

8 October 2024

Redmond Oregon

Good morning Chair Bentz and members Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries.

I am Deschutes County Commissioner Tony DeBone. I live in Southern Deschutes County about 45 miles south of here. The Deschutes River flows from South to North all the way to the Columbia river and then out to the Pacific Ocean.

On October 2 of this year Deschutes County we just adopted the Deschutes County 2040 Comprehensive Plan. This is a 20 year vision document with goals and objectives pertaining to conservation and development for the lands outside of our 4 incorporated cities of Bend, Redmond, Sisters and La Pine. We have a population of just over 200 Thousand and growing.

Quoting from our Comp. Plan: “The Deschutes River and its tributaries serve as the region’s surface water resources. Surface water rights in the Upper Deschutes Basin are fully allocated, meaning no new surface water rights can be issued. Approximately 86% of basin water rights are associated with agriculture, 12% associated with instream uses, and 2% associated with municipal uses.”

Water Goals and Policies

Goal 5.1: Support regional, comprehensive water management solutions that balance the diverse needs of water users and recognize Oregon water law.

Goal 5.2: Increase water efficiency and conservation efforts among all users, including homeowners and businesses.

Goal 5.3: Maintain and enhance a healthy ecosystem in the Deschutes River Basin.

Goal 5.4: Maintain and enhance fish and riparian-dependent wildlife habitat.

Goal 5.5: Coordinate land use and water policies to address management and allocation of water in Deschutes County.

Water is the resources that gives life to people living here. In the Upper Deschutes Basin, from Crescent Lake in Northern Klamath County that feed the little Deschutes River to Spring River and Fall River then all merge to the main Deschutes River, flowing water is an asset for all of us. Recreationally these rivers are used for floating and boating in the summer. In Southern Deschutes County, by Sunriver and to the middle Deschutes River in Bend and beyond, we all love these rivers.

As commissioners we support these ongoing efforts:

- Water conservation efforts (funded by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service) that are helping to pipe Central Oregon's irrigation canals.
- Central Oregon Cities Organization's efforts to conserve water while meeting their legal responsibilities to prepare and plan for growth; and
- Efforts to improve on-farm irrigation efficiency measures.

A future project that I support is the city of Bend to provide reuse water from their water processing plant for the North Unit Irrigation needs. There is 14,000 acre feet of Class A processed and sterilized water available. This is a State of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality issue that this committee might be able to help move along.

Thank you for conducting this hearing in our home, right here in Redmond at the Deschutes County fairgrounds.

Thank to our Congresswoman Lori Chavez-DeReemer for representing us in Washington DC and Congressman Cliff Bentz for bringing us together here today!