

House Bill 3114

Sponsored by Representatives OWENS, HELM (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 **as introduced**. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: The Act concerns a process for managing water. The Act tells agencies to take actions related to water. The Act gives money for supporting the process. (Flesch Readability Score: 64.6).

Instructs Oregon Consensus at Portland State University and Oregon State University to support a process related to water management in the Chewaucan River watershed.

Instructs the State Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Water Resources Department to undertake certain activities related to the Chewaucan River watershed and Lake Abert.

Appropriates moneys to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for distribution to Oregon Consensus and Oregon State University for purposes related to the process.

Declares an emergency, effective July 1, 2025.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to the Chewaucan River watershed; and declaring an emergency.

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

4 **SECTION 1. (1) Oregon Consensus at Portland State University and Oregon State Uni-**
5 **versity shall continue to support a collaborative process for:**

6 (a) **Developing a shared understanding of water management in the Chewaucan River**
7 **watershed; and**

8 (b) **Identifying broadly supported actions related to the Chewaucan River watershed that**
9 **will strive to:**

10 (A) **Meet water needs, including needs for agricultural operations, communities, Lake**
11 **Abert, wet meadows and fish and wildlife;**

12 (B) **Address the ecological health of Lake Abert and the entire Chewaucan River**
13 **watershed; and**

14 (C) **Consider social, economic and environmental benefits and impacts.**

15 (2) **The process must be guided by a governance agreement that describes conditions for**
16 **participation, the scope of the collaborative process, how decisions will be made and how the**
17 **process will:**

18 (a) **Be developed by a collaborative group that represents a balance of interests, including**
19 **but not limited to interests in in-stream and out-of-stream water;**

20 (b) **Address current and future in-stream and out-of-stream water needs;**

21 (c) **Promote contemplation of actions that are consistent with the state water resources**
22 **policy as defined in ORS 536.007 and water-related state laws that are in effect on the effec-**
23 **tive date of this 2025 Act;**

24 (d) **Be developed through an open and transparent process that fosters public partic-**
25 **ipation; and**

26 (e) **Be developed in consultation with the Department of Environmental Quality, the**
27 **State Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Water Resources Department and affected**

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 federally recognized Indian tribes.

2 (3) The process may not delay or preclude the activities of agencies, including activities
3 such as applying for in-stream water rights, regulating water use, managing water rights,
4 collecting water-related data and performing technical analyses.

5 (4) The process may not interfere with water appropriations granted on or before the
6 effective date of this 2025 Act for privately held surface and ground water rights to use water
7 from the Chewaucan River watershed and the tributaries of the watershed.

8 (5) The process may not delay or preclude the activities of private landowners, including
9 activities such as applying for new water rights, for water right transfer, for changes in
10 points of diversion or appropriation or for irrigation uses, or any other activities allowed
11 under water-related state laws.

12 **SECTION 2.** Section 1 of this 2025 Act is repealed on January 2, 2028.

13 **SECTION 3.** (1) The State Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Water Resources
14 Department shall undertake activities related to the Chewaucan River watershed and Lake
15 Abert, including but not limited to the following activities:

16 (a) Collecting data and information, and performing technical analyses, to develop an
17 improved understanding of water management and the hydrologic system.

18 (b) Collecting data and information, and performing technical analyses, related to fish
19 and wildlife, including information and analyses about the presence, distribution and water
20 needs of the fish and wildlife.

21 (c) Developing a refined hydrologic analysis that assesses water inflows, water outflows
22 and changes in water storage.

23 (d) Supporting collaborative processes, public participation and the resolution of complex
24 issues related to water management.

25 (2) The State Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Water Resources Department may
26 contract for performance of the activities described in subsection (1) of this section.

27 **SECTION 4.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-
28 ated to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, for the biennium beginning July 1,
29 2025, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$420,000, for distribution to Oregon Consensus
30 at Portland State University, which must be used for the purposes described in section 1 of
31 this 2025 Act and may be used for awarding grants and stipends to participants in the
32 collaborative process described in section 1 of this 2025 Act.

33 **SECTION 5.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-
34 ated to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, for the biennium beginning July 1,
35 2025, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$150,000, for distribution to Oregon State Uni-
36 versity, which must be used for the purposes described in section 1 of this 2025 Act.

37 **SECTION 6.** This 2025 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
38 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2025 Act takes effect
39 July 1, 2025.

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