

I am a fifth-generation rancher in the Wood River Valley Just North of Klamath Lake. OWRD issues all water right regulation orders, throughout the state, as “orders in other than contested case.” OWRD issues these orders without giving irrigators a hearing.

In many cases, these orders are issued based on a straightforward application of the prior appropriation doctrine and are not controversial—no lawsuits are ever filed. However, in other cases, OWRD is making regulation decisions based on controversial scientific determinations, poorly-investigated facts and inconsistent application of statutes and rules. In 2017 the Upper Klamath Basin received 140 percent snowpack/ precipitation, the rivers and creeks were over flowing their banks and yet the OWRD gauges were reading below the tribal claim. Because we filed for judicial review and got the stay it forced OWRD to come down and look at the situation and changes were made to the regulation procedures that takes into consideration the variances in flows during changing flow patterns.

In the past OWRD has stretched their authority beyond their limits that, can and has, caused harm to the agricultural community. The stay has helped farmers and ranchers mitigate some of these damages. Without the stay OWRD will be given free reign to trample on the rights of agricultural businesses with little to no regard for due process for the individuals.
PLEASE REJECT THIS BIASED, UNNECESSARY AND UNCALLED FOR BILL.

Randall Kizer