



# WaterWatch of Oregon

## Protecting Natural Flows In Oregon Rivers

### HB 3106

#### Testimony of WaterWatch of Oregon

by Kimberley Priestley

#### House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water

#### February 27, 2025

Founded in 1985, WaterWatch is a non-profit river conservation group dedicated to the protection and restoration of natural flows in Oregon's rivers. We work to ensure that enough water is protected in Oregon's rivers and aquifers to sustain fish, wildlife, recreation and other public uses of Oregon's waters. We also work for balanced water laws and policies. WaterWatch has members across Oregon who care deeply about our rivers, their inhabitants and the effects of water laws and policies on these resources.

**WaterWatch supports continued attention to the Water Portal Pilot Project:** WaterWatch has been supportive of the state's efforts to move forward on the pilot Water Portal program thus far and support continued movement forward on the pilot.

**WaterWatch does not support the -1 amendments:** While we support continued efforts forward on the Water Portal Pilot Project, we have concerns that the -1's are overly prescriptive in directing agency action. We also have concerns that some of the directives could lead to unintended consequences. And finally, it is unclear if the state is at a point where they could meaningfully comply with all the directives in a way that would render a good result. For example, it is our understanding that there is a dire need to update agency IT systems before they could move forward on populating a Water Portal to the degree envisioned. Long story short, the -1 amendment seems to be putting the cart before the horse. As such, we do not support the amendments as drafted.

**WaterWatch recommends legislative attention to building agency IT/capacity, in order to construct the building blocks necessary for a successful Water Portal.**

We also support efforts to continue forward the "pilot" program that is currently underway.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

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