

Submitter: Mindy Sheley

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3800

it is true that the amount of ground water being pumped for irrigation in Harney County has drastically increased over the past 20 years. Why is that? Because the State of Oregon approved, issued and collected fees for hundreds of new water drilling permits - they even used tax payer dollars to drill new wells on state lands! Now the State want to say "oops" we massively over-allocated permits and now need to massively regulate Harney County's ground water usage. Seriously? They were incompetent in issuing drilling permits and now you want us to believe that they will be competent in how they would manage water restrictions? I have zero confidence that OWRD would have the farmers' best interests at heart. Where is the conversation about buying back water rights and also giving compensation to pay for all of the additional infrastructure the farmer invested into their property? Or where is the conversation about capturing the Spring run (which is currently flooding numerous homes) for future irrigation use? I think this bill is just one more way for the State to take back total control of the water resources - drive farmers out of business, make the farmer's land worth nothing and retake their lands for next to nothing.