

What could be a more important natural resource in this era of climate change and the megadrought gripping the west? Maintaining adequate staff and equipment to monitor both ground and surface water will yield positive outcomes in protecting what could quickly become a shrinking vital asset. An associated part of the state's natural infrastructure is its wildlife which is even more vulnerable to loss of water for habitat and sustenance than we are. Cutting positions and equipment including groundwater monitoring wells and stream gage stations in the the Oregon Water Resources Department as mentioned in Reduction Packages 090 and 092 would be a step backwards in keeping abreast of the status of this essential state resource. Policy Option Package 110 provides some funding to collect information on aquifer water supplies so that we don't end up depleting it much faster than it's ability to be replenished, as has occurred tragically in large portions of the midwest's Ogallala aquifer, the water supply for one sixth of the world's grain production.

In regards to fish and wildlife directly, Oregon Fish and Wildlife Department will be able to participate in regional Integrated Water Resources Strategy planning if funded by POP 114. Rivers require adequate water supply to support fish stocks. Congress has added other uses, in addition to irrigation, for the water of the Willamette Basin's federal reservoirs such as wildlife, industry, and municipalities. ODFW's Policy Option Package 115 and OWRD's Policy Option Package 113 fund the water monitoring necessary to allocate the water as permitted now by congress.

Thank you for considering my suggestions.