Letter for Board approval by 5/17/2021.

Comments may be submitted through May 20,2021. I would like to have approval from Local and State by 5/17 to give national time to reply by the deadline. Thank You!!!!

Please review this letter of support for the request from Lone Pine Irrigation District and the Farmers Conservation Alliance for funding to pipe and pressurize 10+ miles of open canal from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The cost of the project would be $13.9 Million; 75% from NRCS PL83-566 monies for the amount of $10+ M the remainder, $3.37 M to be paid for by the district through grants and loans.

As a member of the Deschutes Basin Water Group we’ve been involved in the final study findings and the Habitat Conservation Plan with Fish and Wildlife to address the endangered spotted frog and the threatened condition of several fish species. In order to improve the quantity and quality of the rivers of the Deschutes basin the DBWC chose to address losses of 30-50+% through seepage and evaporation in their surface canal delivery system. This is very expensive, as you can see from how much it costs just to modernize 10 miles of Lone Pine’s system. We could not do it without Federal monies and Senator Merkeley has been instrumental in funding COID, Tumalo ID, Sisters ID and others.

Farmer’s Alliance asked for corrections and comments for the final environmental assessment available at [oregonwatershedplans.org/](http://oregonwatershedplans.org/) latest plans. Lone Pine Irrigation District draft Plan-EA.

In section 4.1: they found “no NRHP listed historic properties within the project area from review of Oregon Historic sites database.” and that “Consultation with affilitated tribes (of Warm Springs) would occur prior to implementation.” I am aware that the acquisition and agricultural use of lands previously used by the Tribes for hunting and gathering and granted to them by treaty has been impacted by private owners refusing access to “their property”. There may also be loss of some species due to agriculture. I do not know if any of that treaty granted lands are within Lone Pine Irrigation Districts holdings. Their district is West of Prineville on the Crooked River and south of Smith Rocks. They do not seem to have consulted with the tribes before the final Environmental Assessment.

Our position of support:

Oregon: "Support of comprehensive long-range planning for conservation and management of ground and surface water taking into account: water availability, consideration of both quantity and quality, and the improvement of water quality, conservation of resources to meet both in stream and out of stream uses and supporting natural habitat."

Project estimated to save 2,103 acre-feet of water annually, 1.6K af to be protected in the Deschutes River and the rest for use of Lone Pine patrons. There will be efficiencies of delivery and accounting, energy savings from pumping, a reduction in patron demand and costs of maintenance and decrease in contamination with agricultural runoff of the Crooked and Deschutes river from operational spillage.

LWVUS Positions “…Natural resources should be managed as interrelated part of life-supporting ecosystems. Resources should be conserved and protected to assure their future availability.” Support..”Protection of water quality, conservation of energy, quality to maintain species populations and diversity including in-stream uses, reduce pollution from direct point-source discharges from indirect non point sources.”

I will append the letter at the bottom for board approval. I propose to also send it to Peggy Lynch at LWV OR for her comments and hope for state approval of the letter.

If I get that I will set up the LWVUS online request for advocate approval for us to request federal $$$. I think that is the process??? All requests to LWVUs should come from the LWV President, I think? Be glad to outline the reasoning for the website request to LWVUS for Carol or whomever needs to send the message if approved.

Part of the reason I want to do all this is to smooth out the procedure as there is likely to be a lot of Federal-State-Local cooperation as this process goes on.

Any questions please contact me, Becky Powell 541-389-5693 (mlp504e@bendbroadband.com) or Celeste Brody (brody886@gmail.com) 541-815-0238.

Not addressed with this letter and process is a concern of mine that with the increasing number of drought years we are experiencing a very aggressive campaign to conserve water by the public is needed. We did a study in 2008 on Water in Deschutes County looking at municipal uses especially, and that could be updated. A lot of work has been done by the cities, upgrading their delivery and control capability and instituting conservation, but the patrons of irrigation districts, well owners, and my neighbors appear to be wasting quite a lot of water and we may not have 13 years to address the condition of the Rivers.

Would the Board like to authorize a study of water use in Deschutes county with a broader look at competing uses, environmental assessments and water conservation?

Also could use some direction on whether or not our support of these “asks” is implicit in our membership in the DBWC?

Thank you all for your time and expertise.