



Oregon Water Resources Department

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Contact:
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Members Sought for Groundwater Study Advisory Committee

The Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) is conducting a groundwater study in the Greater Harney Valley that will provide additional information about the aquifer system and whether there is opportunity for new groundwater development in some parts of the study area. The study is expected to be completed by the end of 2020.

OWRD and the Harney County Court are looking for volunteers to serve on the Harney County Groundwater Study Advisory Committee, which is being formed to track and provide input on the study as it progresses.

Since mid-2015, OWRD has been working with members of the community to build awareness of the groundwater situation, seek input, and initiate efforts to address water needs for the area. As an interim option until the groundwater study is being completed, OWRD worked with the community to develop rules that will allow groundwater applications pending as of April 15, 2016 to be approved if certain criteria are met. Those rules were adopted April 13 by the Oregon Water Resources Commission. The rules also outline a process to plan and conduct the study in coordination with a Groundwater Study Advisory Committee.

The committee, jointly appointed by OWRD and the Harney County Court, will be made up of nine members, including one OWRD staff person and one representative of the Harney County Court. The committee may include local irrigators, well drillers, members of the scientific community, conservation and instream interests, and the public.

Those interested in becoming a member of the Harney County Groundwater Study Advisory Committee should submit a letter to the Harney County Court, 450 Buena Vista, Burns, OR 97720 by the close of business on Monday, May 2. Letters of interest should include contact information, availability for regular meetings, reasons for wanting to serve on the committee, and anticipated contribution to the groundwater study effort.

For more information, please contact Harney County Judge Steve Grasty at (541) 573-6365, OWRD Watermaster JR Johnson at (541) 573-2764 or OWRD Region Manager Jason Spriet at (541) 523-8224.

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