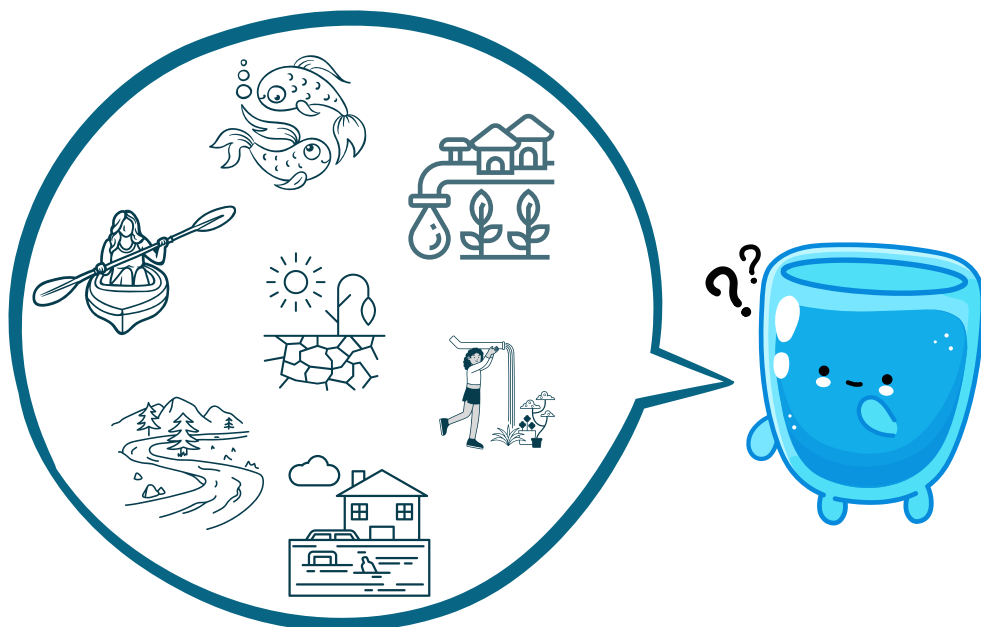
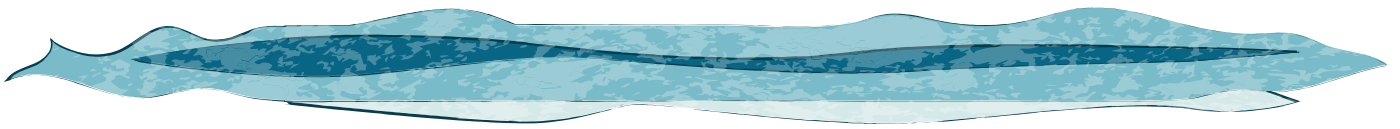




# CONVERSATION GUIDE

# OREGON'S WATER STRATEGY





This Guide is for anyone in Oregon who wants to organize and host a Kitchen Table Conversation with their family, friends, or neighbors about water in Oregon. You might be a:

- community leader bringing people in your network together to talk
- young person organizing a conversation with your peers, classmates, or teammates
- teacher holding a classroom conversation to demonstrate civics, public decision-making, or policy lessons in action
- A community-based organization who wants to make sure the voices of the people you serve are heard

We hope this Guide provides helpful ideas for organizing a community conversation, a structure for what to talk about during the conversation, and a clear way to summarize what people shared and get it to OKT.

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# OUR APPROACH

Oregon's Kitchen Table strives to include all Oregonians in the decisions that affect their lives, with a particular focus on reaching, engaging, and hearing from Oregonians who have been left out of traditional public processes.

We work with organizers, translators, and interpreters so materials and online and in-person consultations are available for Oregonians who speak a wide variety of languages and learn in a variety of ways.

We recognize that people bring all different levels of knowledge and familiarity regarding issues / policies. We use approaches to ensure those who may not have as in-depth knowledge can still respond and share what they believe and have experienced. People participate in many different ways: through online and paper surveys, individual or small group interviews, culturally specific and community events festivals, listening sessions, or public meetings open to anyone.

One of the approaches we use is what we call a Kitchen Table Conversation: a group of people gathering together to learn from each other and share what they think in the language, setting, and format that is most comfortable for them.

# GATHERING PEOPLE TO TALK

## INVITATION

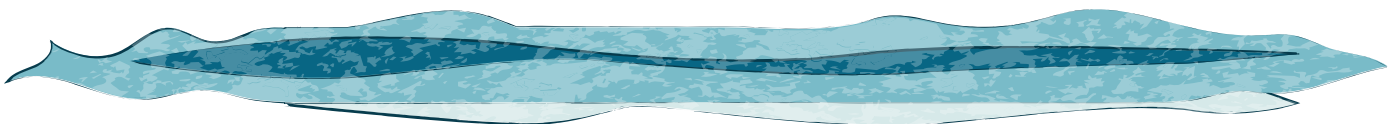
Use whatever method people will pay attention to, but make sure it feels warm, welcoming, and inviting. It might be a text, a phone call, What'sApp, a social media post, or an email. Some people set up e-invites. Make clear the time, place, purpose, what to expect (food or participant incentive), and if they need to RSVP.

## GROUP SIZE

10-12 people is ideal. But larger groups can be broken up into smaller groups. And you can still have a good conversation with 2-3 people.

## FORMAT

You can meet in person, over Zoom, or group chat (people have used WhatsApp before, for example). You can talk while planting trees or clearing out invasive species. You can have the conversation on a bus during a field trip. Hold the conversation in a space that is easy and comfortable for people in your community.



# WELCOMING

## HOST

Think of yourself as the host, welcoming people at your table,

## FOOD

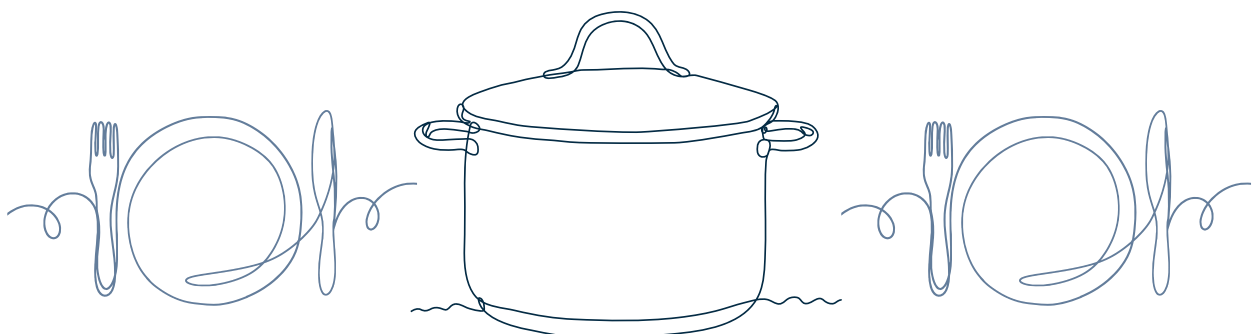
If you are in person, have food! Even a simple snack (popcorn, cookies, water, fruit) will help people feel welcome.

## FUN

If you're in-person or virtual, have some element of fun and joy that makes sense for your community: music, a short game, decorations.

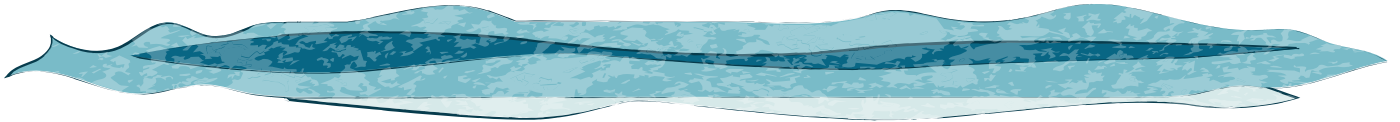
## ACTIVITY

Have an opening activity that allows for all to say something at the beginning so that they can get comfortable. For example, you could invite everyone to say one word that comes to mind when they think of water in Oregon.



# ROLES FOR CO-HOSTS

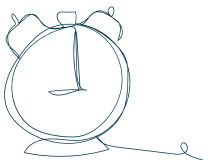
If you are working with a partner or a team to co-host a conversation, decide who will take which role. Here are some common roles. You could also invite participants to join you and take on one of these roles.



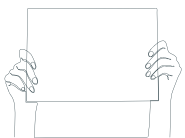
**Facilitator:** Guides conversation, asks questions, and helps capture themes, commonalities, or differences.



**Notetaker:** Captures what people say. Bullet points are fine! If the notetaker can get any good quotes, that's great but not required.



**Timekeeper:** Use a clock (phone works!) to help make sure that there's enough time for each part of the conversation. Give facilitator / group time warnings.



**Reporter:** If there are small group discussions, shares a summary of what the group discussed for the whole group.



**Observer:** Helps the Facilitator make sure everyone gets a chance to talk or that no one person takes up too much time.

# PURPOSE FOR GATHERING

Explain why you've inviting people in your community to gather together to talk about water in Oregon. Below is a description of what the decision is and why it matters. You can read this or summarize in your own words.

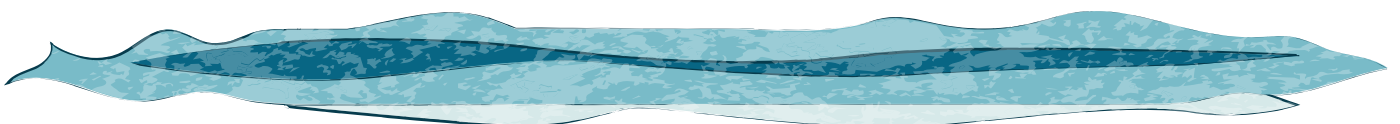


In Oregon we have a plan for our water. It's called the Integrated Water Resources Strategy. This Strategy helps us understand what water we have available in Oregon and what we need for people, plants, animals, and the land.

Now it's time to update that plan. The Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) and 13 other state agencies are working with Oregon's Kitchen Table (OKT). OKT is a program of Portland State University that creates ways for Oregonians to share what you think about the decisions that affect your lives. We want to hear about what you want to see in Oregon's water Strategy.

Your input will help the state make decisions about our water. Some of these decisions the state will make include:

- To decide about how we plan for extreme weather like droughts.
- To decide how to make our water healthier and safer.
- To decide what kinds of systems we build to get water where we need it.



# GUIDING THE CONVERSATION

## 1. BACKGROUND

People have different experiences and knowledge about the topic. We honor all of those experiences and knowledge. Share the basic background provided in the "Purpose for Gathering" section.

## 2. QUESTIONS FOR CONVERSATION

OKT has developed a few questions with the decision maker. We usually have a few main questions to pose along with follow up in case people need some direction in responding or in case there's extra time.



## 3. HOW TO SPEND YOUR TIME TOGETHER

It's ok if people want to spend time on just one or two - we want to know where their interests and energies are, so that's fine!

## 4. CONFIDENTIALITY

Let people know that their names or anything that identifies them won't be shared. You'll give OKT a summary of what you all talked about. OKT will combine all the input from different conversations, surveys, and other ways people share what they think.



# CONVERSATION QUESTIONS

What are your major water issues/concerns?

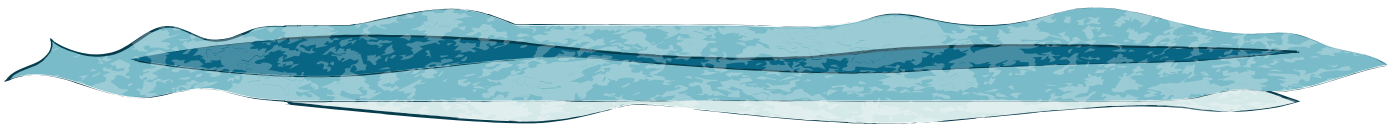
- What are the main water challenges you or your community are facing right now?
- What do you worry most about water 10-20 years from now?

What are some ideas for solving these issues / concerns?

- What have you noticed that your community is doing well that is helping address water concerns?
- What are other ideas you have for addressing water issues?

How do you think decision makers in Oregon can better work with your community on water issues?





## CONNECTING BACK

Let people know where their input will go and how it will be used. You can use the timeline on the next page. Also let them know that you will connect with Oregon's Kitchen Table with whatever questions came up and circle back to people with any answers.

## INVITING MORE VOICES

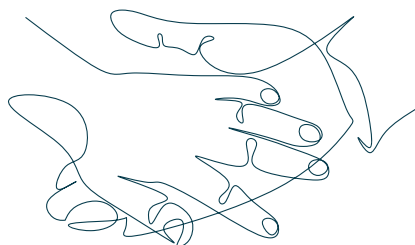
Share information about ways that participants can invite other people they know to share what they think. Use the postcards with the link and QR code included after the templates.

## APPRECIATIONS

Let people know how important their input is and we appreciate hearing their ideas, thoughts, experiences and time on this important issue. You can invite everyone to share their appreciations for each other.

## ACTIVITY

If there's time, you can invite people to share aloud. If there's not time, have post-it notes or cards for people to write or draw their response to a closing question: "What is one thing you want people from other parts of the state to know or understand about your community?"



CLOSING

# WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

## 1. INVITE YOUR NEIGHBORS TO PARTICIPATE

Engagement will happen May 11 - June 15. Invite other people you know to share what they think! Invite people to join you in helping shape Oregon's water strategy.

VISIT [HTTPS://BIT.LY/OREGONSWATER](https://bit.ly/oregonswater)  
OR  
SCAN HERE WITH YOUR PHONE:



## 2. OKT REPORT ON WHAT WE HEARD

OKT will provide a report of what we heard to OWRD. We will post the report and a summary of that report in 9 languages on the OKT website. We will also share it with anyone who gave us their contact information.



## 3. HOW STATE AGENCIES WILL USE THE INPUT

State agencies will use this input as they draft the update. They will share a draft with the public in the fall. You can give feedback on that through OWRD's public comment period.

## 4. DECISIONS ON THE WATER STRATEGY

The Oregon Water Commission will then vote on the updates in early 2024. That will then become the updated Oregon's Integrated Water Strategy.

## 5. HOW STATE AGENCIES WILL USE THE STRATEGY

It is up to different state agencies to use the Strategy to make decisions on how they will prioritize different activities and water projects that are in the 2024 update.

# KEEP IN MIND AS YOU GUIDE THE CONVERSATION

Check with yourself: What is the main goal for this conversation? Can I state it clearly?

People will come with different levels of understanding, interest, and motivation. We're glad everyone is here to share and has something to learn from everyone.

Watch body language: people will let you know when they are feeling confused, unclear, or they have something to say.

Some people really, really want to talk. Let them know their participation is important while inviting others in ("I'm hearing lots of ideas for us to consider. Who else has an idea they haven't shared?")

Try different ways of bringing in people who may not be comfortable speaking up. ("Let's talk in pairs for a couple minutes then come back to the whole group.")

Keep in mind you can be flexible: if something is not working, look for ways to adjust or try other methods.

It is okay to not have all the answers! Save questions people have. If you say you will bring it back for follow up, make sure to find out who can answer and how we could follow up with the person asking the question.

# TIPS FOR NOTETAKING

- ~ Focus on making sure the points of view are recorded accurately.
- ~ While taking notes, stay in the moment as much as possible.
- ~ Wait to organize / review for spelling and edit when you prepare the final report.
- ~ Try to capture what was actually said as accurately as possible, using people's language and ways of explaining.
- ~ You don't need to capture word-for-word, though getting a couple good direct quotes is always great!
- ~ Don't try to reword or add to what people are saying.
- ~ Comments you heard from people even before or after the meeting or at breaks can be helpful, too.
- ~ Review your notes as soon as possible so that you are remembering accurately for writing your summary.
- ~ If you handwrite your notes, make sure to take a picture of the paper so you can refer to it later when writing your summary.

# TIPS FOR SUMMARY

- ~ Bullet points are fine! This is a summary not a formal report.
- ~ Let us know any areas where there is agreement or disagreement in people's perspectives.
- ~ Let us know if there are any unique perspectives (an idea / experience / belief one person shared even if others didn't have it).
- ~ Add your observations/reflections: Feelings, sense of issues, concerns, positive experiences.
- ~ Let us know if there's anyone we ought to follow up with on any ideas they shared.
- ~ Share any questions about the project that you couldn't answer and who to follow up with.
- ~ Include any pictures from the conversation. Make sure to ask permission first!

# SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Date / Place:

# of people:

General description of the group (age ranges, languages spoken, any ways the group might identify themselves):

Opening activity (what you did, anything anyone shared):

# SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Major water issues/concerns

Ideas for solving these issues / concerns



# SUMMARY TEMPLATE

How decision makers in Oregon can better work with  
your community on water issues

Closing activity (what you did, anything anyone shared):

# SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Areas of agreement among the group

Areas of disagreement among the group

# SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Unique perspectives

Areas where someone was persuaded by someone's  
else's point of view

# SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Direct quotes

Any observations you had

**SEND YOUR SUMMARY BY JUNE 15TH TO  
SAGILES@PDX.EDU**

[HTTPS://BIT.LY/OREGONSWATER](https://bit.ly/oregonswater)

Share what you think! Your input will help Oregon decide how to meet our water needs.



MAY 11 - JUNE 15  
SCAN HERE WITH YOUR  
PHONE:



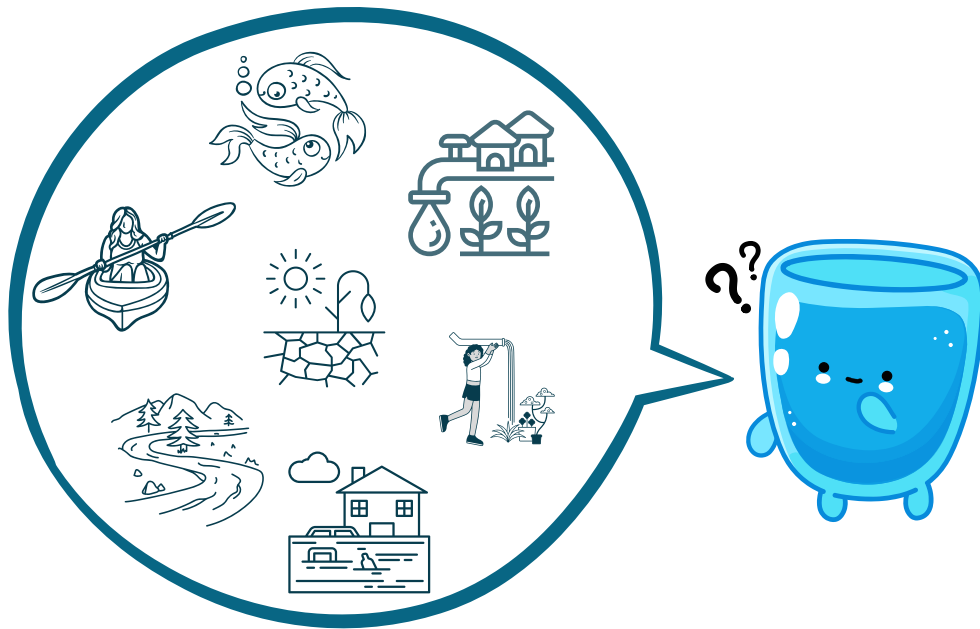
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QUESTIONS?  
IDEAS?  
NEED SUPPORT?  
CONTACT US!

 503-725-5248

 [INFO@OREGONSKITCHENTABLE.ORG](mailto:INFO@OREGONSKITCHENTABLE.ORG)

 [WWW.OREGONSKITCHENTABLE.ORG](http://WWW.OREGONSKITCHENTABLE.ORG)

