

Chair:
Rep. Ken Helm

Vice-Chair:
Rep. Gary Leif
Rep. Jeff Reardon

Staff:
Misty Mason Freeman, LPRO Analyst
Shelley Raszka, Senior Committee Assistant



80th LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER
State Capitol
900 Court St. NE, Rm. 453
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1484
FAX 503-364-0545

Members:
Rep. Vikki Breese-Iverson
Rep. Mark Owens
Rep. Karin Power
Rep. E. Werner Reschke
Rep. Marty Wilde

February 11, 2020

Misty Mason Freeman, Interim Director
Legislative Policy and Research Office
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street, NE, Room 453
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Request for continued support for the Harmful Algal Blooms workgroup

Dear LPRO Director:

The Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) workgroup was formed at my request on behalf of the House Committee on Energy and Environment prior to the end of the 2019 Legislative Session. The workgroup was charged to take an in-depth look into the issue and develop recommendations for potential legislation related to HABs for consideration in 2020 and 2021. The workgroup created three sub-groups (Treatment Technology; Monitoring and Prediction; and Response and Mitigation), which met independently, reported back to the full workgroup in September, and presented final recommendations for the House Committee on Water on November 5, 2019. All told, there were a total of 14 full workgroup and subcommittee meetings, with robust discussion and exceptional enthusiasm from stakeholders.

Among the recommendations delivered by the workgroup to the House Committee on Water was the development and evaluation of a list of existing HABs programs. This effort would include comprehensive identification of all existing federal, state, local, and stakeholder programs that play a role in preventing, monitoring, and addressing exposure to HABs. Once compiled, an evaluation of the list would have the following objectives:

- Identifying gaps;
- Identifying areas of potential collaboration;
- Identifying key deficiencies; and,
- Identifying relevant agencies, current/past programs, and funding/research needs.

Additional activities needed to evaluate current HABs programs include:

- Conducting a literature review of Oregon-based academic research;
- Outlining a set of effective strategies related to HABs for consideration during the 2021 Session; and,
- Identifying best practices among agencies and utilities.

To that end, I would like to designate the Legislative Policy and Research Office (LPRO) as the project manager for this effort. Specifically, I request that assigned staff from LPRO work closely with the existing HABS workgroup members to identify existing HABS-related programs and compile them into a document, database, or other appropriate format. Once the list is complete, I request that LPRO staff facilitate an evaluation and related activities bulleted above, in coordination with subject matter experts from the HABS workgroup. Meetings with stakeholders may be held as necessary.

Finally, I request that LPRO provide its findings, including any proposed legislative concepts from HABS stakeholders, to the House Committee on Water by no later than September 1, 2020.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kenneth D. Helm". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "K".

Representative Helm, Chair
House Committee on Water
Oregon State Legislature