

AGENDA ITEM FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING

( ) Discussion only

( x ) Action

FROM (DEPT/ DIVISION): Umatilla County

PROGRAM: Emergency Management

SUBJECT: County Drought Declaration

<p>Current drought conditions affect 100% of Umatilla County, with approximately 55% classified in Severe Drought according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. Adoption of the resolution positions the County within the State drought process and supports coordination across agricultural, municipal, natural resource, and public safety partners as the region approaches the spring and summer season.</p>	<p>(X) <u>ACTION REQUESTED:</u> Adopt Order No. BCC2026-011</p>
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ATTACHMENTS: Order and Staff Support Letter

Date: (2/25/2025) Submitted By: ( Sage DeLong )

\*\*\*\*\*For Internal Use Only\*\*\*\*\*

Checkoffs:

To be notified of Meeting:

- ( ) Dept. Head (copy)
- ( ) Human Resources (copy)
- ( ) Fiscal
- ( )
- ( ) (Other - List:

) Legal (copy)  
Needed at Meeting:

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Scheduled for meeting on: March 4, 2026

Action taken:

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Follow-up:

# Staff Report

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Umatilla County Commissioners  
Umatilla County, Oregon

Date: February 2, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Drought Emergency Declaration

**DEPARTMENT:** Emergency Services

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

**CONTACT PERSON:** Sage Delong, Emergency Manager

**FOR BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING:** March 4, 2026

**SUMMARY:**

Umatilla County is currently experiencing drought conditions affecting 100% of the county. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, the entire county is classified in Moderate Drought (D1) or worse, with approximately 55% of the county area classified in Severe Drought (D2). No areas of Extreme (D3) or Exceptional (D4) drought are currently present. These conditions persist despite recent precipitation and reflect an ongoing seasonal deficit impacting soil moisture, runoff potential, and water supply outlook. National Weather Service information indicates precipitation across much of the region has been below normal, contributing to reduced soil moisture and uncertainty in spring runoff conditions. NRCS SNOTEL monitoring further indicates snowpack across Oregon mountain sites remains well below normal, generally ranging from approximately 15% to 45% of median. Basin indices within the Middle Columbia region indicate reduced carryover into the spring and summer water supply period.

Reduced snowpack and forecasted water supply conditions may affect irrigation availability, forage production, and agricultural planning for the upcoming growing season. Local irrigation and water management organizations have formally requested consideration of a drought declaration to allow water users to evaluate available drought response tools ahead of the growing season. These requests reflect concern regarding agricultural sustainability and water supply reliability.

**BOARD ACTION:** Approval of the resolution will declare a local state of emergency and facilitate a request to the State of Oregon asking that all applicable state and federal drought relief programs be made available to Umatilla County citizens.

**FINANCIAL/BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS:** There are no direct or immediate impacts to the General Fund. If a request for financial assistance is made, the associated fiscal implications would be brought before the Board for consideration at that time.

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:** The resolution before the Board includes a local emergency declaration and a request for a state-level declaration. Completing this process ensures access to drought assistance programs and expedites potential requests for state or federal aid.

Respectfully submitted,

**Submitted:** Sage Delong Umatilla County Emergency Manager

Attachments:

1 – **Oregon Drought Monitor**

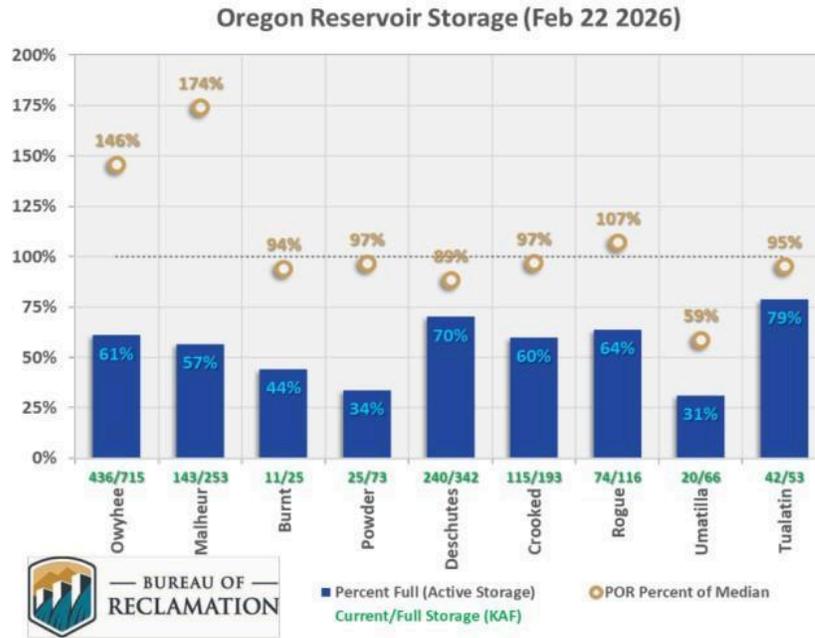
2 – **Oregon Water Conditions and Reservoir Storage Summary**

3 – **AWS Plot Snow Water Equivalent In Middle Columbia**

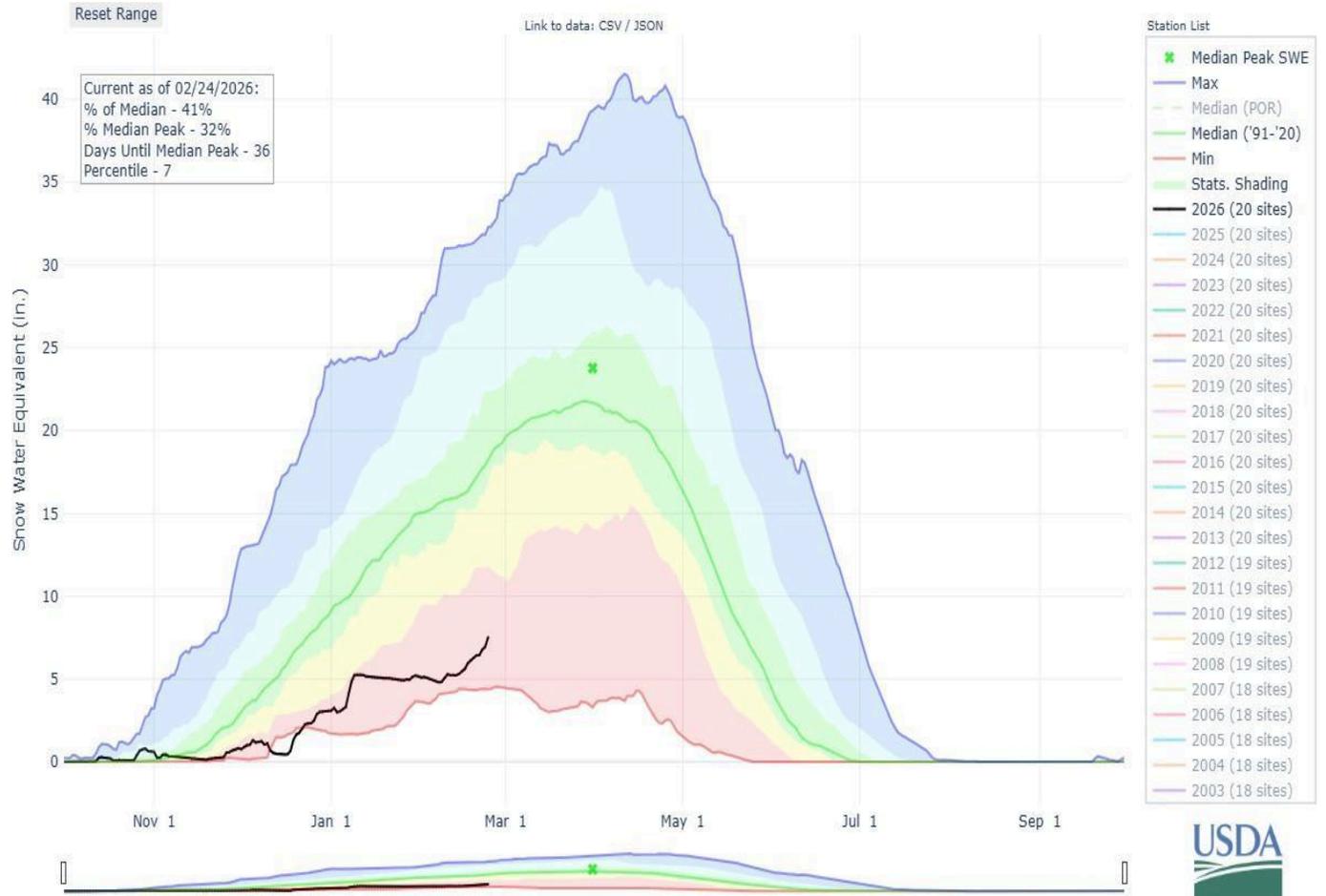


## Attachment 2: Oregon Water Conditions and Reservoir Storage Summary

### STORAGE



### Attachment 3: AWS Plot Snow Water Equivalent In Middle Columbia 2/24/2026



THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF UMATILLA COUNTY

STATE OF OREGON

Umatilla County, Oregon )  
Proclamation of Drought ) Order No. BCC2026-011  
Disaster )

WHEREAS information has been provided to the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners, that a drought is occurring in Umatilla County and that protective actions may be or are required to protect the Citizens of Umatilla County;

WHEREAS Umatilla County is currently experiencing drought conditions affecting 100 percent of the County according to the U.S. Drought Monitor;

WHEREAS the February 17, 2026 U.S. Drought Monitor indicates the entire County is classified in Moderate Drought (D1) or worse, with approximately 55 percent of the County classified in Severe Drought (D2);

WHEREAS precipitation across the region has been below normal, resulting in reduced soil moisture and increased concern regarding spring runoff and water supply conditions;

WHEREAS snowpack monitoring within the Middle Columbia Basin indicates snow water equivalent remains below historical norms, reducing anticipated water availability for the 2026 irrigation season;

WHEREAS water supply forecasts indicate below-normal water availability across much of Oregon;

WHEREAS Cold Springs Reservoir was 29% full and McKay Reservoir storage was 34% full;

WHEREAS local irrigation and water management organizations have requested consideration of a drought declaration to allow evaluation of drought response tools and planning for anticipated water supply constraints;

WHEREAS continued drought conditions may impact agricultural production, natural resources, municipal water supply, and seasonal

wildfire conditions;

NOW THEREFORE, the Board of Commissioners orders that:

1. A state of emergency exists in Umatilla County due to drought conditions.

2. Due to the state of emergency, the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners does hereby request and entreat the Honorable Tina Kotek, Governor of the State of Oregon, to:

(A) Declare a "State of Emergency", a drought, to exist in Umatilla County, Oregon;

(B) Direct the Oregon Water Resources Department to provide all available means of assistance to Umatilla County agricultural producers.

(C) Direct Office of Emergency Management to coordinate and assist as needed to address current and projected conditions in Umatilla County.

(D) Direct all other state agencies to coordinate with the above agencies and to provide appropriate state resources as determined necessary to assist those affected in Umatilla County.

3. Umatilla County will coordinate with state agencies, water users, and stakeholders regarding drought response and planning.

DATED this 4th day of March, 2026.

UMATILLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Daniel N. Dorran, Chair

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John M. Shafer, Commissioner

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Celinda A. Timmons, Commissioner

**ATTEST:**  
**OFFICE OF COUNTY RECORDS**

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**Records Officer**