

**A-Engrossed**  
**House Bill 2988**

Ordered by the House April 10  
Including House Amendments dated April 10

Sponsored by Representatives HELM, OWENS, LEVY B (Pre-session filed.)

**SUMMARY**

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: The Act tells an agency to do certain things related to aquifers. The Act tells the agency to make a report related to aquifers. (Flesch Readability Score: 60.7).

Instructs the Water Resources Department to take certain actions related to aquifer recharge and aquifer storage and recovery.

Instructs the department to report to interim committees of the Legislative Assembly on topics related to aquifer recharge and aquifer storage and recovery on or before [October 1, 2026] **January 1, 2027**.

**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

1  
2 Relating to aquifers.

3 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

4 **SECTION 1. (1) In consultation with the Department of Environmental Quality, the**  
5 **Oregon Health Authority, the State Department of Fish and Wildlife and other state agencies**  
6 **and interested parties, the Water Resources Department shall identify opportunities to im-**  
7 **prove processes, and shall develop technical assistance resources, in order to encourage the**  
8 **expansion of beneficial aquifer recharge and aquifer storage and recovery in Oregon in a**  
9 **manner that protects public health, ground water quality and ecosystems.**

10 **(2) To carry out the purposes described in subsection (1) of this section, the department**  
11 **shall:**

12 **(a) Identify and describe the types of projects related to aquifer recharge and aquifer**  
13 **storage and recovery that can support water quality, water supply or use and habitat or**  
14 **ecosystem needs in this state or have the potential to improve aquifer levels or aquifer**  
15 **quality over current baseline conditions.**

16 **(b) Identify regulatory and other improvements to encourage the expansion of aquifer**  
17 **recharge and aquifer storage and recovery and issuing timely decisions.**

18 **(c) Identify opportunities to improve data, information and modeling requirements for**  
19 **limited license approvals related to aquifer recharge and aquifer storage and recovery test-**  
20 **ing.**

21 **(d) Identify any environmentally protective approaches that other states with robust**  
22 **aquifer recharge and aquifer storage and recovery programs have successfully employed that**  
23 **could be established in Oregon.**

24 **(e) Identify any regulatory changes that are needed in order to carry out the purposes**  
25 **described in subsection (1) of this section, including any changes to internal guidance, rules**

**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 or laws.

2 (f) Develop a proposed schedule for enacting any regulatory changes identified pursuant  
3 to paragraph (e) of this subsection and enact the changes, to the extent the changes are  
4 under the jurisdiction of the department.

5 (g) Develop guidance related to technical assistance and other resources that can support  
6 permitting and the development of aquifer recharge and aquifer storage and recovery pro-  
7 grams.

8 **SECTION 2.** (1) On or before January 1, 2027, the Water Resources Department shall  
9 submit a report, in the manner provided by ORS 192.245, to the interim committees of the  
10 Legislative Assembly related to water on how aquifer recharge and aquifer storage and re-  
11 covery in Oregon may be promoted in a manner that protects public health, ground water  
12 quality and ecosystems.

13 (2) The report must identify the following, at minimum:

14 (a) Recommended changes that state agencies can make to internal policies, guidance  
15 and processes.

16 (b) Recommended changes achieved by amending existing rules or adopting new rules.

17 (c) Recommended changes achieved by amending existing law or enacting new laws.

18 (d) Programmatic needs that support access to and acceleration of aquifer recharge and  
19 aquifer storage and recovery.

20 (e) Available and needed technical assistance resources and incentives to support the  
21 evaluation and pursuit of aquifer recharge and aquifer storage and recovery.

22 (f) Resources needed by state agencies to effectively implement aquifer recharge and  
23 aquifer storage and recovery.

24 (g) Funding mechanisms that may support staffing needed for projects related to aquifer  
25 recharge and aquifer storage and recovery.

26 (h) Federal and state funding programs that can support the projects.

27 **SECTION 3.** Section 2 of this 2025 Act is repealed on January 2, 2027.  
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