

DATE: April 2, 2025

TO: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water



Co-Chair Helm	Representative Bobby Levy
Co-Chair Owens	Representative Marsh
Vice-Chair Finger McDonald	Representative McLain
Representative Boice	Representative Scharf
Representative Hartman	



FROM: Oregon Water Partnership

RE: **HB 3343-4: Support for Water Use Measurement and Reporting Tools**



Co-Chair Helm, Co-Chair Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald, and Members of the Committee,

Oregon Water Partnership supports HB 3343-4, which would move forward select water use measurement and reporting authorities to enable Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) to better accomplish its mission.



Oregon Water Partnership is a diverse partnership of statewide conservation groups with a common goal: to advocate for balanced water policies that ensure cold clean water to sustain healthy communities, livelihoods, and ecosystems. Our priorities are to build resilience for Oregon's water future, bring water data into the 21st century, support smart water management, and protect and restore our waters. We collectively have tens of thousands of members in Oregon communities across the state, and our organizations work collaboratively with cities, counties, Tribes, farmers, ranchers, and forest owners to restore natural habitat and improve watershed function. Our members served on the Water Data Legislative Work Group and delivered our recommendations to a version of this Committee in 2021.



Oregon Water Partnership supports HB 3343-4, which sets up a program for the Measurement and Reporting Cost Share Fund, expands conditioning authority, and allows civil penalties related to violations.



Oregon Water Resources Department's mission is to directly address Oregon's water supply needs and to restore and protect streamflows and watersheds in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of Oregon's ecosystems, economy, and quality of life. This is a massive mandate, especially since all water within the state from all sources of water supply belongs to the public.

According to OWRD's 2022 Legislative Report on Water Use Measurement and Reporting, "Water use measurement data can help the Department protect existing water right holders, facilitate planning for future water supplies, maximize the beneficial uses for both instream and out-of-stream uses, and minimize time-consuming and costly conflicts over water use." Yet only about 17% of water rights have to measure and report their water use.

We know we can't manage what we don't measure, but the state's existing authorities around measurement and reporting of water use are poorly matched to the scale of our growing water challenges. While HB 3343-4 is more modest in scope than HB 3419-3, it will provide additional tools to help the state proactively steward the public's waters for instream and out-of-stream uses in the face of worsening drought, increasing water demand, and changing climate.

Oregon Water Partnership appreciates the sponsors' attention to this critically important issue and urges the Committee's support of HB 3343-4.

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