

# Exploration of State Funding Models For What It's Worth...Oregon's Experiences

**ACWA Annual Meeting**

August 13, 2025

**Jennifer Wigal**

Oregon DEQ



# Water Quality Program Overview



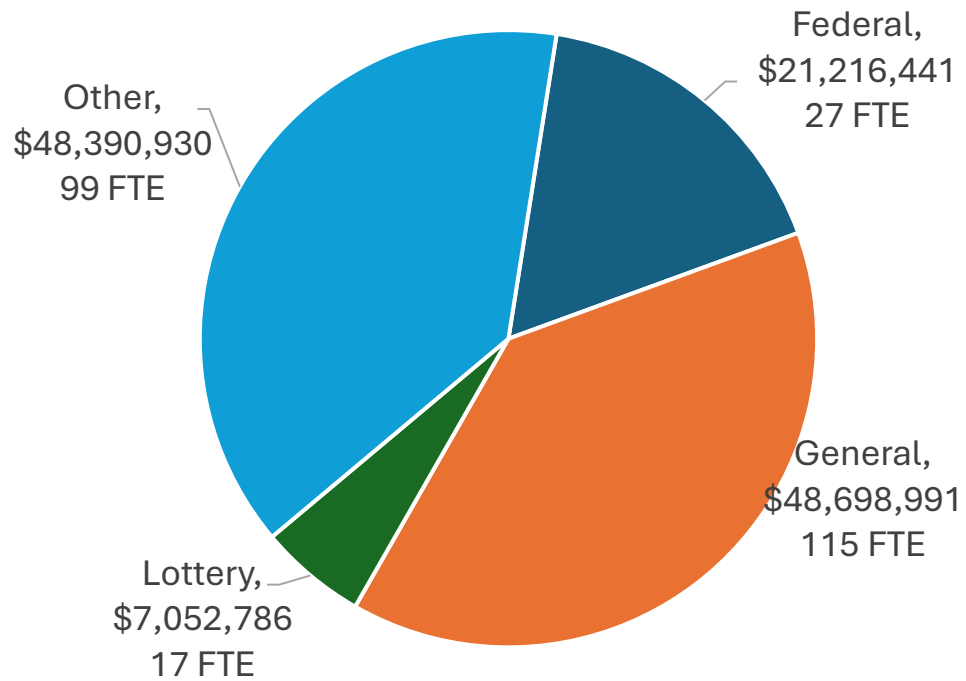
- All CWA programs & complementary state WQ programs
- Laboratory for field work and analysis
- Onsite septic permitting & licensing
- Groundwater quality
- CWSRF

## OTHER AGENCIES

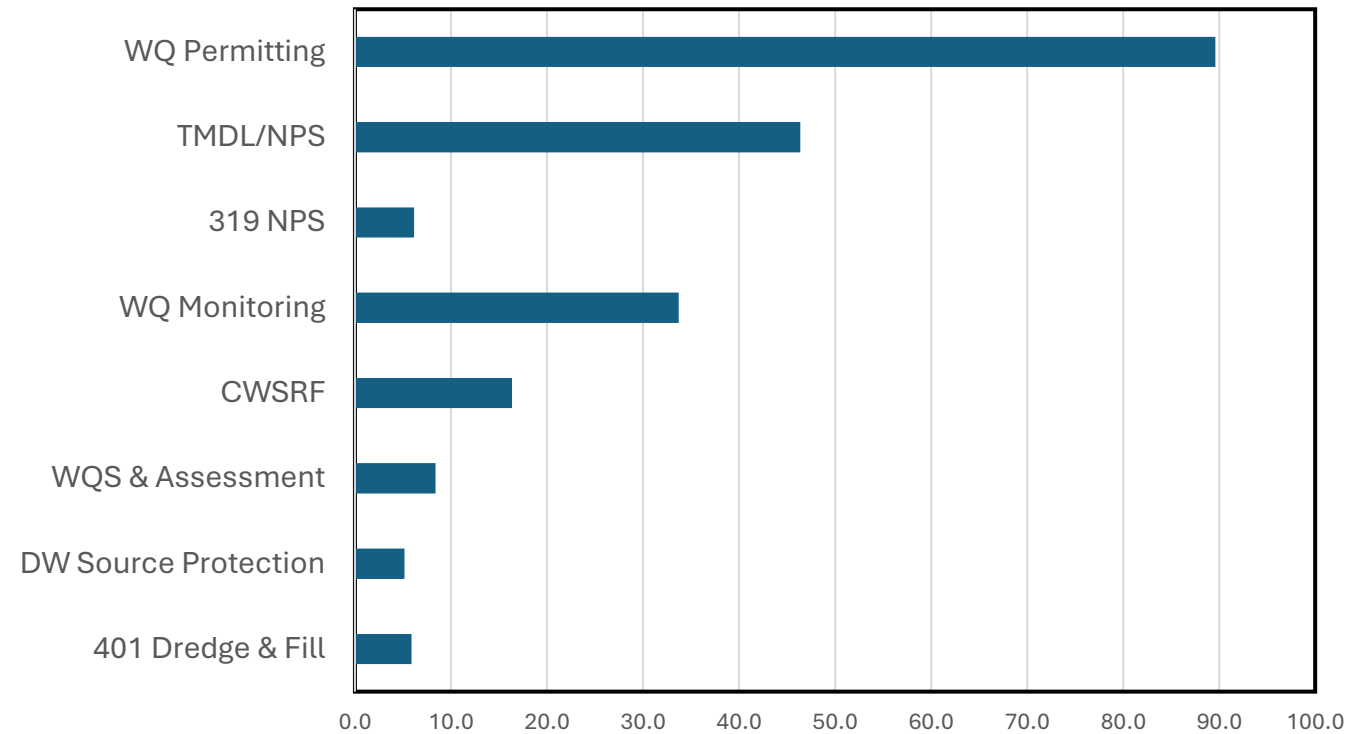
- Drinking water regulatory program
- BMPs for nonpoint sources
- Water rights
- Wetland permitting & mitigation

# WQ Program – Quick Stats

**Water Quality Program Total**  
**258 FTE--\$125M biennial budget**



**FTE by program**



# Oregon's Funding Models

Permitting

TMDL and NPS work

Lottery funds

Source Water Protection

# Permitting



## Permitted universe

~2800 NPDES permittees (incl. stormwater)

~2300 State permittees (10 year WPCF permits)



## Cost share for fees and public funding

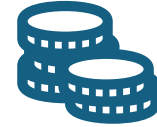
60% fees; 40% public funds (State general funds + Federal funds)

Applies to whole of NPDES universe and WQ permits issued under state law



## Fee types

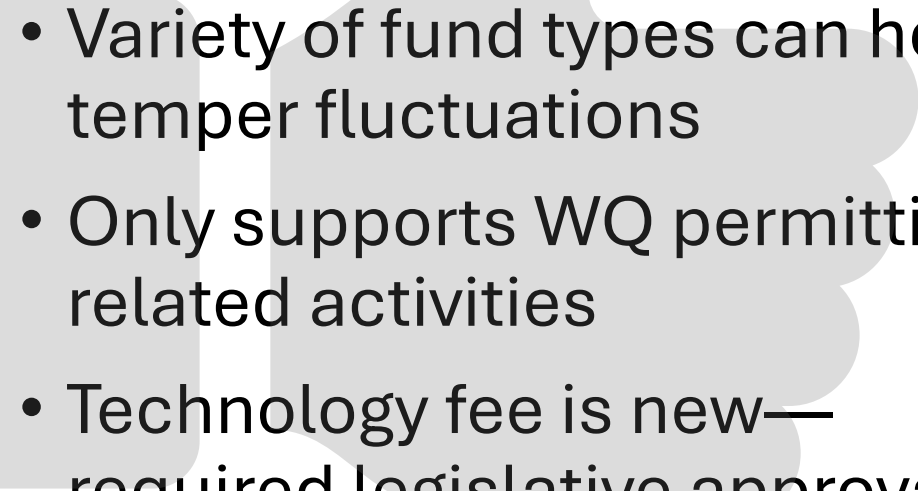
Annual  
Renewal  
Modification  
Plan reviews  
Technology fee



## Philosophy— “polluter pays” & “public good”

# Applicability of this model to other states?

Yes

- 
- Variety of fund types can help temper fluctuations
  - Only supports WQ permitting-related activities
  - Technology fee is new—required legislative approval

# TMDL and NPS work



## **Staffing model:**

~50 total staff

Modelers/Analysts

NPS specialists

Regionally located staff for TMDL  
Implementation and NPS efforts



## **Funding**

319, 106, General Fund,  
Lottery Fund

Currently ~8 FTE place-based  
staff funded by 319

# Applicability of this model to other states?

Likely challenging...

- Key aspect includes
  - structure of staffing
  - how Oregon performs TMDL & NPS work
- Updated EPA 319 guidance—  
may need to change model

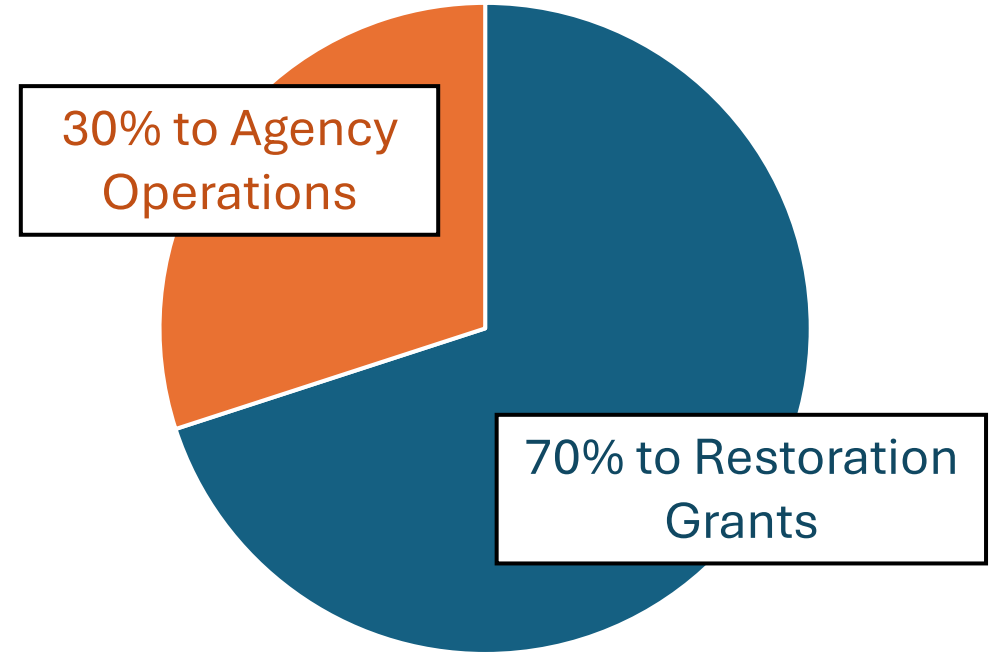




**OREGON  
LOTTERY®**

Together, we do good things.

- Oregon Constitution:
  - 7.5% of net proceeds for salmon, watershed and habitat restoration
- DEQ's share:
  - \$7M per biennium in Lottery Funds
    - ~11 FTE of WQ monitoring
    - ~3.5 FTE in TMDL/NPS
    - ~2.6 FTE in permitting

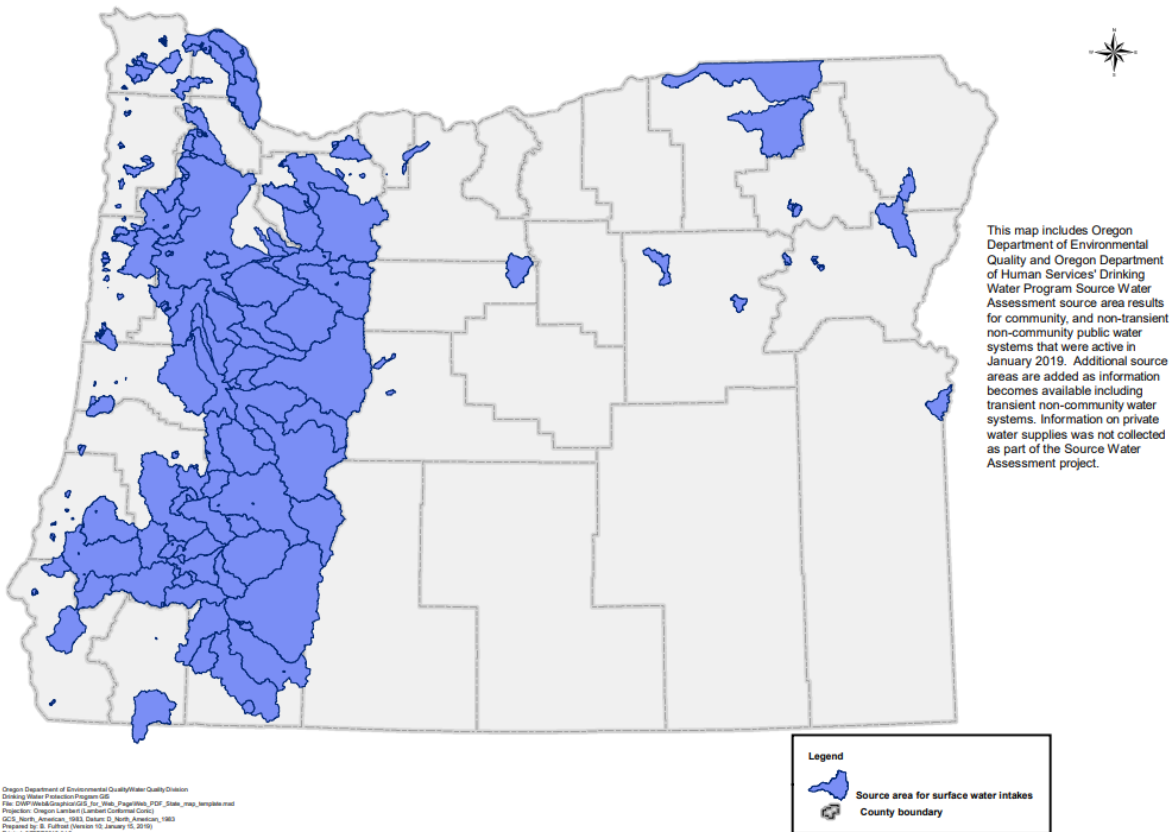


# Applicability of this model to other states?

- Unlikely...
  - Depends on public and legislative priorities within state
  - Result of momentum-building around specific common interest area over time
  - Ballot measure to amend constitution

# Drinking Water Source Water Protection

Drinking Water Source Areas for Oregon Public Water Systems - Surface Water



## Responsibilities

- Oregon Health Authority– Intake to tap
  - SDWA regulatory program
- DEQ–upstream of tap
  - Watershed health protection and restoration with focus on watershed upstream of small communities

## Funding

- DWSRF Admin funds transferred from Oregon Health Authority to DEQ
- Funds 4 FTE at DEQ

## Complementary to TMDL/NPS efforts

- Prepare comprehensive source water assessments
- Tech assistance, including support and data for grants, land acquisition

# Applicability of this model to other states?

Yes—possible model

- Synergies with NPS program
- Effective in implementing Source Water Protection work
- Able to provide data and analysis and other tech assistance
- Communities successful in pursuing grants

## Things to consider

- Diversity of fund types can help weather storms
- Spreading out types of financial transactions and who pays
- “Public benefit” vs. “Polluter pays” philosophies

## Overall observations

- Opportunistic
- Complicated and evolutionary
- Requires buy-in at broad scale
- “Big ideas” aren’t frequently embraced

*Is this the time for such an opportunity...???*

