

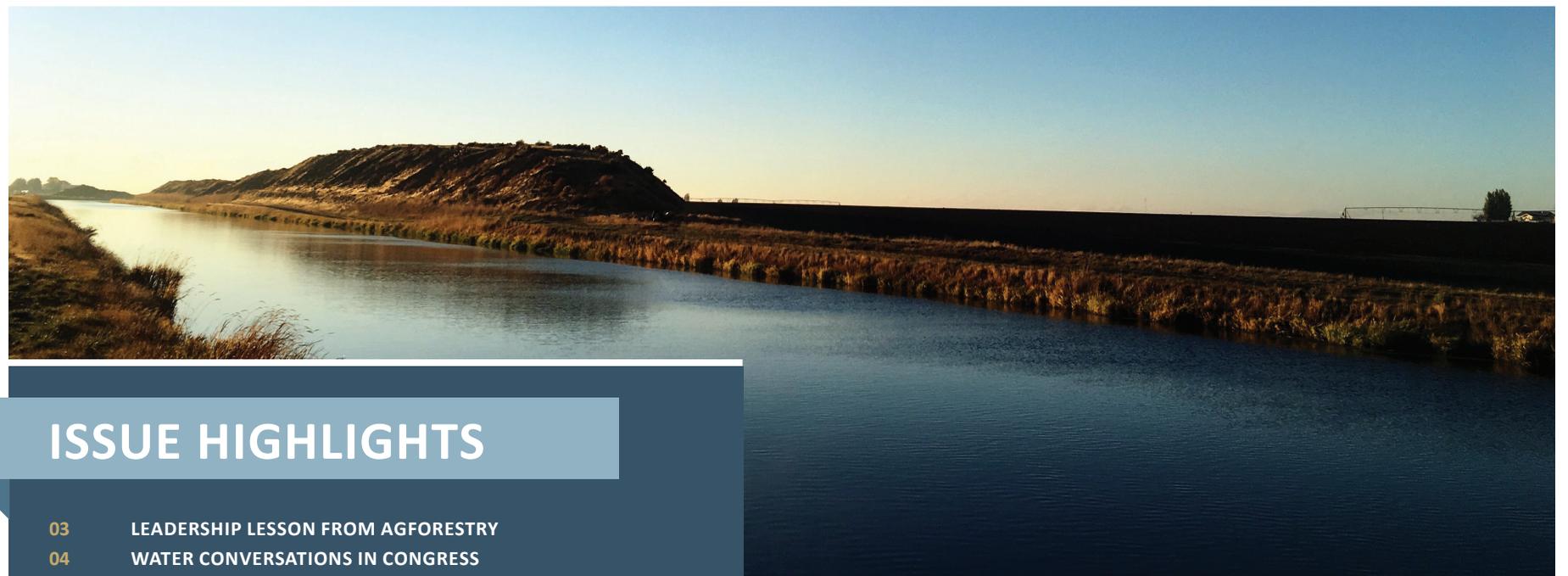
# VOICE OF THE PROJECT

*Supporting the Columbia Basin Project since 1964.*



## OUR MISSION

Serving as the voice of the Columbia Basin Project – advocating for completion and sustainable maintenance.



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## LEAGUE’S 57TH ANNUAL MEETING – CELEBRATING ANOTHER YEAR OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The League’s 57th Annual Meeting was held Thursday, November 4 via Zoom with a keynote presentation by U.S. Bureau of Reclamation’s Columbia-Pacific Northwest Regional Director, Lorri Gray. If you missed the Annual Meeting, here is a short recap.

The League recognized three outgoing board members: Bill Wagoner, Joe Gross, and Randy Gubler. We thank them for their years of service and wish them well. The League welcomed Doug Muscott of Lad Irrigation to the Board of Trustees.

Overview of recent and upcoming activities by the League:

- The League has long been called the Voice of the Project because we listen, compile, and present the needs of all stakeholders at

*Continued on page 2*

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"League's 57th Annual Meeting – Celebrating Another Year of Accomplishments" continued from page 1



The League salutes Director Gray for over 36 years of federal service, and congratulates her on her retirement!

the local, state, and federal levels through various channels.

- The League joined a coalition of Western states in 2021 to influence the recently passed infrastructure package. We made sure water for agriculture made it into the package.
- \$2 million in Reclamation's budget was secured for the Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program (OGWRP) as well as report language calling out both the need to advance OGWRP as well as address critical upgrades to the automated monitoring and control system—called SCADA—for the Columbia Basin Project (CBP) (pending the outcome of the continuing resolution in effect at the writing of this article).
- The League is strengthening its relationship with partners to support other creative funding avenues
- This summer and fall the League worked with East Columbia Basin Irrigation District to coordinate a series of tours of the completed EL 47.5 Pump Station for federal, state, and local policymakers.

- The League partnered with the Columbia Basin Foundation – a 501 (c) 3 organization – to leverage grant funding for education and outreach activities; grant applications are being submitted and have already yielded \$25,000.

League Annual Meeting's keynote speaker, Director Gray, announced her retirement starting December 31. While the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) searches for a new regional director, Roland Springer and Jennifer Kerrington will play interim roles. Gray gave Washington State a shout out by saying: "I have worked with about 12 different states throughout my career, and the state of Washington is frankly one of the very best partners that I have had the opportunity to work with."

Director Gray also shared that the USBR continues to be active in the Columbia Basin Project, working with department of Ecology, and irrigation districts. Some accomplishments she highlighted includes:

- Ongoing work on the Potholes Supplemental Feed Route – a project that brings water from the north part of the CBP to support the increased demand in the south portion.
- OGWRP advancement, including canal widening, siphon construction, pumping plants design and construction; congratulations to ECBID on the completion of EL 47.5 pumping plant and delivery system.
- OGWRP receiving USBR funding since 2018.
- Columbia River Treaty negotiations are still in progress.

If you would like to keep up-to-date on League's efforts and activities, become a member! You can also sign-up for bi-monthly news drops, and the Voice of the Project newsletter at [www.cbdl.org/newsletter-sign-up](http://www.cbdl.org/newsletter-sign-up). Follow us at @ColumbiaBasinDevelopmentLeague if you're on Facebook, for regular updates on the Project.

## LEADERSHIP LESSON FROM AGFORESTRY

Recognized as the natural resources' premier leadership development program in Washington State, AgForestry provides an 18-month, hands-on learning experience for people working in agriculture, forestry and other natural resource-based businesses. The League's Deputy Director, Sara Higgins, is a member of class 42 and will complete the program in Spring 2022. Numerous other Columbia Basin Project stakeholders have been through the program which just started its 43rd year. Below, Sara shares some insights gained at a recent seminar focused on the Columbia River and applicable to the work of the League.

We know the Columbia Basin Project is a multi-benefit project. The value of the Columbia River to various stakeholders is also multi-faceted. Three strong interests in the river can be loosely categorized along the lines of:

- power and flood control
- fish and environment
- agriculture and transportation

In a recent seminar, we heard from all three interests--which are not necessarily at odds with one another in every matter, although they do have differing priorities. What was most striking about the presentations was that they all made use of credible facts and data, yet each generally (and logically) only referenced that which supported the advancement of their specific priorities. Consequently, in order to understand the "big picture," no one interest could be solely relied upon for complete information. All three had to be heard and considered.

Similarly, the League has a responsibility to hear and represent multiple interests. The priorities of each Project irrigation district are different. The priorities of landowners in the developed areas and undeveloped areas are different. The timeline and steps associated with the Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program and Project completion are different.

The outcomes of the League's 2019 stakeholder survey served to underscore these differences and call the League to action listening and representing multiple interests. While the League's limited resources made this a monumental undertaking, we have not lost sight of that call to action. Thanks to a partnership with the Columbia Basin Community Foundation, the League is now pursuing grant funding to bolster resources for outreach and education. Most recently, the League's initial \$25,000 success is increasing capacity to actively expand outreach and broaden the reach of current communication efforts.



Sara Higgins, class 42 of AgForestry



QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination.

- Author, Jimmy Dean



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## WATER CONVERSATIONS IN CONGRESS

By: Casey Hammond – Federal Advocate, Water Strategies

The last quarter of the year produced some wins for the League with more opportunities for success to come. Most recently, the House of Representatives narrowly passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (H.R. 3684) which had already passed the Senate, which President Biden signed on November 15. The bill provides \$8.3 billion for Bureau of Reclamation Western Water, \$3.2 billion for Reclamation Aging Infrastructure, \$400 million for WaterSMART, and \$1.5 billion for Reclamation water storage, groundwater storage and conveyance projects. Additionally, \$40 billion was included for the rehabilitation, replacement, and construction for bridges.

Thanks to a coordinated effort between the League and Senator Cantwell's office, the

substitution for aquifer protection projects. Had it not been for this amendment, OGWRP would not qualify for any funding provided by this bill.

Work continues on annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2022. Congress passed a Continuing Resolution to extend current funding levels through December 3rd. It is a work in progress to track the \$2 million for the Bureau of Reclamation intended for OGWRP, which is still stationed, to be included in final passage. The process is continually pushed back with competing challenges such as the debt ceiling, the infrastructure package and the reconciliation package known as Build Back Better. However, it became common practice for the appropriations process to be extended past the end of the fiscal year.

Finally, there have been some notable and familiar faces added to the Department of Interior roster at the end of 2021. In a seemingly rare unifying vote by voice on November 4, the Senate approved long-time friend of the Columbia Basin Project, Camille Touton, as Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. The commissioner has previous experience within the Department of the Interior and years of relevant experience on Capitol Hill.

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### AND, IT INCLUDES AN AMENDMENT AUTHORED BY SENATOR CANTWELL, WHICH THE LEAGUE CLOSELY GUIDED, TO CREATE A NEW PROGRAM TO PROVIDE FEDERAL FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR GROUNDWATER...

bill will provide for groundwater storage and conveyance projects, including those like the Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program (OGWRP). And, it includes an amendment authored by Senator Cantwell, which the League closely guided, to create a new program to provide federal financial and technical assistance for groundwater recharge, aquifer storage and recovery, and water source

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## LEAGUE'S PREVIEW OF WASHINGTON 2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

By: Mike Schwisow, Government Relations Director, Columbia Basin Development League

The pace is starting to pick up on preparations for the 2022 Washington Legislative Session. House and Senate Committees held virtual work sessions the week of November 15 to hear updates on implementation of legislation passed last session and to discuss potential bills that could come before the Legislature in the Session beginning on January 10.

The Senate Administration Committee has determined that the committee hearing process will again be conducted on a virtual basis due to continued COVID infection concerns. The Senate expects to conduct in-person floor sessions with access limited to members and necessary staff who are vaccinated or regularly tested. As of the writing of this article, the House is expected to adopt a similar operating procedure. Virtual committee hearings did provide the opportunity for citizens from across the state to participate but large numbers limited the amount of time each person was given to make their arguments.

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### A JOINT LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON WATER SUPPLY DURING DROUGHT HAS BEEN MEETING TO EVALUATE THIS PAST SUMMER'S DROUGHT AND WHAT THE STATE CAN BE DOING TO RESPOND MORE RAPIDLY.

The Department of Ecology Office of Columbia River's Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program appropriations requests are made as part of the biennial Capital Budget. DOE OCR is not planning any supplemental budget requests for the 2022 Session. During the 2021 Session an additional \$21 million was made available by the Legislature to implement the OGWRP project.

The CBDL and other Ag Lobby members will also monitor potential bills related to drought relief and salmon recovery. A joint legislative task force on water supply during drought has been meeting to evaluate this past summer's drought and what the State can be doing to respond more rapidly. Fortunately, the Columbia Basin Project water supplies have not been impacted by drought situations like those experienced this past summer. But, abnormally dry conditions and early high temperatures did significantly impact water demand. The situation focused the need for operational flexibility in a very dynamic system serving a large landscape.

The Governor's office is expected to roll out a new salmon recovery program before the session and a thorough review of impacts to the ag industry will be in order. As the largest diverter of water from the Columbia River, Columbia Basin Project interests pay close attention to river management proposals that may impact Project operations.

The 2022 Session is a short session, only 60 days including Saturdays and Sundays and will conclude by mid-March.



# OGWRP DESIGN AND COMPLETION: AN ALL-HANDS-ON-DECK PROCESS

By: Jennifer Hickenbottom, Odessa Project Manager – Bureau of Reclamation

Since 2018, Reclamation has been given the authorization to utilize federal funding for the implementation of the Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program (OGWRP). This resulted in \$750,000 going towards the OGWRP in 2018, \$2 million in 2019, close to \$1.5 million in 2020, and close to \$1.5 million in 2021. The reimbursability of these funds depends on the support requested. That being said, Reclamation's goal is to support the OGWRP as much as possible, within the limitations of the Agency.

Design is a critical first step in OGWRP development, and there are many steps and individual process components that need to be adhered to in order to complete the overall design process (please see the process flowchart for reference). Each component may have separate partners/parties to work with and multiple steps within their own system; therefore, parties must be highly vigilant on when each process component needs to start. The order in which the tasks are conducted is important, as each process has a different duration of time needed for completion, as well

as necessary data requirements to even begin. It is extremely difficult (not to mention costly) to try and go back and meet requirements when parties have already moved on to the next step. The necessity of following this process can make the end goal seem unreachable, but, if all partners work together to ensure the timing of the essential tasks, each component can be achieved without jeopardizing the overall schedule.

With so many tasks required to complete the design process, efforts can start to feel overly

nickel-and-dimed. That is why Reclamation has determined that there are specific support actions that Reclamation can conduct on a non-reimbursable basis. One such task, is for the physical model necessary for the designs of OGWRP's proposed pumping plants. Reclamation authorized the use of non-reimbursable funds for Reclamation's Technical Service Center (TSC) to conduct the physical models. Due to the nature of the flow within the East Low Canal, it is assumed that all the proposed systems will require a physical model be conducted; thus, Reclamation apportioned out the funding necessary to conduct the model for the systems on track for completing their 30% designs.

Along with the modeling, Reclamation is authorized to allocate funds towards design support and review; to work with all parties and partners from 0-30%, 30-60%, 60-90%, to completion and acceptance. Other tasks include environmental review and the writing and submission of necessary documents; cultural resource consultation and concurrence; easement acquisition support; along with construction oversight, project management, and power support. These tasks are required for design, construction, and operational acceptance of the facility – the necessary steps for Reclamation title acceptance which is of particular value to stakeholders because of the low power rate it affords the projects that follow this process. Pumping water through OGWRP pump plants would be substantially more expensive without Reclamation's power rate.

It takes open communication, collaboration, and reliance that we are all working with the same, accurate information to be as efficient and cost-effective with all the time, money, and effort that everyone involved has, and will continue to invest, in the completion of the Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program.

# WATER DEPLETION CHALLENGES WASHINGTON POTATO PRODUCTION

By: Chris Voigt, Executive Director, Washington State Potato Commission

You can produce more potatoes on an acre of ground in the Columbia Basin than anywhere else in the world. This worldly distinction is only made possible by water.

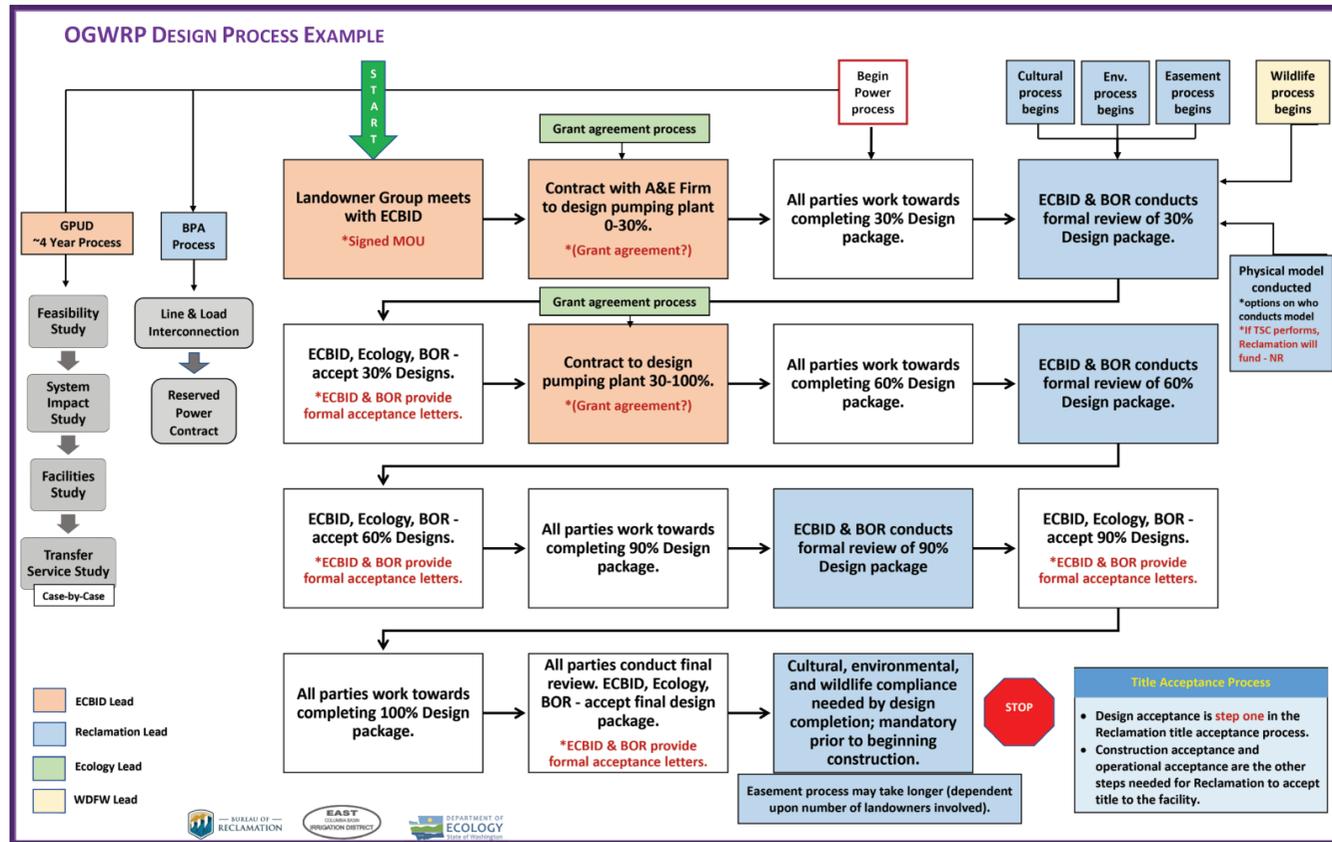
Potato production in Washington State is responsible for over \$7.4 billion in economic activity and employs over 36,000 people to grow, process, and transport the annual potato crop. And, the demand for potatoes and potato products continues to grow, particularly in the Pacific Rim. In fact, the Washington State Potato Commission had to put customers on rations due to the strong demand for our potatoes and potato products. To meet this growing demand, we need to gradually expand the availability of irrigated ground within the Columbia Basin Project (Project) for additional potato production.

One of the most critical partners in preserving and expanding the use of water in the federal Project is the Columbia Basin Development League (League). The Washington State Potato Commission is always an active supporter and sponsor of the League. The expertise of the organization is thoughtful, professional, and effective. Vicky Scharlau and her team provide amazing management, communications, and enthusiasm for the organization. Their consultant in Washington, D.C. has the connections and communication tools that have raised the profile of our water issues within Congress and the Administration. I cannot say enough about the League's representation in Olympia. Mike Schwisow, known by everyone as "Mr. Water", plays a critical role in securing funds for the water replacement project in the Odessa Sub Area – Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program (OGWRP).



The Odessa Subarea plays a very critical role in our potato community, but it is threatened by declining wells in the area. The potatoes grown in this region of the Basin last the longest in storage. You can harvest a potato in early October, put it into storage, take it out nine months later, and it is just as fresh as the day you harvested it back in October. We believe the heavier soils of the Odessa Subarea are the key factor in its ability to produce potatoes that maintain their high quality in storage. Our 10 potato processors in the Basin rely on the potatoes from the Odessa to operate their plants year-round. Without the long storing potatoes from the Odessa Subarea, our processors would have to idle their \$500 million processing plants for several months each year, making them less competitive.

The League and the East Columbia Basin Irrigation District have been critical partners in getting new surface water to the wells that are going dry in the Odessa Subarea. I cannot express enough gratitude for the work that they have done, and I look forward to our continued efforts to preserve farms, jobs, and our rural communities whose livelihoods depend on water.



# RECREATIONAL FISHING IN GRANT COUNTY MADE POSSIBLE BY THE PROJECT

By: Chad Jackson - Region 2 Fish Program Manager, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Recreational fishing is a popular activity in Washington State, infusing millions of dollars into local economies and positively contributing to the quality of life of resident anglers. Many anglers prefer fishing in Washington’s lowland lakes including those within Grant County. The basalt landscape of Grant County was carved and gouged by the Lake Missoula floods creating large coulees and potholes, redistributing substrates, and depositing fertile glacial soils. The dominate habitat type was shrub-steppe composed mostly of sagebrush, rabbit brush, and bunchgrasses. While some natural lakes existed (e.g., Park, Blue, Moses, etc.), initially, there was very little surface water within Grant County. Even lower Crab Creek flowed seasonally drying up in the summer and fall months.



Grant County’s landscaped was forever changed with the introduction of the Columbia Basin Project (Project) in the late 1940s. The Project is the largest water reclamation project in the United States. Irrigation water is diverted from Lake Roosevelt into storage reservoirs (e.g., Banks and Billy Clapp) and then supplied through a vast system of canals to farmers from Odessa south to Pasco. One of the unintended benefits of the Project was the creation of numerous lakes and ponds throughout Grant County through seepage, irrigation returns, and/or elevated water tables. These lakes and ponds have offered recreational fishing opportunities for decades. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) stocks hundreds of thousands of trout in several of these lakes and ponds annually. Some of these waters also offer fishing opportunities for naturally self-sustaining populations of bass, walleye, and panfish. Many of these waters are destination fisheries visited by out-of-county and non-resident anglers.

The WDFW offers a number of helpful resources to anglers wanting to fish the lakes, ponds, and reservoirs within Grant County. The first resource is our lowland lake fishing locator on the WDFW website (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/locations/lowland-lakes>). Anglers can search this database by county or target fish species. Each lake has its own landing page with useful information such as fish species you might catch, lake size, and locations of access sites. Another resource for anglers is WDFW’s statewide hatchery trout and kokanee stocking plan (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/reports/stocking/statewide>). This plan details which lakes are stocked in a given year and with what species and how many of them. Anglers will need to know what the fishing regulations are

for a particular lake, pond, or reservoir. Fishing regulations can be found in print at most sporting goods stores, on WDFW’s webpage (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations>), or by downloading our Fish Washington mobile app, which is very popular. Lastly, anglers are always welcome to call the regional office in Ephrata to speak with one of our very knowledgeable customer service staff or the local fish biologist to answer any questions.



United States Department of Agriculture

## ECBID Application Status Report

### Looking Ahead ...

Let’s assume the PIFR is completed November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 ...

Step	Activities	Start	Finish	Duration	2022				2023				2024				2025				2026			
					Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4																
1	Project Investigation Feasibility Study/Report	10/25/2021	10/29/2021	1w																				
2	Application for Federal Assistance	11/1/2021	4/29/2022	26w																				
3	Watershed Plan/NEPA Completion and Approval	5/2/2022	4/26/2024	104w																				
4	Watershed Project Implementation	4/26/2024	4/22/2027	156w																				

Soonest work can start May 1, 2024

Timeline presented by NRCS during the October 27, 2021 OGWRP Producers Meeting.

## OGWRP PARTNERS AND LEGISLATORS PURSUE SIGNIFICANT NRCS FUNDING

By: Harold Crose, Resources Conservationist, Grant County Conservation District

The Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program (OGWRP) has been under development for several years. It is time to complete the design and construction of the infrastructure needed to deliver the new Columbia Basin Project water to approximately 87,700 acres.

The Grant County Conservation District (GCCD), East Columbia Basin Irrigation District (ECBID), many producers, and our local legislators are pursuing funding through USDA Farm Bill conservation programs, specifically, the NRCS PL-566 Small Watershed Program to help implement the next and final phases of OGWRP. This new initiative, known as the Odessa Watershed Program is the starting point for securing significant federal funding through

NRCS, including potentially up to 100% of engineering costs and 75% of construction costs for the OGWRP pump stations and laterals. But, such funding would require congressional approval.

You may be wondering; how long could it take to secure funding and get projects on the ground? During the OGWRP Producers Meeting hosted by GCCD on October 27, Larry Johnson, NRCS’ Washington State Conservation Engineer shared an estimated timeline, including the various steps that need to be taken prior to implementing projects through PL-566.

While NRCS’s timeline showed May 1,2024 as the soonest possible day engineering and construction can start under PL-566, GCCD is

fairly confident that the watershed planning and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process can be accelerated based on the significant amount of work that was previously completed in 2012 through the US Bureau of Reclamation’s and Department of Ecology’s joint Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Odessa Subarea Special Study.

## MEET JOHN O'CALLAGHAN AND GET UPDATED ON SCBID

### Q. What did you do before coming to South Columbia Basin Irrigation District (SCBID)?

A. I started working on the Columbia Basin Project April 1, 1991, at the Columbia Basin Project Office, now called the Bureau of Reclamation's Ephrata Field Office. I worked for 24 years in the Operations group, working in water operations, hydrography, facility O&M, dam safety and other related activities. We had responsibility for O&M oversight on the north central Washington irrigation districts, as well as irrigation districts in northern Idaho and western Montana. I progressed into management at EFO, first as the water operations team lead, and then the technical services supervisor.

I have been very fortunate to benefit from a wide variety of mentors and colleagues throughout my career. These are people who have a wealth of

### SCBID IS A STRONG DISTRICT. OUR STRENGTH COMES FROM OUR PEOPLE, THEIR WORK ETHIC, SKILLS, AND EXPERIENCE.

knowledge with the formative years of the Project, such as Francis Jensen, Ron Jeske, Bill Gray, Shannon McDaniel, Dick Erickson, Keith Franklin, John Baird, Richard Lemargie, and Merle Gibbens, as well as people who bring depth of experience from outside the Columbia Basin Project (CBP) such as Stephanie Utter, John Moody, Dave Solem and Larry Martin.

### Q. Tell us a little more about your background and interests.

A. I grew up in south Snohomish County in an area that was rapidly urbanizing during my teen years. I left after high school to attend Washington State University (WSU) as a third generation Coug. Having

moved to Eastern Washington, I resolved never to live in Western Washington again. I completed a B.S. in Agricultural Engineering in Fall of 1987 and went directly into WSU's graduate program while working for USDA on campus. After a couple of years of grad school, Francis Jensen, who was Reclamation's Operations Supervisor at the Columbia Basin Project Office, offered me a job in Ephrata. The timing coincided with the birth of my son, which had shifted my priorities. So, rather than finish my graduate degree, I went to work for Reclamation.

My avocational interests have consolidated over the years, with my primary focus now being skiing (in all its flavors), backpacking and hiking, hunting, and cycling.

### Q. What is your vision for the South Columbia Basin Irrigation District?

A. SCBID is a strong district. Our strength comes from our people, their work ethic, skills, and experience. We have an experienced and savvy board of directors who clearly understand the CBP, the District and their responsibilities. Our primary mission is the same as all irrigation districts – to serve our water users with reliable, cost-efficient water. We have been successfully doing so since transfer in 1968. I think the principal function of the district's management team and workforce is to manage risk to the district and our water users. Most of what we do serves this purpose in some way, whether it's improving facilities and operations, adopting new technologies, securing our workforce, addressing regulatory and political issues, and most importantly the daily work of delivering water. It is not very exciting, but my vision for SCBID is to keep doing what we do and to steadily improve on it. The CBP is not here for the short-term. We are working towards the next 50 years and beyond.

### Q. What is your perspective on the Columbia Basin Project – the project and its path toward completion?

A. Those of us who are part of the CBP community know the benefits to be realized by completion of the project. The State of Washington has clearly recognized the desirability to continue building out the project and has responded aggressively. Unfortunately, it seems like there is less enthusiasm in the federal arena for large Reclamation projects. Cost is usually floated as the main objection, but I think there is no shortage of money. There are many places the federal government spends vast quantities of money for activities that would appear to have way less long-term benefits to the nation. And regardless of the potential of



John O'Callaghan – Secretary/Manager,  
South Columbia Basin Irrigation District

Potholes Headworks outlet transition and the Trail Lakes section of the Main Canal. We hope to make some progress this off season with the Potholes Headworks project.

Urbanization issues in Block 1 occupy a significant amount of our attention and we are working with the City of Pasco and property developers in this area. Block 1 is the focus of several related complex operational issues and we have been working this problem for the last 6-plus years. We have made significant progress and are now getting traction with the city on solving the part of the puzzle that involves them.

Two other issues that have been around a long time and continue to occupy the district's attention are the Potholes Supplemental Feed Route and the East Pasco Basin Groundwater Program. Both these issues move very slowly, though we are encouraged by the recent state legislation which will ease the way for developing the groundwater program.

### Q. Winter is here. Can you share some plans about repair and maintenance projects?

A. We have a wide variety of maintenance and improvement projects every year. We are starting a multi-year program to replace pumping plant discharge manifolds. We continue to build traveling weed screens for pumping plants. Most years we do a certain amount of piping projects, but due to the high prices of pipe and limited availability we are choosing to forego any major pipe projects this winter. We will be automating four more lateral headworks and are starting work on fully automating lateral control of the lower portion of the Pasco Pump Lateral in Block 1.

available federal funding, the legal and regulatory environment that federal agencies must operate in makes traditional large infrastructure accomplishments extremely difficult. Engaging the private sector, with private capital, may represent a way forward. I realize this requires a significant paradigm shift, but the last 30 years of effort has shown the difficulty of achieving on-the-ground progress, so maybe public-private partnerships could provide a path forward.

### Q. What are your priorities? How will you prioritize items like infrastructure reinvestment projects, or the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program?

A. In the short term, SCBID's direct interest in OGWRP lies with the proposed EL86.4 pipeline system. We are committed to participating with ECBID in making that project happen, though our main role is to not get in the way. To that end we are in the process of drafting the necessary documentation to facilitate ECBID writing contracts to serve SCBID lands. SCBID has several other priorities that we continue to work on. Regarding Project Reserved Works, the District is focused on the repair of the

# THE LATEST FROM ECBID

By: Duaine Anderson, President, East Columbia Basin Irrigation District

The East Columbia Basin Irrigation District (ECBID) celebrated some key milestones in 2021 including the grand opening of the 47.5 system, which is a significant part of the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program (OGWRP). This project is designed to remove landowners from well systems on the non-replenishable Odessa aquifer and transition use to the irrigation system.

This coming year will be no different. Some significant priorities for the ECBID team include:

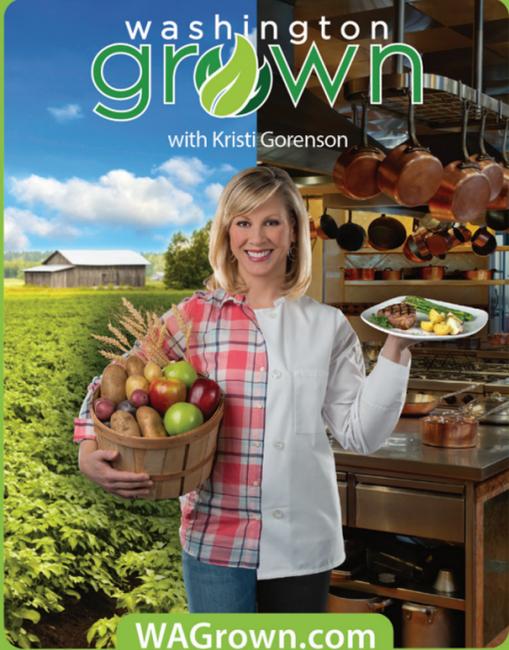
1. The continued implementation of the Preferred Alternative from the Bureau of Reclamation's Odessa Special Study's Record

of Decision. This is the OGWRP design and construction of the public irrigation facilities that are needed to continue replacing the landowners' reliance on the depleting Odessa aquifer.

2. The improvement and increased efficiency of the canal system through the use of automatic gates where economically feasible. The ECBID team is working toward continued water delivery efficiency by exploring "re-reg" reservoirs for the canal system. This allows the capture and reuse of operational waste by pumping water back into the main canal and efficiently using that water further downstream.
3. Water conservation remains a continued

priority for the ECBID team. Conserved water can be reallocated somewhere else in the delivery system. This can be accomplished through the lining of their large canals and by burying laterals with PVC pipes. Improving the canal's efficiency now ensures a consistent and reliable water supply for the future while reducing operational costs.

4. ECBID team shares: "Our team remains focused on serving landowners to the best of our ability. Not only do we work to maintain a consistent and reliable water supply at a reasonable cost, but we strive to treat our customers and the communities we serve with respect."



### WHERE TO WATCH

**KSPS (Spokane) - Mondays at 7:00 pm and Saturdays at 4:30 pm**  
[www.kspis.org/schedule/](http://www.kspis.org/schedule/)

**KWSU (Pullman) - Fridays at 6:00 pm**  
[www.nwpb.org/tv-schedules/](http://www.nwpb.org/tv-schedules/)

**KTNW (Richland) - Saturdays at 1:00 pm**  
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**KBTC (Seattle/Tacoma) - Saturdays at 6:30 am and 3:00 pm**  
[www.kbtc.org/tv-schedule/](http://www.kbtc.org/tv-schedule/)

**KIMA (Yakima) / KEPR (Pasco) / KLEW (Lewiston) - Saturdays at 5:00 pm**  
[www.kimatv.com/station/schedule](http://www.kimatv.com/station/schedule)  
[www.keprtv.com/station/schedule](http://www.keprtv.com/station/schedule)  
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**KIRO (Seattle) - Check local listings**  
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# THE COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY

By: Tom Myrum, Executive Director, Washington State Water Resources Association

The Columbia River Treaty was signed between the United States and Canada in the 1960s to solve the threat of flooding down river and to provide a major boost in regional hydropower generation. It has been 60 years of a very successful and productive relationship with Canada, but some of the original terms are about to expire. In less than three years, the flood risk management (FRM) regime could change from the security of six year assured operating plans to a “called upon” FRM operation that requires the United States to ask Canada for storage of floodwaters on an annual basis. The new “called upon” program is not defined in the treaty, which could impact the operations of Grand Coulee Dam and the level of Lake Roosevelt in the process. (Lake Roosevelt provides the largest Treaty storage space in American reservoirs.)

The Columbia River Treaty negotiations between the U.S. State Department and Canada completed 10 rounds of negotiations,

but have not reconvened since June 2020. The two sides exchanged proposals, but little has officially taken place since then. Senator Cantwell recently added amendments to the bipartisan infrastructure funding bill that, among other things, authorizes \$100 million for modifications to the Keys pumping plant behind Grand Coulee. This facility pumps vital irrigation water supply to the Columbia Basin Project (Project). The authorization of \$100 million for the Keys plant could mitigate any potential deep drawdown impacts associated with the “called upon” FRM scenario in 2024. The Bureau of Reclamation will be responsible for determining the feasibility of changes to the Keys pumping plant. Ideally, there will be a resolution to treaty negotiations, and a new treaty will be signed between the two countries without the need for any changes to the Keys pumping plant.

The Project districts are paying very close attention to treaty developments regarding the operation of Grand Coulee Dam, Lake Roosevelt,

and the Keys Pumping Plant. As we get closer to the 2024 “called upon” storage regime, the Project irrigation districts will continue to engage with legislators, the State Department, and the Interior Department to ensure that they are all aware of the potential impacts to the project in the event of alterations to the current FRM regime. There are many other elements to the negotiations with Canada, but flood risk management is central to the mission of the treaty, and is often determinative of power generation and other downstream benefits. The United States and Canada held the eleventh round of negotiations to modernize the Columbia River Treaty regime on December 9, 2021.

Thank you to the J.R. Simplot Company Foundation and our Annual Partners for their generous financial support of the League’s outreach and education efforts and for being a great champion of the Columbia Basin Project!



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