



**OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICANS  
OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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**REP. GREG SMITH, HOUSE REPUBLICANS ADVANCE OASIS PROJECT TO  
EXPAND WATER RESOURCES IN NORTHEASTERN OREGON**

*HB 3525 will boost Agriculture, Economy in Northeastern Oregon*

SALEM – Rep. Greg Smith (R-Heppner) today led House Republicans in passing a successful motion to bring HB 3525, the bill known as the Oregon Oasis Project, to the House Floor for a vote later this week. Four Democrats joined 29 Republicans in voting to withdraw the bill, which makes 500,000 acre feet of Columbia River water available for Eastern Oregon agriculture and groundwater replenishment.

“The Oregon Oasis Project is an important economic development initiative for Eastern Oregon,” Rep. Smith said. “By withdrawing Oregon’s allocated share of Columbia River water, we can boost agriculture especially in groundwater-restricted areas of Morrow and Umatilla Counties. The Oasis Project is critical for Oregon agriculture to compete with the markets in Washington and Idaho.

Community and business leaders throughout Northeastern Oregon applauded today’s motion to withdraw HB 3525 for a Floor vote.

“Economic development should not be exclusive to those living in urban areas; People in rural areas want the same things that those in urban areas already have; good jobs, good schools and good neighborhoods,” said Bob Hale, CEO of Hale Farms. “It’s a simple fact Economic development and economic opportunity in northeastern Oregon runs through the Columbia River. We are an agricultural-based community and all you need to do to stimulate our economy is add one ingredient; water.”

“I’m a strong supporter of the Oasis Bill,” said Chet Pryor of Eagle Ranch. “We desperately need it to alleviate critical groundwater areas that cover a lot of acreage in this part of the state. This will have a huge impact on our ability to sustain agricultural use and is important for any type of expansion.”

The Oregon Oasis Project is expected to provide water for 100,000 additional irrigated acres and allow the growth of high market fruits and vegetables. Supporters of the legislation say it will create as many as 7,300 new jobs and pump \$220 million into the Eastern Oregon economy.

“Passage of HB 3525-4 will help boost the economy, create jobs and promote Oregon Agriculture providing the ability to grow high value crops on irrigated land where the ground is

now producing low value dry land wheat or is out of production all together,” said Steve Eldridge, Umatilla Electric CEO and General Manager.

Added Port of Morrow General Manager Gary Neal, “We need to move in a positive direction to address our water needs. The Oasis Bill would do this; it’s the right thing at the right time.”

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