

**Testimony to the House Committee on Water  
On HB 3103**

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Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Oregon Environmental Council supports HB 3103-1.

Stored water is a significant means for satisfying the water needs of many Oregonians – ensuring adequate drinking water resources in water-challenged areas. It supports economic development in rural communities, supports agricultural production, and helps maintain adequate in-stream flows for fish and wildlife. As water needs change, water rights holders with primary storage rights need to be able to change the type of use authorized by their right. HB 3103-1 gives the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) authority and ability to address this need.

Opponents of the bill point out that it does not solve another stored water issue – change in place of storage. Decisions related to changing the permitted place of storage are much more complicated, with potentially far greater impacts to local and regional ecosystems and community interests. While OEC agrees that HB 3103-1 does not address this issue, we see no need for a single resolution to a compound problem.

HB 3103-1 will allow stored water permit holders to legally change the type of use, freeing them up to creatively and appropriately deal with changes in water needs, whether those changes are brought about by shifts in the economy, shifts in precipitation patterns and timing brought about by climate change, shifts in agricultural production, or shifts in community needs.

Holding the successful resolution of change of stored water use hostage to the successful resolution of change of place of storage is counterproductive and denies relief to the many permittees who are seeking legitimate changes to their primary stored water permits.

OEC urges the committee to vote yes on HB 3103-1.