

Governor Kitzhaber's Balanced Budget

Investments in Water Quality and Coordinated Monitoring

Governor's Natural Resources Office
Inter-agency Budget Memo
February 4, 2013

Oregon has been a national leader in restoring and protecting water quality. With groundbreaking programs and substantial efforts by the private sector, Oregon has earned the reputation as an environmental leader. Oregon's state natural resource agencies have a long and successful history of working together to improve water quality in a manner that is strategic, efficient and effective.

Over the past ten years, however, Oregon has failed to keep pace in protecting water quality despite the fact that Oregonians consistently identify water quality as their leading environmental concern. With population continuing to increase, along with drier summers and warmer temperatures, it will be increasingly difficult to achieve and maintain good to excellent water quality in Oregon's waterways. The Governor's 10-year plan objective is to continue to reduce the percentage of streams with declining water quality and to assure that water quality is improving throughout the state by 2022.

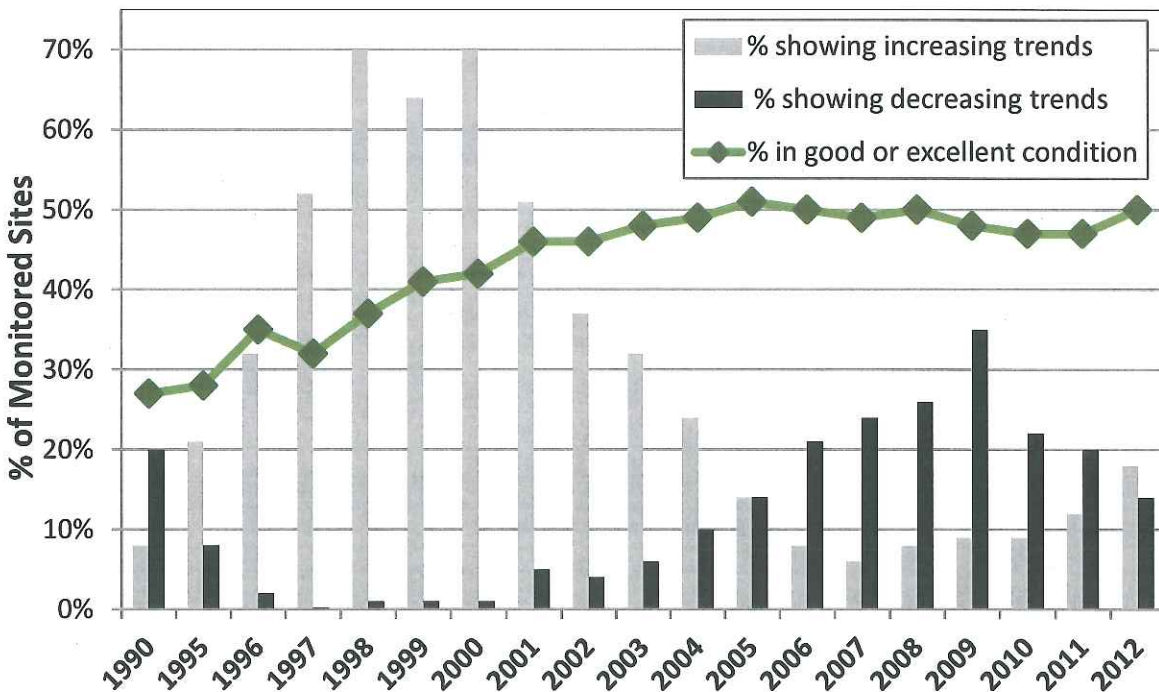


Figure 1: DEQ's laboratory developed the Oregon Water Quality Index to track water quality trends across the state. This index combines eight water quality measurements such as nutrients, fecal bacteria, pH and dissolved oxygen into a single number to describe general water quality conditions. Data from a network of approximately 130 ambient river monitoring sites representing major streams throughout the state are analyzed on a yearly basis. Trends are determined based upon the most recent ten year period.

The Governor's Balanced Budget makes a substantial investment – over five million dollars – to begin reversing the disinvestment in water quality programs.

This memo provides an overview of the budgetary proposals the Governor has advanced for the 2013-15 biennium, recognizing that additional investments may be needed to sustain water quality improvements as our state's population continues to grow.

Enterprise Monitoring

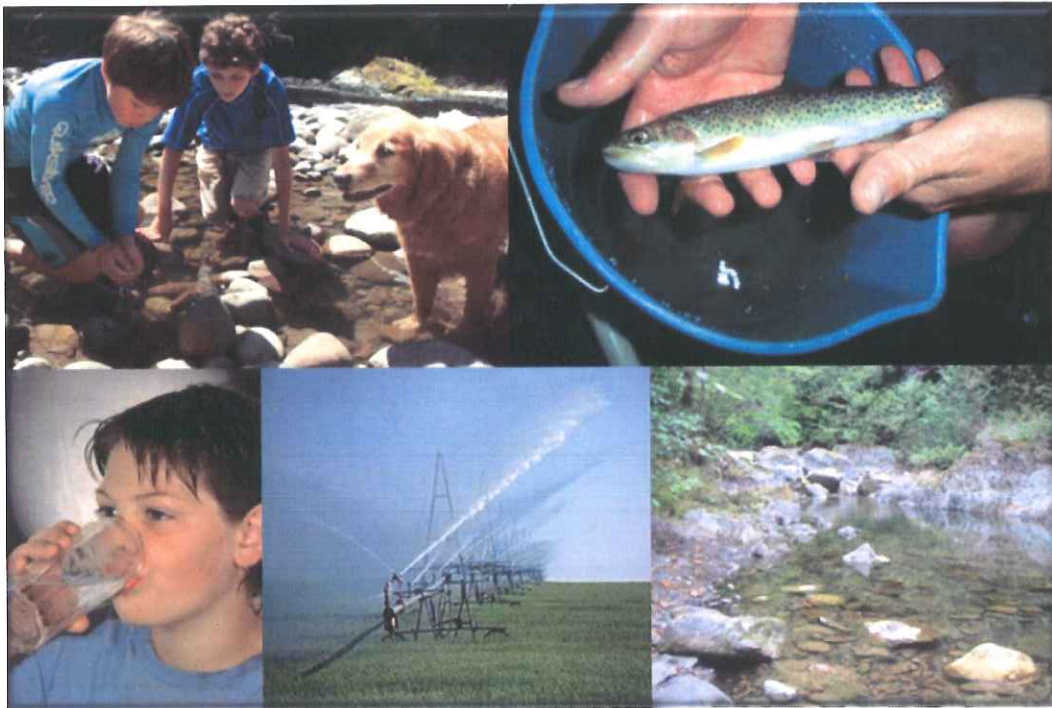
A significant part of the Governor's investment in water quality builds upon a cross-agency enterprise approach to monitoring water quality and watershed health. Under this enterprise approach, state agencies have implemented a number of useful and productive monitoring efforts under current service level programs. One example is the Wilson River basin restoration project that led to dramatic improvements in water quality over the past ten years. The Governor's investment proposes to begin scaling up this approach to other basins in the state, allowing resources to be targeted to where they will have the greatest effect. The enterprise monitoring program and Wilson River project is described in a separate memo, appended to this document.

2013-15 Investments in Water Quality				
Agency and Package #	Package Description	Funding	Positions	Funding Source
Water Quality Monitoring				
Targeted Water Quality Monitoring				
DEQ - 122	DEQ Oregon Plan Monitoring: collect and assess data on aquatic biological communities to understand impacts on watershed health	238,161	2.00	GF
Nonpoint Source Monitoring Program Enhancement				
ODF - 452	Integrated Effectiveness Monitoring: Evaluate protections standards for headwater stream processes and conditions	465,997	1.00	GF/OF
ODA -325	Water Quality Monitoring: Track changes in riparian conditions; fund additional ambient water quality monitoring	962,654	3.00	GF
Water Quality Management				
Pesticides				
ODA - 315	Pesticide Outreach: Continue outreach on lawful use of pesticides and compliance monitoring activities	463,534	2.00	OF
ODA - 320	Pesticide Stewardship Program (½ Fees, ½ GF): Implement an effective collaborative program to address pesticide-related water quality issues across all land uses in a more cost-efficient alternative to regulatory approaches	1,380,483 (747,942 transferred to DEQ)	1.00	GF/OF
DEQ - 320	Pesticide Stewardship Program: Collect data and coordinate with partners to address pesticide-related water quality issues across all land uses in a cost-efficient alternative to regulatory approaches	747,942	4.00	OF transfer from ODA
Water Quality Program Continuity				
DEQ - 090	Replacement of LF/OF/FF shortfalls: Restores three wastewater permitting and three TMDL positions	1,505,084	6.00	GF
Nonpoint Source Coordination				
DEQ - 127	IWRS Implementation: Provide technical assistance for local water resource projects and implementation of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy	474,187	2.25	GF

Water Quality Monitoring:	1,600,413	GF
	66,399	OF
	\$1,666,812	Total
Water Quality Management:	2,727,213	GF
	1,096,030	OF
	\$3,823,243	Total

The Governor's Balanced Budget also includes targeted investments for water resources management and development, and for salmon recovery efforts. These investment proposals are described in separate budget memos.

An Enterprise System for Natural Resource Monitoring



What is the Enterprise System for Natural Resources Monitoring?

Oregon's natural resource agencies manage our air, water, land and wildlife resources to support a healthy environment that sustains communities, our economy, and the places we all treasure. The Enterprise Monitoring System builds on existing collaborative monitoring efforts to achieve environmental outcomes more efficiently, cost effectively and with better results. By sharing capabilities and capacities we maximize the efficient use of state resources, information and know-how. Environmental information and data produced through enterprise monitoring will measure and guide progress toward achieving the vision described in the Governor's 10-Year Plan for Healthy Environments.

Data-Driven Decision Making

Monitoring and assessment are the foundation for effective natural resources management and informed decision making. Monitoring programs provide the information Oregon needs to identify and prioritize problems, target actions where they will have the most benefit for the least cost, and determine what is working and what is not. Without sufficient data Oregon runs a risk of implementing programs that fail to produce the desired results, or that do so inefficiently. Monitoring data are also needed in some circumstances to permit new activity, meet regulatory requirements and to achieve other objectives. Monitoring data allow us to recognize and reward success, while focusing resources where they are most needed.

Building Upon a Solid Framework

Natural resource issues cut across agency boundaries. For example, water quality affects aquatic life and municipal and business interests; while forestry, agriculture and urban development affect water

quality. Oregon's natural resources agencies and their partners have a 15-year history of working together to protect and restore Oregon's watersheds under the framework of the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds. The Oregon Plan advanced cross-agency collaboration on monitoring, assessment, planning and implementation activities. These efforts have been important components of programs such as the Forestry Program for Oregon, Total Maximum Daily Loads, Agricultural Water Quality Program Water Quality Management Plans, and salmon recovery efforts. However, additional investments in monitoring are needed to implement the Governor's 10-year plan.

Bacteria Concentrations Wilson River at Highway 101

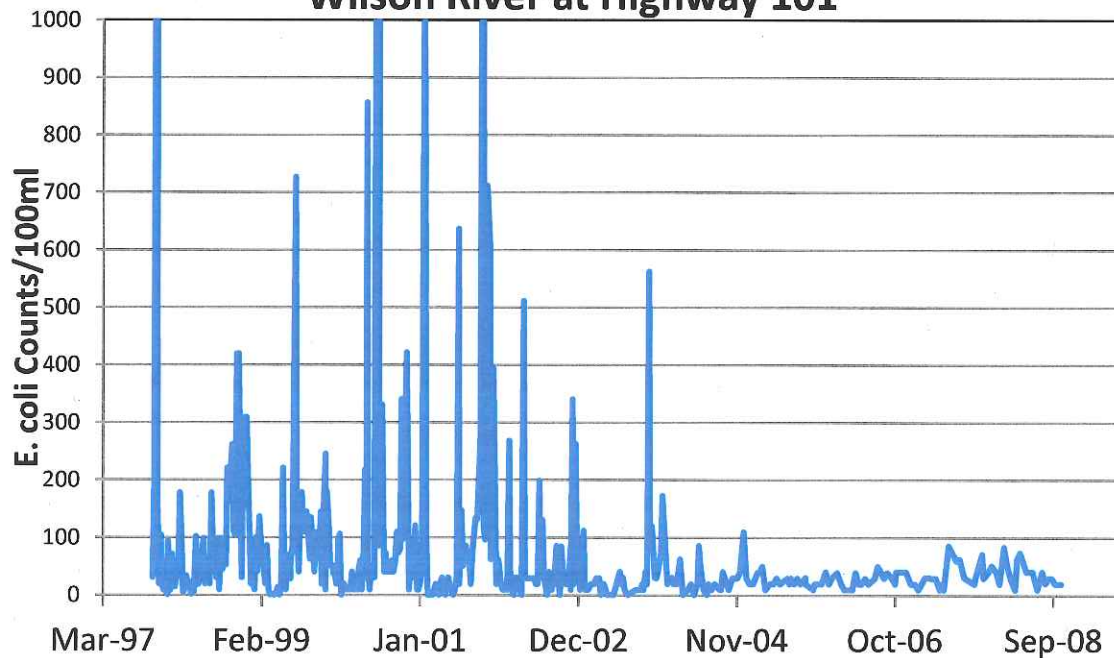


Figure 1: Collaborative monitoring and restoration activities have been extremely effective. Tillamook basin's Wilson River had a long history of unsafe concentrations of bacteria. Monitoring information brought stakeholders together to address a serious water quality issue, and helped them focus resources on correcting the sources of pollution. The combined efforts of DEQ, ODA, Tillamook Estuaries Partnership, Tillamook County Creamery Association, the SWCD and local producers resulted in dramatic improvements in Wilson River water quality in a short time span.

Investment Needed

Greater upfront investment in strategic monitoring and data collection leads to better program outcomes such as clean water and better policy decisions. Agency leadership and stakeholders recognize that Oregon needs to invest in natural resource monitoring to provide the information needed to wisely manage these precious resources, comply with legal mandates, support economic development and achieve public and private interest outcomes. Needs include filling data gaps and making improvements in how we gather, process and share environmental data and information.

Natural resource agencies are approaching the 2013-2015 biennium understanding the need for smart investment and demonstrating an Enterprise Monitoring approach. To be successful, we must have an integrated monitoring system that will support the right decisions around natural resources and their beneficial uses.