



February 16, 2023

To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

From: Sustainable Northwest

RE: Support for HB 3195 – Clean Water State Revolving Fund Eligibility

Chair Helm and Vice-Chairs Hartman and Committee Members,

Sustainable Northwest offers our strong support for HB 3195, which expands the qualifying entities for the state administered Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loans to Domestic Water Supply Districts.

This amendment to the CWSRF will be vital in ensuring that water districts working to provide clean drinking water to their communities are able to utilize the full suite of funding mechanisms and programs. Many water supply districts operate in rural communities, independent of any larger local governments and municipalities. These districts are required to take creative and complicated approaches to funding plant upgrades, site renovations, or land acquisition regarding ensuring the delivery of clean water to rate payers. Often these communities are limited on staff time and capacity. By widening the scope of the entities able to qualify for the CWSRF, the State of Oregon will better provide a streamlined funding and loan source for small community water districts.

The Arch Cape Domestic Water Supply District is a strong example of the need for the expansion of the CWSRF program. Over the past eight years, the Arch Cape Domestic Water Supply District worked to acquire 1441 acres of forest within the community's source drinking water area. Through the support of Sustainable Northwest and North Coast Land Conservancy, the district was able to secure a portion of funding from the Federal Forest Legacy Program. However, Arch Cape attempted to secure the final 20% of it's funding through a Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan. This required the Water District to utilize the partnering Sanitary District to qualify for the CWSRF loan, forcing additional burden on the two staff members of the Arch Cape Water District. Arch Cape did not qualify for the CWSRF Loan.

Access to reliable and clean drinking water is a right for all Oregonians, and something that we can no longer take for granted. The adjustments to the CWSRF, through the proposed HB 3195 will reduce the strain and burden on these small water suppliers, such as Arch Cape. **For these reasons, we thank you for your leadership and work on this pressing matter and urge you to support HB 3195.**

Sincerely,
DWear

Daniel Wear
Forest Program Manager
Sustainable Northwest

