

HARTT Laura A * WRD

From: vesey1912@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Robin Vesey <vesey1912@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2024 7:15 AM
To: WRD_DL_rule-coordinator
Subject: Approve sustainable groundwater rules that protect Oregon wildlife

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Dear Water Policy Analyst Laura Hartt,

As a supporter of wildlife and 30-year environmental restoration volunteer, I support the Oregon Water Resources Department's proposed rule changes that provide an important, positive step toward preventing further degradation and loss of Oregon's groundwater systems.

Our existing rules for issuing new groundwater permits have resulted in losses to our public drinking water systems and a horrible loss to our rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands.

The proposed rules don't go far enough to address the current issues of Oregon's over-allocated groundwater systems. In many areas around the state, groundwater levels are falling at unsustainable rates.

We must enact rules that consider groundwater's connectivity to other water features like springs, wetlands and fens that could also be affected by pumping. These ecosystems provide important habitat for an amazing array of wildlife and plants that are increasingly at risk due to their interdependent connection to groundwater — levels of which have been declining statewide for decades due to outdated permitting rules.

Please enact rules, now, to prevent further worsening of a severely damaged system. Adopting the proposed rules is the bare minimum that Oregon should do to improve sustainable groundwater management for its residents and wildlife who depend on these important water sources.

We must do more to reverse the damage to groundwater and better protect ecosystems and wildlife.

Sincerely,
Robin Vesey
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