

Clean Water – Oregon | Testimony

Updated January 9, 2025 with data as of December 1, 2024

Good morning Co-Chair Helm and members of the committee. For the record, my name is Tawny Reader, Consumer Lending Director at Craft3. I live and work outside of Bend, Oregon in a community called Terrebonne.

I'm joined today by Patrick Flynn, President of Econo Rooter. Patrick will be able to answer any technical questions you may have about installing and replacing septic tanks.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak about Oregon's Clean Water Loan program. DEQ selected Craft3, a nonprofit lender, to administer Oregon's Clean Water Loan program in 2016. As with the other water programs up for discussion today, this program helps improve water infrastructure across the state. Septic repairs are often urgent, unexpected, and costly and for some homeowners, a septic repair can be a crisis.

State funding takes us through the end of the current biennium. If funds are not allocated, the program would need to be scaled back or shut down completely at the end of the current biennium.

This is an effective, affordable, and fiscally responsible program.

As of December 1, 2024 of this year, 224 homeowners in 29 of Oregon's 36 counties received loans funded by state dollars. Nearly 40% of the families served by this program are low-income. These borrowers benefit from the lowest rates and most-flexible repayment programs. Loans cover the entire cost of eligible design, permitting and installation and include a reserve to cover maintenance costs.

Craft3 helps state dollars go farther by revolving and reloading capital and working with private investors to bring in additional funds, distinct from public dollars.

An allocation of \$5 million to the Clean Water Loan program for the 2025 – 2027 biennium will help preserve homeownership and promote housing stability, support local septic contractors, and result in healthier living conditions and communities.

One our referring contractors is here with me today and available to answer questions you may have. We also have written testimony to share from a borrower.

Thank you again. I'm happy to answer questions you may have.