

## What is H2OEO?

Water for Eastern Oregon (H2OEO) is a non-profit coalition of businesses and community organizations in Morrow and Umatilla counties dedicated to **supporting efforts to provide clean drinking water to every household and resident in our region.** We do this by:

### 1 Sharing Information in Our Communities

We filled a gap identified by the Oregon Health Authority and local health departments by providing drinking water, testing, filtration systems, and educational materials.

- **Distributed** more than 4,300 fact sheets through schools, community organizations, and to our own employees.
- **Created** the H2OEO.org website to share state and county health resources, with more than 500 unique visitors.
- **Conducted** a phone survey and information call to 138 domestic well users identified by OHA as “hard to reach.”
- **Invited** more than 800 employees to participate in a survey to understand barriers to testing and communication.

These public and private partnership efforts have helped achieve\* the following:

**1,660** wells have been tested

**424** households receiving water delivery

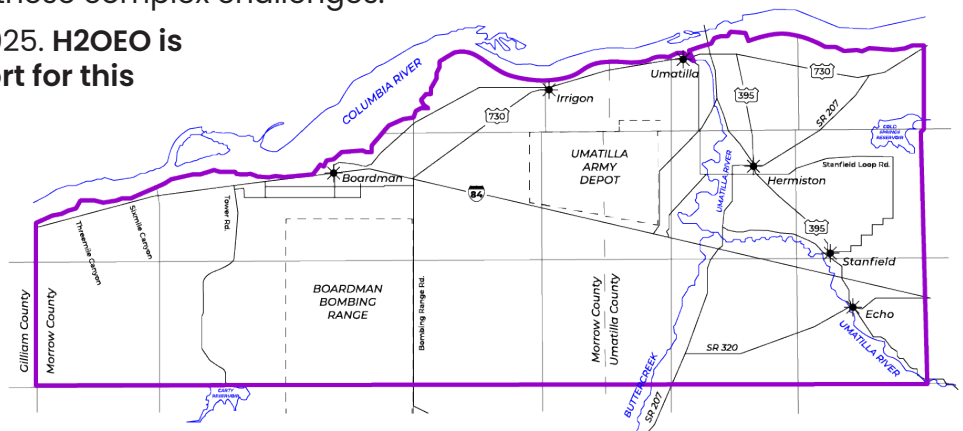
**55** filtration systems have been installed

\* as of 12/31/2023

### 2 Supporting Meaningful Scientific Research

H2OEO supports the work of the Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area (LUBGWMA) Committee, which is tasked with developing solutions to reduce nitrate concentration levels in the Basin.

- Lawmakers have funded an academic researcher to produce peer-reviewed science on the vast, structurally complex Basin. **The underlying aquifer is more like a network of sponges than a single lake.** Tracking migration patterns of nitrate plumes is challenging, but essential to developing effective solutions.
- Identifying nitrate contributions from a variety of urban, rural, septic, agricultural and other sources is important to address these complex challenges.
- Initial findings are expected in 2025. **H2OEO is advocating for continued support for this critical research.**
- In early 2024, following advocacy from H2OEO and other stakeholders, **a new state-level position was created to serve as liaison between state agencies and the LUBGWMA.**



## 3

### Taking Action to Reduce Nitrate Concentration

While we support a science-driven, long-term solution, businesses and landowners are already taking actions, like those recommended in the LUBGWMA action plan:

- **Reducing water outflows** and reuse in the winter by shifting processors’ maintenance schedules to avoid putting high demands on the Port of Morrow during winter months.
- **Leveraging technology** and implementing new filtration technology to reduce water outflows.
- **Supporting continued research and monitoring** of nitrogen and irrigation applications, such as agronomic nitrogen uptake rates across the seasons.
- **Investing more than \$50 million** in improvements in water usage, pretreatment, and efficiency over the past several years.
- **Creating new diversion systems** and other tactics to reduce water use by as much as 10% for the same production level.
- **Updating industrial reuse application permits** to better adapt to today’s best management practices while increasing the level of certainty that the public is protected.

**These efforts are above and beyond regulatory requirements.** They combine with the Port of Morrow’s \$500 million investment to treat industrial reuse water, build storage to eliminate wintertime application, and acquire additional land for application, all with a goal of reducing nitrate concentrations.

### What’s at Stake

We recognize that nitrate issues in the LUBGWMA have been around for decades and will **require a coordinated, collaborative effort to make a meaningful difference.**

We also realize that inaction not only delays progress ensuring clean drinking water is available to every resident in our communities, it increases the likelihood of rushed and short-sighted actions that fail to protect groundwater while carrying potentially harmful effects on our livelihoods. **This is why it’s crucial to support credible voices and be part of the solution.**

### Join the H2OEO Mission

Water for Eastern Oregon is working to expand our 501c4 organization by hiring an executive director and **ensuring local voices continue to play a role in finding scientifically-driven solutions** while continuing to meet the needs of our community.

There are multiple levels of support available to participate in this effort.

	Ally	Supporter	Associate	Member
	No fee	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$15,000
Access to educational materials	✓	✓	✓	✓
Business included among H2OEO backers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Participation in annual board meetings		✓	✓	✓
Directional guidance at quarterly board meetings			✓	✓
Voice in strategy and fiscal decision-making				✓
Eligibility for board leadership positions				✓

**For more information or to join our mailing list, email us at [info@h2oeo.org](mailto:info@h2oeo.org).**