

HB 2707 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Energy and Environment

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/22

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Appropriates ___ from General Fund to Water Resources Department for ground water studies and investigations, or other ground water data gathering and analysis needed to assess and manage Oregon's ground water resources, conducted in cooperation with United States Geological Survey in priority basins determined by department. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

According to the Water Resources Department (WRD), Oregon currently has 256,800 known wells, and several thousand new wells are built each year. Wells uses range from providing drinking water, water for irrigation and industry, and information about ground water levels throughout the state. To monitor ground water, WRD has a network of approximately 1,100 observation wells. These wells provide information on current ground water availability and long-term trends. But according to the November, 2016 Secretary of State Audit these observation wells only provide reliable data for very specific areas and while the hydrologic connection between ground water and surface water is understood, more information is needed in many basins to better understand how ground water use impacts streams, aquifers and other water sources. WRD coordinates with the United States Geological Survey to collect information for extensive water basin studies. These studies typically take 5 to 6 years to complete, as all of the data in the basin being studied needs to be compiled, reviewed, and analyzed, to monitor surface water and/or ground water trends. To date, only about one-third of the state has been covered by basin studies.

House Bill 2707 would appropriate _____ from the General Fund to WRD for ground water studies and investigations, or other ground water data gathering and analysis needed to assess and manage Oregon's groundwater resources, conducted in cooperation with the United States Geological Survey in priority basins determined by WRD.