



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

## Water Resources Department

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### Testimony for Senate Bill 5531

#### Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Capital Construction

Senator Fred Girod, Co-Chair

Representative Rob Nosse, Co-Chair

Submitted by: Bryn Hudson, Legislative Coordinator

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 5531 section 9, which provides \$20 million lottery bonds for the Oregon Water Resources Department's (the Department) Water Projects Grants and Loan program. This section of the bill corresponds to the Department's budget (SB 5543), policy option package 104.

In 2013, SB 839 established the Water Projects Grants and Loans program, providing grants to evaluate, plan, and develop instream and out-of-stream water projects that have economic, environmental and social/cultural benefits.

This competitive funding opportunity is meant for implementation-ready projects. Eligible projects include conservation, reuse, above-ground storage, below-ground storage, streamflow protection or restoration, water distribution, conveyance or delivery systems, and other water resource development projects. Any local government, Indian tribe, or person may apply for funding.

Since program establishment, the Department has awarded \$95.8 million in grants to 55 different projects in 17 counties. Examples of projects funded by the Water Projects Grants and Loans Fund include:

**Arnold Irrigation District Deschutes Basin Flow Restoration Project (Deschutes County, 2023):**

This project will enclose over four miles (23,175 linear feet) of open canal with leak-free HDPE piping, restoring and protecting 12.6 cubic feet per second of streamflow to the Deschutes Basin. The project will improve conditions for native and ESA-listed species, improved public safety, and provide a resilient solution for water supply reliability in the Deschutes Basin.

**Butte Creek Mill Water Supply Security and Instream Transfer (Jackson County, 2021):** This project provided instream water for native fishes and supported the re-opening of the historic Butte Creek Mill. Project funds helped purchase the industrial water right for the Mill and transferred a portion of that water instream to protect 12 miles on Butte Creek, with the remaining portion of the water retained for operation of the historic mill.

**Sterling Park Stormwater Recharge Project (Washington County, 2018):** This project captured and treated residential stormwater as a source for aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) in Sterling Park in Beaverton, Oregon, and recovered it in the summer for non-potable uses, including irrigation and streamflow enhancement/ temperature mitigation in Summer Creek. By creating an alternative source of supply for non-potable applications, this project leaves more water instream, benefiting native and endangered fish species in the Tualatin River, and offsetting groundwater usage in the Bull Mountain-Cooper Mountain Critical Groundwater Area.