

Submitter: Kent Knock
On Behalf Of: Self
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural
Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3372

Co-chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald and members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water:

My name is Kent Knock and I am a homeowner from Rogue River. I am writing today to support HB 3372-5. Currently in Oregon it is legal to water a ½ acre garden or use 5,000 gal/day for a commercial purpose, but neither of those apply to growing food and farm products for sale.

This personally impacts me because:

Groundwater is a part of the "commons" and what one user does can affect their neighbors. If a commercial use is affecting the neighbors well(s) by depletion or contamination, it must be regulated. Permits should be required so the use can be monitored. The permits need not be as complicated or stringent (or expensive!) as regular commercial use permits.

If neighbors wells do suffer harm from depletion or contamination by a well being used for commercial production, the use of the subject well should be regulated up to complete halting the use of the well to protect the non-commercial surrounding wells. I guess the initial decision on what is occurring would have to be up to the local Water Resources Department official. As long as no harm to surrounding neighbors' wells occurs, the farmer using the well should be able to sell whatever produce they grow.

Local, small scale food production should be encouraged by allowing use of domestic wells as long as there are provisions for protecting existing domestic wells. Each well has unique characteristics so Water Department officials will have to make judgements, as they now do when establishing commercial water rights.

Thank you,

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