

Submitter: Donna Beverage

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and
Water

Measure: HB3164

Donna Beverage Testimony on HB 3163 2023

House Committee on Agriculture, Land use, Natural Resources and Water

Chair Helm, Vice-chair Hartman and Owens and members of the committee.

As the Convener of the first ever completed Place-based planning group, The Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed Partnership located in Union County in NE Oregon I want to thank you for funding this Pilot Project in 2016.

You should have handouts in your packets for review at a later time that describes the work we have completed in the last 6+ years.

Even though I really want to testify in support of this bill and want the same opportunity for other basins to do this planning, I do have some concerns.

One thing we learned as the first four pilot projects shared with each other is that each basin has totally different water needs and one size does not fit all!

My concern with this bill is that it does not have language that includes the elected officials in the basin or a local person to be the convener.

The original intent was that the plan be led locally and that County elected officials be involved as they will be the ones representing the plan to the State Legislature. I believe that local planning needs to be led locally and needs to have local elected officials on board.

The Upper Grande Ronde is conducting a Feasibility Study on Storage, which was our highest priority as a group. This study is funded by OWEB and includes match from ODFW and CUITR to conduct in -stream studies as part of that Storage Study. We have started to get pushback on looking any further into Storage, to the point I feel like we may be shut down from State agencies that have been at the table from the beginning.

Our goal from the beginning was to work together to do projects that help different water users in the Basin, while harming none. I know this goal has high marks and will include all water users working together to accomplish this for our future and future of our children.

I want to make sure that all of our time and planning doesn't just sit on a shelf and nothing is implemented.

If the Upper Grande Ronde succeeds, all of Oregon succeeds. If we fail, then I can't honestly tell you this is a good investment.

Thank you for your time!

Commissioner Donna Beverage Union County