

I am here both as an interested and concerned Corbett resident as well as a Board Member of the Corbett Water District.

Regarding the Water District perspective, let me quickly say that I am NOT here formally representing Water District although they share my same concerns about providing safe and adequate drinking water for our community.

I am here in strong support of HB 2594 and Representative Williams Amendment HB 2594-1.

I would like to speak to 1) the availability of safe and adequate drinking water and 2) the rising costs associated with same.

Corbett is an unincorporated community with a population of about 3800. Our Water District has 1100 accounts. Our water comes from Gordon Creek watershed which runs 9 miles east to west and 4 miles north to south and drains through about 26 miles of streams on the southwest side of Larch Mountain. The land within the watershed is owned and/or operated by BLM, Forest Service and Private Timber Companies.

As a community we experience a sometimes dangerously short supply of water in the dry months. In the high usage summertime, we use 1 million gallons/day. That gives us a total at best of a 2 day supply. What's more, we have no inner ties or cross connections to other municipalities' water supply. In that regard, we are alone, isolated and vulnerable.

Due to lax forest practice rules and stream designations, when Frank Lumber clear-cut along Gordon Creek, they could legally leave a buffer of trees (20 ft) along the creek so shallow or narrow that much of the buffer blew down and in doing so, destroyed our water works on the South Fork of Gordon Creek.

In addition to losing water volume/flow, there is now greater siltation and turbidity overall rendering our water supply less safe for drinking. We currently only have access to the North Fork of Gordon Creek. We have lost 1/3 of our water supply.

As of 2019, we have committed to drilling a Well as an alternate water source and are in the midst of drilling a test well at a cost of over \$600,000 to verify that there is in fact water to be accessed there. If successful, the price tag for the Well is estimated to be \$2.2 million. We have spent just over \$550, 000 since 2017 on preliminary research on a well including current costs for the test well. And regarding the Test Well, we are currently at or below our targeted depth for hitting water with disappointing and uncertain results.

We are also planning to engineer and repair the South Fork intake and working with agencies including DEQ and the East MC Soil and Water Conservation District on conservation measures, but our options are few and our hands are largely tied.

As it pertains to the Corbett Water District's need to secure safe and adequate drinking water for its citizens and to protect its watershed and water resource, **HB 2594/2594-1 would ensure that Gordon Creek and its tributaries are *accurately* classified as being for "domestic use"** so that the increased buffer requirements could meaningfully protect the streams and prevent outcomes like what happened to the intake on South Fork of Gordon Creek.

The Board of Forestry needs to be vigilant and fair in protecting our water supplies by revisiting, evaluating and updating stream classifications. There needs to be clarity on the process for this and the recognition and appreciation of this precious resource – our water. And I agree that **there is an important role for the Oregon Health Authority and Environmental Quality Commission in overseeing/participating in the assessments and classifications.**

Thank you for your time.