

V. MAY 8, 2024

Morrow County Water Policy and Action Concepts - DRAFT

The following is a preliminary (working) list of policy or action concepts or categories that the Water Coordinator project will vet with the Water Advisory Committee in the coming months. Morrow County will continue to develop these concepts considering the County's purview/responsibilities, available resources (staffing and funding), and other concurrent priorities.

- I. Review and update of the Goals 5 and 6 (Natural Resources) section of the Morrow County Comprehensive Plan.
 - o The policies were most recently reviewed and updated in 2014. New information and conditions can be incorporated.
 - o https://www.co.morrow.or.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning/page/991/6_of_19_-_mc_comp_plan_-_goals_5_6.pdf
 - o Policies and actions that are pursued may need to be incorporated formally in Goals 5/6 of the Comp Plan
 - Call out of any specific water projects being pursued/supported by the County
 - Page 28 – list of Water Resource Policies
 - o Specific policy references may be warranted for drinking water and water supply. In particular, additional or explicit considerations may be needed to address:
 - Nitrate impacts to groundwater and long-term management/remediation needs
 - Expansion/development of data centers
 - Water reuse/land application operations
 - Update status of Columbia River water supply development
 - New groundwater allocation rules (pending)
- II. Identify and develop “water programs” similar to those established by other Oregon counties that are relevant or provide benefits to Morrow County (residents and businesses). For example, other counties have:
 - o Contracting by State DHS Drinking Water Program to administer and enforce drinking water quality standards for PWS that use groundwater and serve a threshold population (3,300).
 - <https://www.co.marion.or.us/HLT/PH/EHS/water>
 - https://www.jacksoncountyor.gov/departments/health_human_services/programs_and_services/environmental_public_health/drinking_water_program.php
 - o Sensitive Overlay Zone (Marion Co)
 - Program to review land use applications to assess the risk that a proposed use will adversely affect the sustainability of aquifer production
 - <https://www.codepublishing.com/OR/MarionCounty/html/MarionCounty17/MarionCounty17181.html>
 - o Programs and/or Resources for Public Water Supply and Residential/Domestic Well Owners
 - <https://health.bentoncountyor.gov/water-and-waste-systems/>
 - <https://www.deschutes.org/health/page/drinking-water>
 - o Considerations:
 - Informational only?
 - How much overlap in the purview of planning and public health departments?
 - Overlap in responsibilities with OHA, OWRD, DEQ (or does it strengthen or reinforce)?

- III. Review development of County-level implementation/enforcement of regulatory requirements or provide assistance with state/federal requirements on water use, supply development, water quality management.
 - Agricultural (best management practices, requirements)
 - Domestic well users (limitations, requirements, technical support/resources)
 - Industrial users (incentives, restrictions, partnerships, etc.)
- IV. Track legislative agenda or on-going rule-making at the state and resource agencies related to water to identify and develop County positions (if warranted) and advocacy approaches (if appropriate).
- V. Identify and facilitate funding opportunities for County water programs, community water systems and other water-related initiatives in the County.
 - Community water systems
 - Managed aquifer recharge projects
 - Domestic well improvements/abandonment (e.g., facilitate OWRD WARRF applications)
 - <https://www.oregon.gov/owrd/programs/GWWL/WARRF/Pages/default.aspx>
- VI. Conduct an internal County review and planning of budget and staffing that supports water-related initiatives. Examples include:
 - Long-term management/participation in LUBGWMA; including coordinating with Umatilla County and OSU to advocate for long term funding for research and projects.
 - Management and implementation of community water system connections for domestic well users.
 - Coordination/collaboration on regional water supply projects (County-wide)
 - Other initiatives, e.g., water trading/market framework for the basin.
 - Data collection in support of water initiatives, including collaboration with resource agencies.
 - General technical resources/support for residents on water issues, including information sharing.
- VII. Provide support for municipal water and wastewater projects where needed to include technical planning, grant writing and funding.