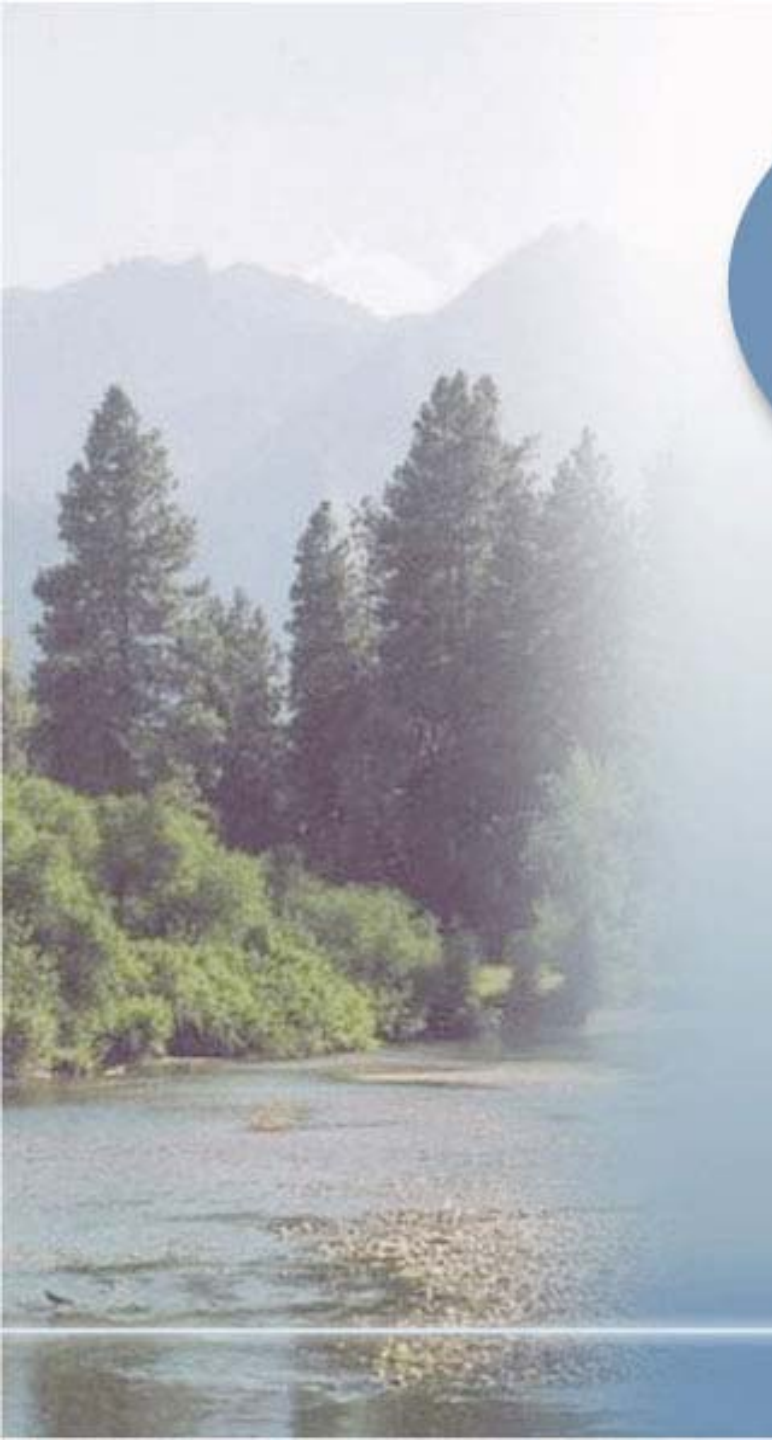


2011 Legislation

Policy Advisory Group Meeting
August 18, 2010

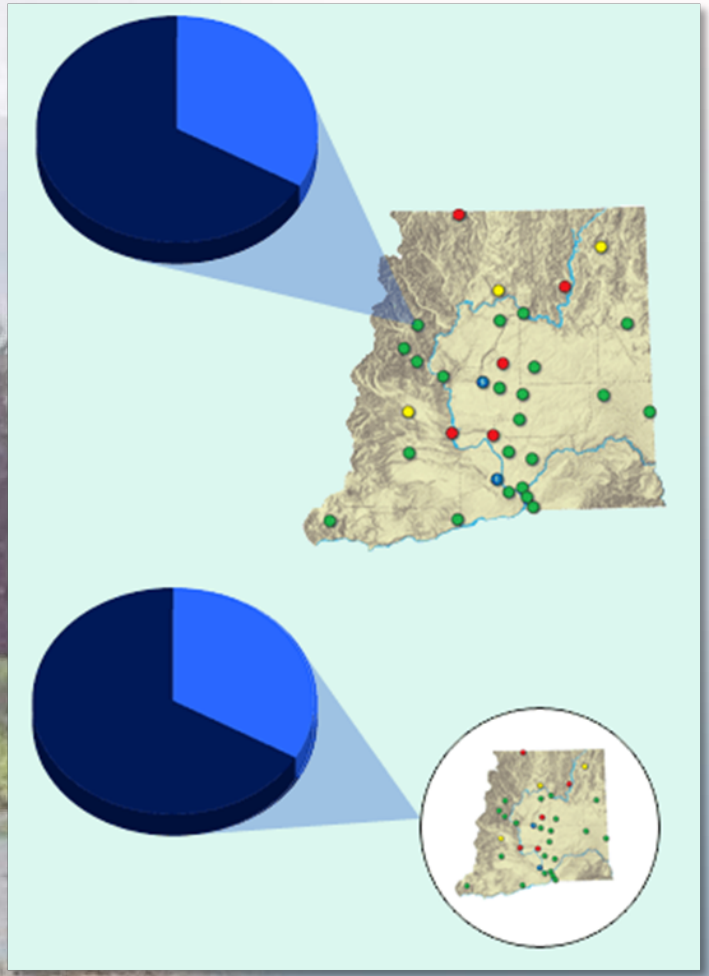
Presented by:

Derek Sandison
Dan Haller
Office of Columbia River
Washington State Department of Ecology

2011 Legislation: Sullivan Lake Reoperation

The proposed legislation would limit the issuance of out-of-stream permits from Sullivan Lake releases to applicants in counties where few other water development opportunities exist: Ferry, Pend Oreille, Douglas, Okanogan, Stevens, and Lincoln Counties.

2011 Legislation: Expanded Storage Allocation Authority



RCW 90.90.020(1) requires that one-third of the water developed from a storage project be allocated to instream uses and two-thirds to out-of-stream uses. Tying the allocation to specific projects makes it difficult for the Office of Columbia River (OCR) to meet specific local needs and to maximize its water supply development potential.

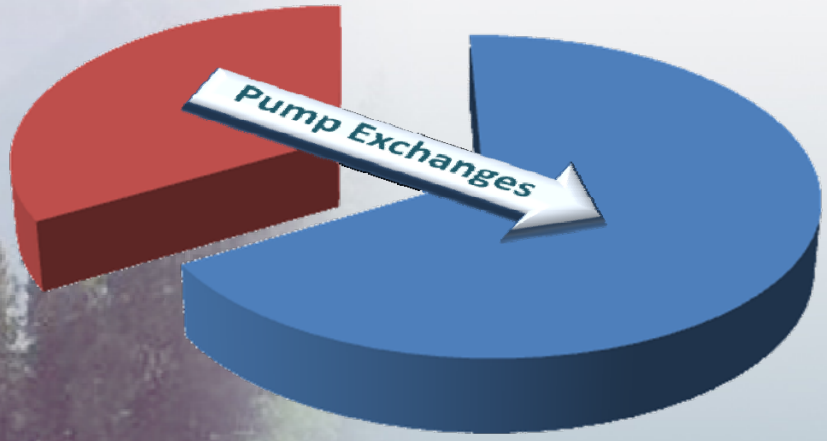
The proposed legislation would allow OCR to distribute the one-third/two thirds balance across the full scope of its projects rather than applying it on a project-by-project basis.

2011 Legislation: Expanded Cost Recovery Authority

Currently, OCR has limited cost recovery authority. For example, OCR can recover operation and maintenance costs associated with federal water service contracts, but not other costs. Additionally, because of OFM accounting rules, OCR can't deposit monies received from cost reimbursements into the Columbia River Basin Water Supply Development Account. Without a fix, public investments are not maximized because beneficiaries of the water are not paying their fair share of the costs to develop the project.

The proposed legislation would allow OCR to enter into cost recovery, loan and revenue sharing agreements for water supply projects and change RCW 90.90 to meet OFM's accounting definition of "revolving fund account."

2011 Legislation: Expanded Pump Exchange Authority



Although pump exchange projects provide storage-like benefits (instream and out-of-stream uses, use of major tributaries as sources of water for smaller tributaries), they are currently funded from the "other than storage" portion (one-third) of the Columbia River Account. OCR investments in pump exchange projects will disproportionately consume the "other than storage" portion of the Account, preventing investments like conservation projects, Odessa investments, and others from fully developing.

The proposed legislation would modify the funding authority to allow pump exchanges to be funded out of the storage portion (two-thirds) of the Account.