGO's, ODFW, etc.) and for water transaction payments

OWEB: coordination with other agencies on shared priorities – geographic, resource

OWRD: Leg support for water right and IT modernization; resources for fee evaluation

### Bonus: Language to describe the bucket

Don't let perfection be the enemy of good

Data to support decision-making

Interagency Collaboration

Be smart with what we have

Better share a scarce resource

Do more with less

# 3. Help communities prepare and adapt

## Most important thing the state should do

Leverage co-benefits across water sectors (“win-win”)	Help people understand what the water future looks like, provide information	Technical assistance to navigate regulatory and permitting issues	Protect & Restore ecosystem functions
Provide funding and technical resources to get big projects done	Help natural resource economies prepare/adapt	Support infrastructure projects where it provides climate adaptation and sustainable growth	Increase incentives, payments, voluntary approaches

## Biggest thing your agency can contribute

DEQ: pursue funding & tech support to increase water reuse	DLCD: grants, tech assistance, circuit riders for cities, counties, and tribes	ODA: leverage partnerships (OSU, UDSA, and others) to provide climate resilient resources that keep farms farming
ODFW: assess best options for mitigation; prioritize basins for restoration; provide technical assistance	OWEB: Increase use of incentives approach based on targeted priorities	OWRD: support voluntary actions & tools (e.g., grant programs), share information & data, support local planning and implementation

## What you need to make that happen

DEQ: Support interagency coordination needed to address infrastructure upgrades, investments in landscape/riparian resilience, and other planning/funding needs.	DLCD: pass through grant \$, additional regional representatives	ODA: resources to consistently engage partners and develop materials that assist producers adapt to and adopt new climate friendly agricultural practices.
ODFW: fund more real-time water and temperature data; funding for local ODFW flow restoration engagement	OWEB: Identify NR enterprise-wide priorities that we can target available funding to [more money, more investment]	OWRD: Funding for grant and CREP programs, increase community engagement & comms capacity, funds to modernize IT/data systems, seek Tribal TEK

## Bonus: Language to describe the bucket

	We are all in this together, let's work it out together	Start early on projects!
	Address economic impacts of climate change, water scarcity	

# 2024 IWRS Draft State Agency Priorities Engagement Opportunities

1

Public Meeting,  
Overview of Priorities  
November 12, 2024  
2 – 4 pm  
Salem & Zoom

2

Submit written  
comments to the  
Oregon Water  
Resources  
Department by Friday,  
November 15, 2024

3

Submit written  
comments on 2024  
IWRS Draft 2, targeted  
for release in January  
2025

For more information: [Water Resources Department : Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy \(IWRS\) : Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy : State of Oregon](#)