



Oregon Water Resources Congress

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OREGON WATER RESOURCES CONGRESS

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I am Anita Winkler, Executive Director, Oregon Water Resources Congress. This testimony is submitted to the United States House of Representatives Appropriations Committee, Energy and Water Development Subcommittee, regarding the FY10 Budget for the Bureau of Reclamation and Oregon Projects.

The Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC) was established in 1912 as a trade association to support member needs to protect water rights and encourage conservation and water management statewide. OWRC represents non-potable agriculture water suppliers in Oregon, primarily irrigation districts, as well as member ports, other special districts and local governments. The association represents the entities that operate water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower production.

Bureau of Reclamation

OWRC continues to support an increase in funding for the Bureau of Reclamation's Water and Related Resources program above the Administration's proposed FY10 Budget request for the Bureau's programs west-wide. However, without knowing the details of that budget and looking at what was provided ultimately in the FY10 budget for the Bureau of Reclamation of approximately \$920 million, OWRC would recommend that an addition several hundred millions dollars be provided for the program to address the needs in the 17 western states. We would like to supplement this testimony once we see the FY10 budget details for the Bureau.

Water for America Initiative

In the absence of a detailed FY10 budget, OWRC continues to be a strong advocate for the Bureau's challenge grant Water 2025 Program, the Water for America Program and the Water Conservation Field Services Program and encourage a level of funding that will meet the needs of the western states' ability to meet water demand through improved management of water supply systems, conservation, and innovation.

State Investigations

We request the funding for the State Investigations program in Oregon realistically reflect the needs of the State as it works to address water supply needs to meet the impact of climate change and changing demographics in the state.

The mission of the Oregon Water Resources Congress is to promote the protection and use of water rights and the wise stewardship of water resources.

Oregon Needs

Conservation Implementation

The largest need for funding for OWRC's members is to implement water conservation projects. Irrigation districts in Oregon *continue to line and pipe open waterways to enhance both water supply and water quality*. But the ability to continue this work depends on some public investment in return for the public benefits. Districts have conserved water and provided some of the saved or conserved water to benefit the fishery in-stream while also building reservoir supplies. Districts are often the largest water supplier in a basin. When they are able to conserve water, that conserved water can be used by other irrigators, to restore in-stream flows to help protect endangered species, or for other uses in the basin.

Oregon districts hope to continue this work through enhanced water conservation and improved water management, but to do that the districts need support to implement effective alternative programs such as pilot water banking projects (Klamath Basin and the Deschutes Basin), energy reduction programs, additional measurement and telemetry monitoring, etc.

While some of these districts will continue to benefit from the funding requested in the FY10 budget, others are going through a reauthorization process or new authorizations for projects in their districts that will continue this conservation ethic.

Previously for Oregon needs we had identified the conservation implementation needs in the Rogue River Basin, Deschutes Basin, Deschutes Basin, Umatilla Basin, Hood River Basin and Klamath Basin. Those needs have not been met and continue to be critical to our member districts in those basins.

In addition to those needs previously identified, the Greenberry ID Phase 3 Pipeline Project in the *Willamette River Basin* will add capacity to the district's infrastructure to provide water for irrigation while supporting other water needs in the basin including augmenting stream flows and supporting wetlands.

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

OWRC supports the BPA's ongoing efforts in protecting, mitigating and enhancing Columbia River Basin fish and wildlife affected by any hydroelectric project. The BPA, through the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, has recognized the importance of funding fish protection efforts on the tributaries of the Columbia River as well as on the river's mainstem. Representatives of several OWRC members have served on the sub-basin planning committees and our member district have been active participants in the Council's efforts as part of cooperative efforts in watersheds in the Columbia Basin.

We encourage the Council to help fund irrigation district projects that conserve water that can be left instream to support the survival of endangered and threatened fish species in the Basin.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding the FY10 Federal budget. While we support existing proposals, we feel that given the record-setting droughts we have suffered in the past few years and in anticipation of another drought this year, we need to support an increased budget to stabilize the nation's water supply for the many needs it must meet. Providing a stable water supply feeds the economy locally and at the national level.