



# Attachment A

## PRIORITIZATION PROCESS AND RESULTS

Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership

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August 2024



## Prioritization Process and Results

The Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership's (Partnership) Water Action Plan was adopted by consensus of the Partnership on May 11, 2022 and was formally recognized by the Oregon Water Resources Commission on June 16, 2022. The Water Action Plan includes a list of 59 actions (some with sub-items) organized into eight Imperatives, or broad categories of related actions. No further prioritization occurred during the planning process. All 59 of the actions are considered necessary to achieving the Partnership's goals of supporting integrated water resources planning that benefits the region's ecosystems, economies, and communities; however, recognizing resource constraints, the Partnership undertook a prioritization process in 2023-2024 to help guide implementation.

### Prioritization Process

A Prioritization Work Group was convened and developed a decision-support system (i.e., scoresheet method) during spring and early summer 2023. The Work Group then met approximately monthly from August 2023 through January 2024 to score actions using the decision-support system. The decision-support system used high (3), medium (2), and low (1) scoring criteria for water quality, water quantity, stakeholder understanding, and implementation readiness. Additional scoring criteria included instream and out-of-stream benefits, regionwide benefits, and consistency with State and regional plans using yes (1) or no (zero) scoring.

The Prioritization Work Group calculated the scores for each action and then used the scores to categorize actions under one of the following Priority Groups: A (highest priority), B (middle priority), and C (lowest priority). Scores were only compared within imperatives, not across imperatives. Imperatives 5 (Resilient Water Infrastructure) and 7 (Planning for Water Supply Development Needs) were combined for Priority Groups due to their similarities. The Prioritization Work Group reviewed the Priority Group of each action based on initial scores and moved a few actions into different Priority Groups.

Exhibit 1 presents a list of individuals who participated in Work Group meetings and their affiliations.

**Exhibit 1. Participants in the Prioritization Work Group meetings and their affiliations.**

Name	Affiliation
Caylin Barter	Wild Salmon Center
Mike Broili	MidCoast Watersheds Council
Christine Clapp	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Tyler Clouse	Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District
Adam Denlinger	Seal Rock Water District; <b>Partnership Convener</b>
Paul Engelmeyer	MidCoast Watersheds Council, Audubon Society
Alan Fujishin	Gibson Farms
Evan Hayduk	MidCoast Watersheds Council
Phebe Howe	Oregon Health Authority
Tatyana Isupov	Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Olivia Jasper	Oregon Department of Agriculture
Kacey Largent	US Forest Service
Bill Montgomery	MidCoast Watersheds Council
Alyssa Mucken	Oregon Water Resources Department
Steve Parrett	Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Clare Paul	City of Newport
Henry Pitts	Oregon State University student
Fran Recht	Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
Mark River	Weyerhaeuser Hydrologist
David Rupp	Oregon State University
Alexandria Scott	Lincoln County resident
Billie Jo Smith	Lincoln County Water Systems Alliance
Janna Stevens	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Steve Stewart	City of Newport
Andrea Sumerau	Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
Matt Thomas	Oregon Department of Forestry
Margaret Treadwell	McKenzie River Trust
Kimberly Wollenburg	City of Depoe Bay
Bradley Wynn	Seal Rock Water District

## Results of the Prioritization

The Work Group’s proposed prioritization was presented at a meeting of the full Partnership on May 29, 2024. After a group discussion and minor revisions, the Partnership adopted the prioritized list of actions as shown in the attached Prioritization Groups Summary table. The prioritization will be used to guide how Partnership resources (e.g., time and money) are allocated to support action implementation efforts. For example, if there are five actions that are not currently being implemented, the Partnership would begin supporting early implementation steps of Priority Group A actions out of that group of five actions.



## MCWPP Water Action Plan Prioritization Groups Summary

Imperative	Action #	Action Description	Total Score	Priority Group
1	1	Develop and implement a public awareness and engagement campaign aimed at supporting the imperatives and actions in the Mid-Coast Water Action Plan, including raising awareness and understanding of regional water issues.	14	A
1	1b	Develop drought declaration and audience-specific (e.g., self-supplied industrial water users) water conservation and curtailment messages.	14	A
1	1g	Conduct outreach to encourage implementation of voluntary, incentive-based actions throughout the region, consistent with existing plans, such as the Mid-Coast Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan.	14	A
1	1a	Promote water conservation at local events, on the Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership website and the websites of regional partners and entities, in news articles, in water bills, via social media, and through outreach materials to businesses, particularly in the hospitality industry.	13	A
1	1f	Identify or develop curriculum and materials/information for students and the public (community education) about their water sources, water management, and water conservation.	13	A
1	1h	Inform self-supplied and public water users and residents and businesses within public water supply areas about water supplies and water protection measures, including proper well construction and maintenance, septic system maintenance, and proper use of landscape and other chemicals.	13	A
1	1j	Conduct education in source water areas (including to those that may not be customers of the water provider) about drinking water sources, risks, choices, and strategies.	13	A
1	1i	Work with partners and agencies (e.g., Oregon State University Extension Service) to deliver information on safe pesticide application practices and vegetation management practices that reduce or eliminate pesticide use. Provide outreach on water quality impacts of pesticides and fertilizers associated with lawn management near streams and ponds. Share methods that reduce impacts and identify alternatives.	12	B
1	1k	Connect private landowners with resources and information about best management practices to improve water quality and quantity.	12	B
1	1c	Coordinate watershed and water system tours to increase awareness and understanding of regional and local water issues.	11	C

Imperative	Action #	Action Description	Total Score	Priority Group
1	1d	Develop a regional initiative/training to improve coordination and provide education to water providers on infrastructure financing and funding.	10	C
1	1e	Provide an internship program, hands-on training, and certification training for water technicians, which includes technician training on updating and implementing water management.	10	C
2	2	Support the creation of a feasible 50-year county-wide water supply plan. Incorporate regionally integrated plans that improve water system resiliency and adequately plan for future water supply development in the face of natural and human-caused disasters.	15	A
2	4	Strengthen/support the Mid-Coast Water Conservation Consortium to enhance water conservation, increase resiliency during shortages and emergencies, and pool resources of multiple water providers. Support enhanced coordination with state and federal entities outside of the Mid-Coast.	14	A
2	5	Support and advocate for planning and development that minimizes impacts to floodplains and riparian areas, promoting Green Infrastructure (GI) methods and Low Impact Development (LID) practices.	14	A
2	10	Collaborate with emergency operations planners to identify highest priority water needs and develop alternative systems and plans. Identify opportunities and access for shared water available for addressing emergency interconnections.	13	A
2	12	Develop regionally integrated Drinking Water Protection Plans to ensure that strategies and implementation plans are in place to minimize threats to water supply sources throughout the Mid-Coast. Advocate for funding to support the development and plan implementation.	13	A
2	13	Create a Source Water Protection Plan, or multiple source-specific plans, to reduce, or minimize contaminants from entering source waters. Advocate for funding to support the development and implementation of these plans.	13	A
2	3	Support the development of organizational procedures for the Mid-Coast Water Conservation Consortium (MCWCC) and the Lincoln County Water Systems Alliance (LCWSA) that will facilitate the prioritization and funding of projects throughout the region.	13	B
2	7	Coordinate water curtailment plans among water providers.	13	B
2	6	Develop and update water management and conservation plans for the Mid-Coast regional municipal and self-supplied direct water systems.	12	C



Imperative	Action #	Action Description	Total Score	Priority Group
2	8	Encourage municipalities to update/complete required stormwater management control plans to incorporate GI/LID practices, using statewide LID technical design guide, and update codes and ordinances that are barriers to implementing these practices. Assist smaller communities, that are not currently required, in voluntarily developing similar stormwater management plans and technical design guides.	12	C
2	9	Advocate for Emergency Response Plans (required for public water systems) address water system needs and specific vulnerabilities and are interconnected to create a regional network during emergency situations.	12	C
2	11	Support the development of tiered communication trees to address: a) typical support needs b) response to localized emergencies affecting one or multiple Public Water Systems; and c) Cascadia Subduction Zone quake, volcanic eruption, regional wildfire. Provide communication alternatives for inoperable phone/internet (HAM resources; meeting locations and days/times).	11	C
3	16	Fully fund, install, and monitor real-time stream gauging stations throughout region in priority locations and times of year when they are needed most to accurately assess source water and enable innovative demand-reduction actions during periods of critical ecological need.	14	A
3	19	Develop a coordinated network of people conducting stream flow monitoring and water quality monitoring to share resources and data. Explore cost-effective ways to incorporate volunteers in data collection to complement gauging network.	14	A
3	17	Develop and implement a coordinated long-term water quality monitoring program throughout the region (e.g., source water, streams, estuaries) to improve understanding of current conditions and event-caused conditions (i.e., storm, low-flow) for nutrients, bacteria, temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, turbidity and other specific contaminants identified by DEQ, including those that contribute to harmful algal blooms (HAB)s. Collect water samples to identify pollutant sources (location, source, practices influencing input, transport and fate of pollutants). Advocate for additional sampling in headwaters (where herbicides and pesticides are applied) and at municipality intakes.	13	A
3	18	Conduct comprehensive and ongoing water testing, and use results to guide best management practice implementation, restoration, etc. to address water quality impairments.	13	A
3	14	Implement more efficient advanced metering infrastructure to enable faster identification of leaks and shortages, and support best practices for water providers to meet industry standards for documenting water loss.	12	B

Imperative	Action #	Action Description	Total Score	Priority Group
3	15	Recommend installation and use of flow meters to gain a more accurate estimate of water use in the region.	12	B
3	21	Develop a water monitoring database for data entry and access by multiple entities.	11	C
3	20	Support the aggregation and update of current self-supplied water system databases, including system description, system status, and system needs. Determine what exists from current databases. Track wells going dry via self-reporting.	10	C
4	22	Improve understanding of Oregon’s existing water reuse regulations, and the opportunities and barriers (e.g., health issues) to using recycled and gray water for all allowed uses. Encourage development of comprehensive water reuse programs at appropriate scales.	14	A
4	24	a) Incentivize commercial and industrial facilities to conduct water audits, identifying water loss and implementing conservation, recycling, and re-use strategies and technologies. b) Evaluate and potentially revise water pricing strategies commensurate with actual delivery costs as well as other strategies to stimulate water conservation and re-use while raising revenue for water conservation investments (e.g., improved efficiency at commercial facilities).	13	B
4	26	Identify and develop voluntary incentives for water conservation.	13	B
4	23	Investigate and share information on methods of reusing treated sewage plant water and water at water treatment plants (e.g., backwash) and regional industries for potable, agricultural, and industrial uses.	12	B
4	25	Work with the NRCS to develop a Conservation Implementation Strategy to provide incentives and technical support to agricultural irrigators interested in making improvements, such as increased efficiencies to minimize evaporation losses.	10	C
4	27/43	Using the Water Management Economic Assessment Model, develop a suite of adaptation measures (e.g., storage investments, conservation rebate programs, and new pricing models) to address existing and predicted water shortages in the region.	9	C
7	27/43	Using the Water Management Economic Assessment Model, develop a suite of adaptation measures (e.g., storage investments, conservation rebate programs, and new pricing models) to address existing and predicted water shortages in the region.	9	C

Imperative	Action #	Action Description	Total Score	Priority Group
5	31	Evaluate alternatives for both natural and built (human-made) water storage with the planning area. For built systems, identify and perform feasibility studies needed to assess whether projects are viable using established and agreed-upon criteria (economic, environmental, regulatory, etc.). For natural storage “systems”, identify feasibility studies needed to assess project viability using established and agreed-upon criteria. For those that appear viable, developed estimates of seasonal water storage and release.	13	A
7	42	Seek additional and alternative sources of water for development in the region.	13	A
5	28	Support upgrading and maintaining water metering system infrastructure, where possible. Note: Automated read systems (not SMART) can be installed at reduced cost.	12	A
5	33	Identify funding programs to support infrastructure enhancements that advance sustainable and secure water solutions for the region. Study how other cities and counties have funded their infrastructure improvements through time and manage water infrastructure assets.	10	B
5	29	Use the latest technologies (e.g., In system monitoring and controls, pumping efficiency, automating, and controlling potential zone isolations) available when retrofitting, or replacing, water infrastructure.	9	C
5	30	Address distribution system failures by installing earthquake valves in water tanks to retain water even if distribution system fails.	9	C
5	32	Support the expansion of the state-supported revolving fund (including developing a new fund for self-suppliers) to accelerate water infrastructure improvements. Improve access to funding by enhancing coordination and collaboration with communities).	9	C
5	34	Establish a community revolving loan program for infrastructure improvements for septic systems.	9	C
6	41	Protect critical lands within drinking water source areas through acquisition, conservation easements, or other tools that prevent degradation and/or impacts to source water quality.	14	A
6	35	Identify, fund, and implement high-priority regional source water protection activities.	13	A
6	40	Furthering a working lands concept, advocate for incentives, and other strategies, that promote silvicultural practices that support restoration of watershed ecological function and protect drinking water source areas.	13	A

Imperative	Action #	Action Description	Total Score	Priority Group
6	36	Support the reduction of nutrient, turbidity, and bacteria inputs and emerging contaminants of concern (e.g., PFAS, PFOA, PFOS, pharmaceuticals, etc.) to source water from all sectors using the latest technology.	13	B
6	38	Assess and evaluate harmful algal bloom events that affect source water to identify potential contributing sources, and educate and support the reduction of nutrient inputs to source water from all sectors to prevent algal blooms (e.g., promote agricultural nutrient management plans, grants to reduce inputs, well water nitrate screening, well water and septic system education, low-input gardening).	13	B
6	39	Advocate for integrated pest management (e.g., minimize aerial spraying in watersheds adjacent to source water; promote hand clearing in riparian zones (versus hand spraying); support notification of all water treatment facilities when and where spraying will occur), as well as notification of downstream water users who are not on municipal water systems and rely on source water for domestic use.	13	B
6	37	Enhance contamination prevention measures for reservoirs, surface water intakes, springs, and/or wellheads.	9	C
8	44	Support restoration projects that involve diverse landowners and land management goals in locations that will achieve the greatest ecological returns on investment (e.g., cooler streams and improved summertime flows for sensitive species and to address water quality impairments).	15	A
8	54	Determine ecological flows (seasonally varying flow targets and temperature-based flow targets), and identify basin-wide in-stream demands. Support development of additional instream water rights. Implement flow restoration efforts in high priority areas as determined by Instream Water Right Monitoring and other means (e.g., ODFW's Aquatic Habitat Prioritization).	15	A
8	55	Use established voluntary programs, or other tools, to convert existing water rights (e.g., irrigation, commercial use, other out-of-stream uses) to instream uses that protect critical flows needed to support fish and wildlife, water quality, recreation, and scenic attraction.	15	A

Imperative	Action #	Action Description	Total Score	Priority Group
8	59	Support and advocate for the compilation of a hierarchy of necessary spatial analyses and modeling to determine which conservation strategies, and locations on the landscape, will result in the greatest environmental returns on investment (ROI) (e.g., ecological function) and achieve the highest priorities in existing species recovery plans (e.g., improving winter and summer rearing habitats). Advocate for implementation of strategies in federal Coho recovery plan and Oregon coast Coho Conservation Plan (OWEB FIP Framework).	15	A
8	46	Advocate for the restoration and conservation of native riparian vegetation to facilitate large natural wood recruitment, maintain water quality, ensure ecological function, and produce habitat for aquatic species, including beavers.	14	A
8	49	Protect beaver populations and encourage beaver pond creation, especially in critical areas with low summer flows.	14	A
8	50	Design and implement restoration projects with partners to directly address impairments and improve conditions (e.g., erosion prevention and control, riparian and wetland buffers, urban tree protection).	14	A
8	51	Evaluate the mechanisms and conditions for restoring hyporheic flows (the transport of surface water through sediments in flow paths that return to surface water) in the Mid-Coast using a suite of strategies (articulated in the Oregon Plan and other plans).	14	A
8	53	Support projects that result in increased water retention capacity in channels, floodplains, and adjacent uplands and wetlands using a variety of strategies.	14	A
8	58	Acquire land, or obtain conservation easements, to protect critical land areas managed for water quality protection.	14	A
8	45	Use established methods (e.g., field assessment, remote sensing, and physical models, such as Heat Source) and local knowledge to prioritize stream reaches for riparian buffer restoration projects. Increase wooded buffer zones on priority streams.	13	B
8	52	Recommend limits on further appropriation of water on high priority streams where water is not available for meeting aquatic life needs.	13	B
8	56	Identify priority invasive species in each watershed, and seek funding to support control and management of invasives in streams and along stream corridors while encouraging establishment of native vegetation.	13	B
8	47	Implement more erosion control practices.	12	B

Imperative	Action #	Action Description	Total Score	Priority Group
8	48	Evaluate anthropogenic sources of fine sediment from all land uses, including mass wasting and unsurfaced roads. Seek funding opportunities to reduce shallow landslide risk and other sediment delivery hazards (e.g., undersized culverts, outdated road maintenance, legacy roads) and perform road upgrades, repair, and decommissioning.	12	B
8	57	Advocate for implementation of the Lincoln County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, especially as it relates to wildfire mitigation in the Mid-Coast.	11	C