

Public Comment for HB 2142

Save Chehalem Mountain is non-profit organization with the mission to ensure that the vast Regional "Chehalem Mountain Ground Water Limited Area" provides the quality and **quantity** of water needed for environmental stability & fire protection necessary to support the thousands of homes & businesses, wildlife, recreation, biological diversity, ecological values, public health and a sound economy for the future. (No water = no home values and ability to collect property taxes). See map on next page.

We are in complete support of HB 2142 to encourage the protection of the aquifers and groundwater. This is a necessary endeavor which is long overdue. The OWRD admitted back in 2016 in an interview with Director Thomas Byler that this Agency desperately needs the additional FTE and manpower to monitor the future of water. Water monitoring should not be left up to residents & businesses.

The link to this interview can be found here: <https://www.streetroots.org/news/2019/07/05/future-oregon-water-resources-peril#:~:text=According%20to%20one%20estimate%20from,meet%20irrigation%20and%20municipal%20needs>

A disturbing and informative article titled "**Draining Oregon**" published in 2016 via the Oregonian details the perils our State was in 5 years ago. With increased & massive growth of the hemp/marijuana industry coupled with year over year growing drought conditions, our situation is even more dire. Here is the link to the article: http://media.oregonlive.com/environment_impact/other/Draining_Oregon_0826d.pdf

Also, the 2016 Secretary of State Audit Report "OWRD: Enhancing Sustainability Efforts & Agency Planning Needed to Better Address Oregon's Water Supply Needs" sheds light on the catastrophic state of our water situation. Here is the link to the State Audit Report: <https://www.streetroots.org/sites/default/files/Audit%20of%20Oregon%20Water%20Resources%20Department.pdf>

An additional increase in both fees and manpower should be absolutely mandatory as water resources are becoming even more inadequate and exacerbated due to combined effects of climate change and over use of our aquifers.

We are currently engaged in a desperate situation where just (1) 22acre hemp/marijuana growing operation at 18505 NE Jaquith Rd, Newberg threatens the future of running water for thousands of residents and businesses according to (2) independent hydrologist / geologist firms. Strict rules & regulations are needed so that 1 industry doesn't permanently destroy neighborhoods, home values & the environment and cost residents/businesses tens of thousands of dollars in legal fees and expert fees to protect the future of their running water.

More can be read about our plight at: www.SaveChehalemMountain.com

Respectfully,

Juliette Wait MD
President, Save Chehalem Mountain

