



P.O Box 1783, Bend, Oregon, 97709
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Oregon Department of Water Resources

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Re: Deschutes Groundwater Mitigation Program proposed Legislative Concept Draft

The League of Women Voters of Deschutes County (LWVDC) supports the Legislative Concept Draft amendments with clarifying language regarding the relationship of the Oregon Department of Water Resources with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation (CTWSR).

The LWVDC has reservations about extending the Deschutes Groundwater Mitigation Program deadline to 2039. We propose that the program be extended no further than 2034.

- This would allow time for pending mitigation projects to be undertaken and could free credits where the projects have been abandoned or proven to be unrealistic.
- The timing and amount of recharge to wells, particularly in the hydraulically complicated general zone is affected by climate change, drought and the numerous exempt and permitted wells throughout the basin makes long term commitments problematic.

Priority uses of water are now determined by the Doctrine of Prior Appropriation and neither the Conserved Water Act nor the monetization of water through the mitigation program allow affordable and equitable sharing of water for more flexible management as yet. Credits established that cannot be fulfilled will affect the resource, environment, economy and resiliency of the community.

We have other questions and reservations about the Deschutes Groundwater Mitigation Program that will follow in a separate letter.

Thank you for an informative introductory program, on April 15th, the opportunity to comment, and for your work monitoring this important program.

Sincerely yours,

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