

HARTT Laura A * WRD

From: imbida@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Julia de Castro
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Sent: Monday, May 6, 2024 6:41 PM
To: WRD_DL_rule-coordinator
Subject: Please approve sustainable groundwater rules that protect Oregon wildlife

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Dear Water Policy Analyst Laura Hartt,

Protecting Oregon's groundwater and wildlife is crucial for future generations and our own lifetime. I'm passionate about improving our state's groundwater management rules, especially with the growing demand and the impacts of climate change. I wholeheartedly support the Oregon Water Resources Department's proposed rule changes as a significant step toward safeguarding Oregon's overallocated groundwater systems.

The current situation, with an excess of groundwater permits and declining levels, is concerning. It's affecting not just our rivers, lakes, and springs but also the ecosystems and species relying on them. The proposed rules, defining stable groundwater levels and ensuring data-backed permit decisions, are vital steps forward. They also protect senior surface-water rights, crucial for our wildlife and domestic use.

However, we must go further. Many areas still face unsustainable declines in groundwater levels. While the proposed rules prevent further worsening, they don't address existing issues or pending permits. We need comprehensive rules considering all impacts on groundwater-dependent ecosystems, not just those directly connected to streams.

It's time for Oregon's groundwater rules to align with sustainability needs. We can't delay implementing these changes to prevent further harm to our water sources and wildlife. Let's ensure a better future for Oregon's residents and the precious ecosystems they rely on.

Sincerely,
Julia de Castro
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