



# Washington Water Law and Secondary Use Permits

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# Introduction to Basic Water Law



## Who owns the water?

- ▷ Waters of the State are a natural resource held in common for the **public good**.
- ▷ An individual or entity can obtain the right to use water & put it to beneficial use, but as soon as the water is no longer used, it reverts back to “common public resource status”.

# Why are Water Rights Required?

- ▷ Water rights are required by law to ensure proper allocation and management of Washington's water resources.



- ▷ Water rights establish priority dates which can be used to protect senior water rights water and instream flows – especially during times of drought.
- ▷ **First in Time – First in Right**

# Types of Water Rights

## ▷ **Water Right Permits**

allow for water use development under the water code

## ▷ **Water Right**

**Certificates** issue to perfected rights under the water code

## ▷ **Reservoir Rights**

allow for filling and storage of water

## ▷ **Secondary Use**

**Permits** allow for the beneficial use of stored water (water use following the storage period)

## ▷ **Water Right Claims**

were filed claiming established water use that occurred before the existing permit system

## ▷ **Instream Flow Water**

**Rights** issue to protect rivers and stream levels

# Grand Coulee Dam and Lake Roosevelt



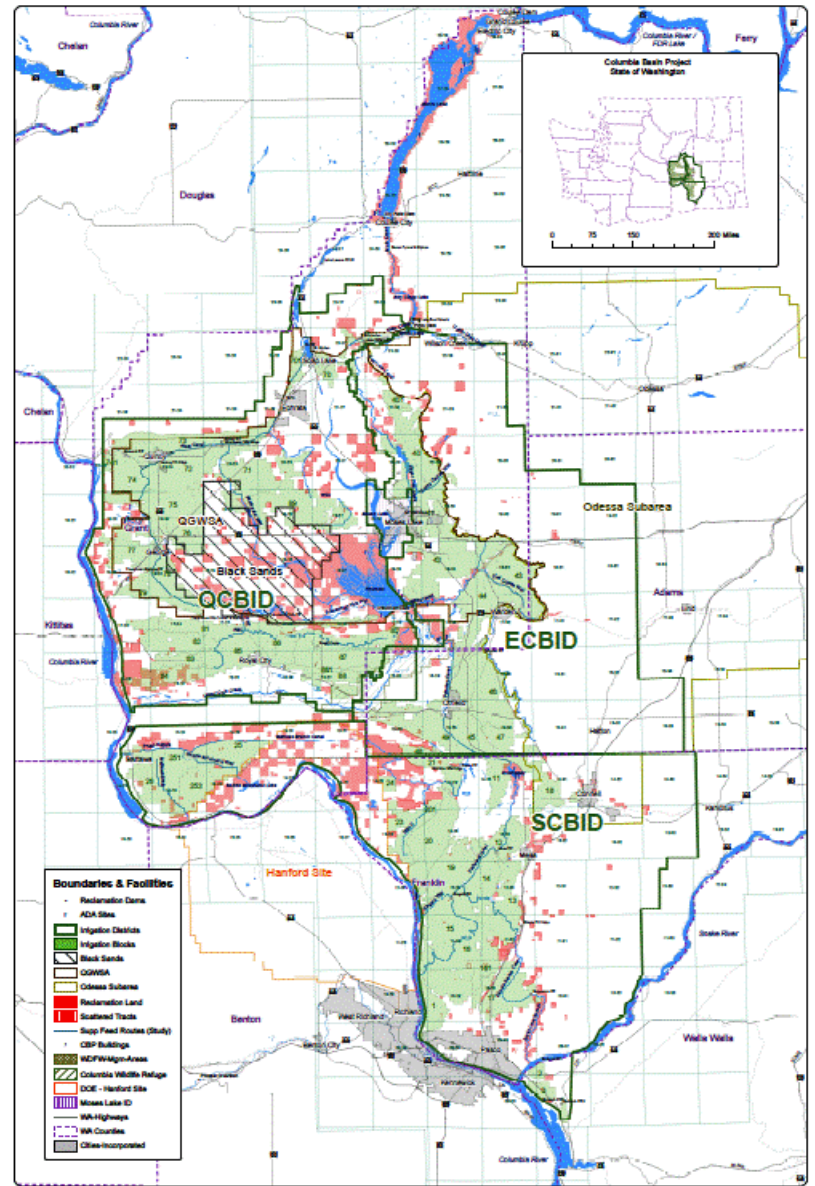
Photo credit: US Bureau of Reclamation



# Columbia Basin Project

US Bureau of Reclamation holds the Secondary Use Permit(s)

## Columbia Basin Project Adams, Franklin, and Grant Counties, Washington



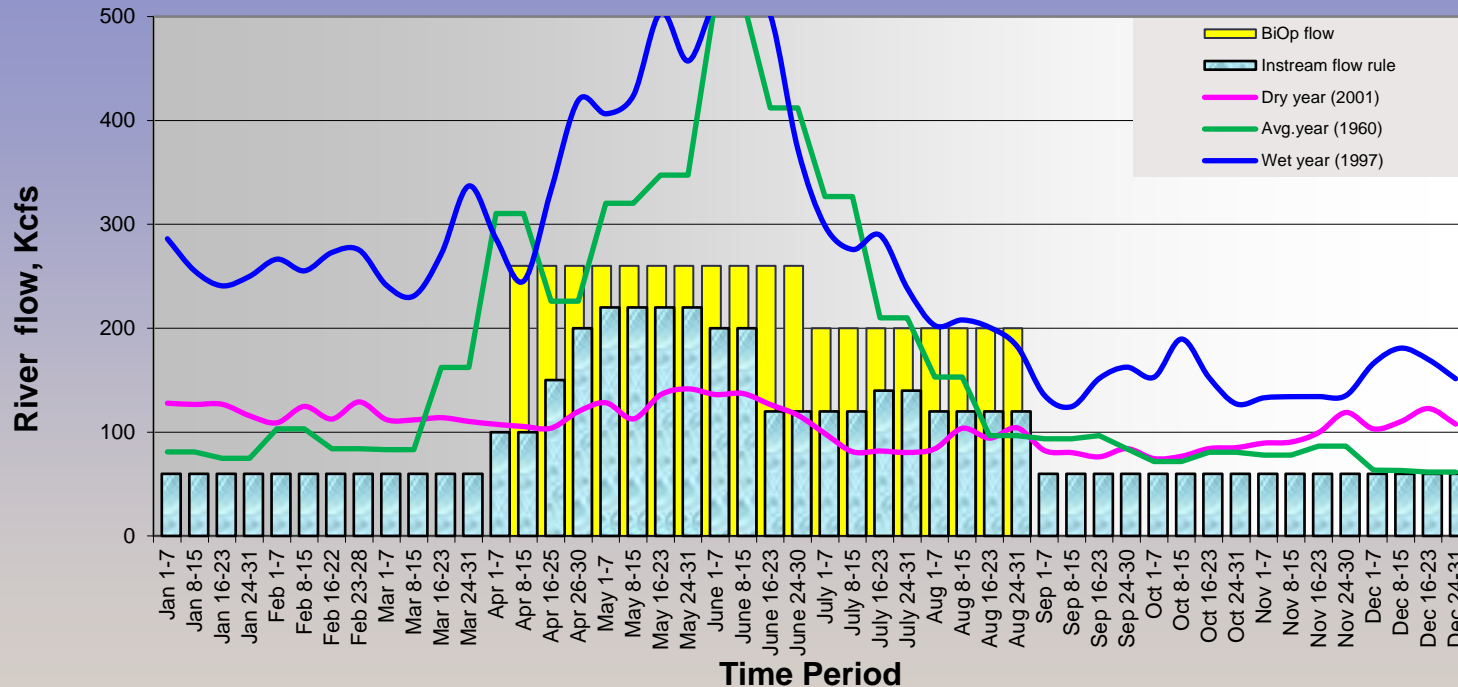
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This map is provided as a convenience to the public and is for display purposes only. The data presented herein were produced by different sources employing varying or unknown standards of accuracy and precision. These data may not be suitable, complete, or consistent. The Department of Property Data, Boundaries, and Surveying is not warrantable for accuracy.

# Columbia River Instream Flows

**Comparison of Dry, Average, Wet Year Flows to Instream Flow Rule**  
(Columbia River at McNary Dam)





# Questions?

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