

Columbia River Basin Water Management Program

Biennial Work Plan

July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2009

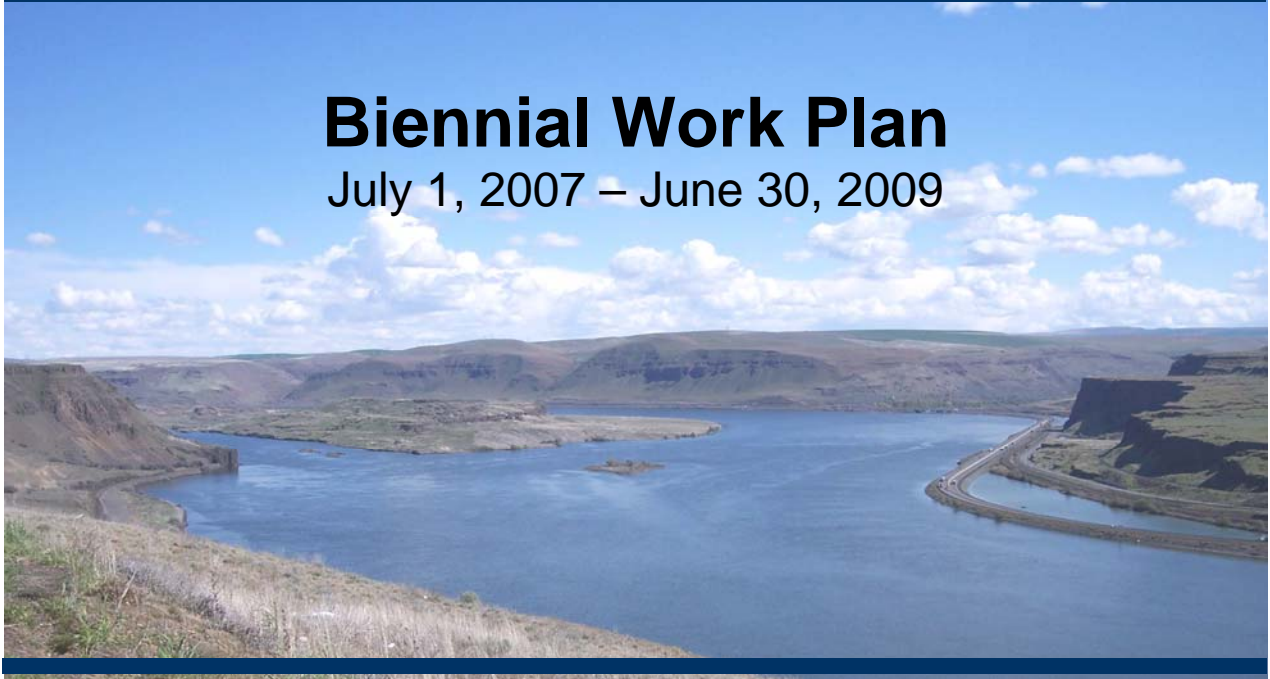


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Purpose

The Columbia River Basin Water Management Program (Columbia Water Program) Biennial Work Plan identifies near and long term tasks and objectives that move the requirements of the Columbia River legislation (RCW 90.90) forward, build agency capacity, and conduct outreach with partner programs, agencies, organizations, water users and the general public. The plan focuses on near term and on-going project implementation and program development as well as cross-agency and program partnership building. This two year plan meets the reporting requirements of the legislation and builds a strong foundation for a sustainable water management program throughout the Columbia River Basin.

Overarching Goals

The overarching strategic goals for the Columbia Water Program are to:

1. Develop water for instream and out-of-stream uses;
2. Allocate water to permits (drought, municipal, and new) and the state trust.

The Columbia Water Program seeks to preserve and enhance the standard of living for the people of Washington by strengthening the state's economy and restoring and protecting the Columbia Basin's unique natural environment. To meet this, *the Columbia Water program will aggressively pursue development of water supplies to benefit both in-stream and out-of-stream water uses.*

Objectives

The objectives of the Columbia Water Program are to:

- Develop timely and cost effective water supplies to benefit both instream and out-of-stream water uses.
- Develop creative and innovative tools to allocate water to meet both instream and out-of-stream needs.
- Manage the Columbia River Water Resources Account responsibly, and make best and balanced use of these scarce public resources.
- Implement a drought insurance program for existing interruptible water uses on the Columbia River.
- Publish comprehensive water supply and demand data to inform decision making.
- Provide easy public access to information about Columbia River water use.
- Work closely with county governments and watershed planning units to ensure the Program is responsive to local priorities.
- Establish and maintain communication avenues that encourage dialogue between the program and the public; within the Policy Advisory Group: and with other states, Canada and tribal governments.

Background

Competition for water continues to escalate. There are hundreds of pending applications for new water rights from the Columbia, and there is little agreement on the stream flows needed to support salmon. Historically water policy on the Columbia River has been driven by litigation, only to result in additional gridlock. The Columbia River Basin Water Management Program was designed by the Washington State Legislature in 2006 as a compromise that allows reasonable access to the River's water resources for out-of-stream uses and provides a guaranteed investment in improving stream flows in tributaries and in the mainstem Columbia to benefit endangered salmon and other species.

House Bill 2860 (RCW 90.90) directs Ecology to aggressively pursue development of water supplies to benefit both in-stream and out-of-stream uses through storage, conservation and voluntary regional water management agreements. The bill also creates the Columbia River Basin development account, a dedicated source of funding for water supply development.

During the first year of the Program, July 2006-June 2007, Ecology implemented several of its key goals and objectives, including:

- Entering into several cooperative agreements with Tribal, Federal, Local and other partners to obtain water for in- and out-of-stream uses and to build and foster on-going partnerships across the Columbia River basin;
- Creating dedicated Columbia River program staff and management structure;
- Completing mapping of 8000 water rights on the Columbia and Snake Rivers;
- Completing the programmatic EIS, including 8 public workshops to develop the scope of the program and educate the public on program policy choices;
- Completing the first legislative report developing an initial water supply inventory of storage and conservation projects for potential funding;
- Completing the first legislative report on water supply and demand forecasting to begin determining the need for water from the Columbia River;
- Creating a standing Policy Advisory Group (PAG) and Columbia River County Commissioners Forum to provide on-going stakeholder inputs for the program;
- Developing a Vision and Mission statement for the Program with clear goals and objectives
- Developing a formal funding application process and scoring criteria for access to Program grant funding;

- Creating a standing Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to assist Ecology in screening and ranking conservation and small storage projects;
- Completing the first formal consultation with federal and state agencies, tribal and local governments on a voluntary regional agreement with the Columbia Snake River Irrigators Association.
- Implementing the first phase of the Columbia River metering program whose goal is to measure 90% of the water use on the Columbia and Snake rivers by 2009; and
- Launching the first phase of a web-based Columbia River Water Information System to begin complying with the 2009 requirement of a fully developed system by 2009.

This plan builds on the accomplishments of the 2005-2007 biennium and focuses on efforts to put water in the Columbia River in this biennium.

Introduction

This 2007 – 2009 biennial work plan is organized around the key work areas of the Columbia Water Program. A general description is included under work area and more specific staffing and milestones are included in the subtasks.

1.0 Program Management

The Columbia River Basin Water Management Program is staffed by 15 FTEs in Ecology's Water Resources Program. The program management oversees the program staff as well as contracted management. Program management coordinates program activities to ensure that they are aligned with the goals of the Program and legislature's requirements (see Figure 1: Organizational management structure of program). The program has a biannual budget of approximately \$60 million dollars that includes both the operating and capital budget costs of the program. This funding supports the program staff, on-going studies and projects, and the contracts that support the program's activities. In addition, the program leverages other agency resources in the Water Resources Program, the Director's Office, and other Ecology water programs (e.g. Water Quality, Shorelands and Environmental Assistance, etc.).

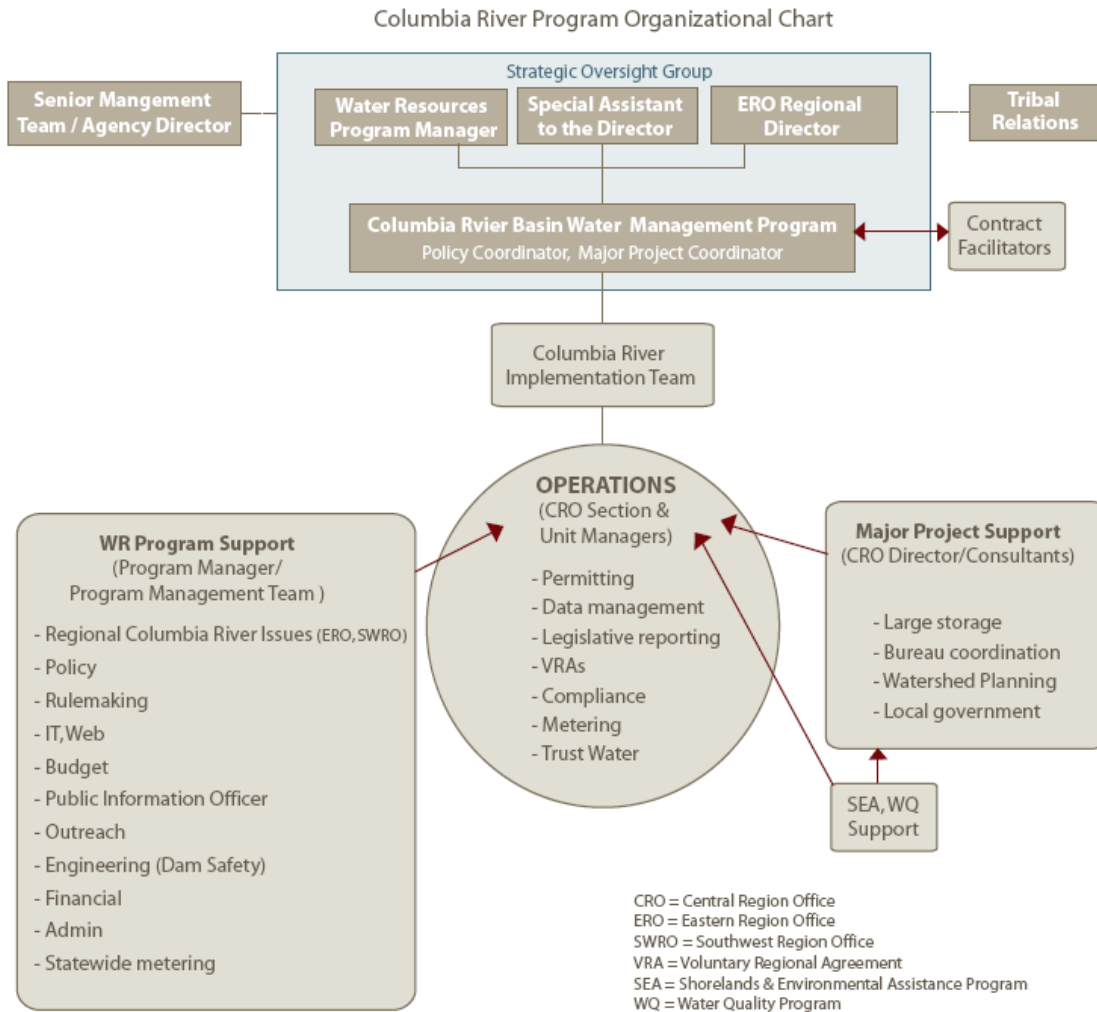


Figure 1: Organizational Structure of Program

1.1 Columbia River Implementation Team

Description of Activity: The Columbia River Implementation Team (CRIT) meets weekly to coordinate on-going program activities. The membership includes core Ecology program staff, representatives from key agency partners such as the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the Washington State Conservation Commission, and the Washington State Office of the Attorney General.

Task Lead(s): Gerry O’Keefe

Task Milestones and Timing: (Ongoing) weekly 1.5 hour calls, monthly in-person meetings to support program implementation.

1.2 Budget and Funding

Description of Activity: Budget staff meets monthly to coordinate expenditures for the operating and capital budgets. Activities include staffing review, contract management updates, and capital expenditures.

Task Lead(s): Tom Tebb, Ann-Marie Sweeten, Dave Burdick, Al Josephy

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Prepare and approve 07-09 Operating and Capital Budgets, July 1, 2007
- (Ongoing) monthly budget meetings to review staff and contract expenditures
- Prepare and approve 2009-2011 Operating and Capital Budgets, July 1, 2009

1.3 Rulemaking

Description of Activity: A State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was finalized in February 2007 to assist Ecology, other participating agencies and entities, and the public in evaluating alternatives to implementing the Columbia River Program and several Early Action Items¹. The Programmatic EIS indicates Ecology's preferred alternative for 13 policy choices under the program. Actual implementation of these preferred alternatives will be accomplished through rulemaking and adoption of written policy. Ecology has preliminarily identified two of the 13 preferred alternatives for potential rulemaking: 1) Calculating Net Water Savings from Conservation and 2) Coordinating VRA Mitigation and Processing New Water Rights (see EIS, Page 6-21). Because of broad stakeholder interest in these potential rulemaking topics², Ecology will likely proceed with negotiated rulemaking on one or both of these topics. Additionally, Ecology is directed in RCW 90.90 to develop supplies for interruptible water users on the Columbia River and is building a Columbia River Drought Insurance Program to meet this objective (See Section 5.3). Allocating limited drought supplies to meet this objective and achieve the maximum net benefits for the use of public waters (RCW 90.03.005) is another potential area of rulemaking.

Task Lead(s): Dan Haller, Gerry O'Keefe, Contractor Support, PAG & External Stakeholder Groups

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Identify scope of potential rulemaking, August 1, 2007
- Identify scope of contractor support, September 1, 2007

¹ The 3 Early Action Items were the Proposed Lake Roosevelt Drawdown, Supplemental Feed Route to Potholes Reservoir, and Columbia Snake River Irrigators Voluntary Regional Agreement.

² Although the Columbia River EIS sets the stage for rulemaking on these topics, the rules would apply to processing of water rights for the entire Water Resources Program and have statewide implications. For example, Calculating Net Water Savings from Conservation may cover several existing policies used by Ecology, Water Conservancy Boards and Cost Reimbursement Contractors for conducting tentative determinations (POL 1120), and evaluating consumptive use (POL, PRO & GUID-1210), impairment and enlargement.

- Identify stakeholders and develop schedule for negotiated rulemaking, October 1, 2007
- Negotiated rulemaking, November 2007 to April 2008
- Prepare draft rule, May 2008
- PAG review, June 2008
- Public comment completed on draft rule, July 2008
- Finalize rule, September 2008

1.4 Policy Development

Description of Activity: Ecology will actively pursue policy development to implement the preferred alternatives in the Programmatic Issues to be addressed by policy likely include: (1) selecting water supply projects, (2) funding criteria for conservation projects, (3) defining acquisition and transfer, (4) conditioning water rights in in-stream flows, (5) initiating VRAs, (6) processing VRAs, (7) defining “no negative impact” to in-stream flows of the Columbia and Snake Rivers, (8) defining the main channel and one-mile zone, (9) coordinating VRA and non-VRA processing, (10) funding projects associated with a VRA, and (11) inclusion of exempt wells in water use inventory.

Task Lead(s): LeAnn Schuster

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Draft policies, December 2007
- Water Resources Advisory Committee review, January 2008
- PAG review, January 2008
- Public comment, January 2008
- Final policies March 2008.

2.0 Outreach and Stakeholder Involvement

The Columbia River Program has committed to ensuring broad stakeholder involvement in the program through the following projects.

2.1 Policy Advisory Group

Description of Activity: In August 2006, Ecology formed the multi-stakeholder Columbia River Policy Advisory Group (PAG) to help Ecology identify policy issues associated with implementing the new water resource management program for the Columbia River. The role of the PAG is to provide Ecology with a range of perspectives on policy choices and priorities and assist Ecology in setting criteria for the funding of storage and conservation projects. PAG members were selected by Ecology to reflect the stakeholder interests in the Columbia River basin.

Task Lead(s): Gerry O’Keefe

Task Milestones and Timing: (Ongoing) Monthly in-person meetings

2.2 Technical Advisory Group

Description of Activity: Late in 2007, Ecology will convene a multi-stakeholder Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to aid in the funding of sound conservation and small storage projects that will advance the goals of the program. The role of the TAG will be to review and evaluate project applications using criteria set by Ecology with input from the PAG, and provide Ecology with funding recommendations. TAG members are selected by Ecology to reflect technical expertise needed to evaluate projects. The TAG will be chaired by a representative of the Washington State Conservation Commission.

Task Lead(s): Jon Culp, Dan Haller

Task Milestones and Timing: Preliminary meetings will begin fall 2007. Regular meetings will begin in April 2008.

2.3 Outreach to County Commissioners

Description of Activity: In an effort to build partnerships with stakeholders across the Columbia River Basin, program staff meet bimonthly with the Columbia Basin county commissioners. The meetings focus on coordinating and mutually supporting the goals and objectives of the Columbia River Program and those of the County Commissioners.

Task Lead(s): Gerry O'Keefe and Derek Sandison

Task Milestones and Timing: Bimonthly meetings

2.4 Coordination with Watershed Planning Units

Description of Activity: In 2006, Ecology began to integrate the Columbia River Program with watershed planning objectives, including using adopted watershed plans as the foundation of the first inventory of conservation projects and formal consultation under the first Voluntary Regional Agreement. In the 2007-2009 biennium, Ecology looks to better integrate the goals of the multi-WRIA Columbia River Program with the goals of local plans. Specific issues to be addressed is 1) coordination of funding for in-WRIA projects so Columbia River funding augments watershed funding, 2) development of policy clarification on permitting in the Columbia River and permitting in its tributaries and 3) broader stakeholder involvement.

Task Lead(s): Derek Sandison, Gerry O'Keefe, Keith Stoffel

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Schedule individual meetings with watershed planning units to discuss integration of local priorities with Columbia Water Program goals, summer 2007.
- Request conservation and storage project inventories from watershed planning units for inclusion in 2007 Legislative Report, summer 2007.

- Implement first round of competitive funding for the Columbia River Program including consultation with watershed planning units, winter 2007.

2.5 First Columbia River Summit

Description of Activity: In October 2007 the Columbia River Program will host the first day-long Columbia River Summit, at a central location in the Basin (likely Tri-Cities). The summit will give stakeholders a chance to discuss program progress to date and talk about future program activities. The event will be timed to coordinate with several key Columbia River events, including the start of Supplemental EIS work on Lake Roosevelt, moving into design/construction phase for the Potholes Supplemental Feed Route, launching the Columbia River Drought Insurance Program, presentation of the 2007 Draft Legislative Report and introduction of the first competitive funding cycle for Columbia River grants.

Task Lead(s): Tim Hill, Wendy Valdez

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Finalize agenda, speakers and venue, July 2007
- Develop presentation materials, August 2007
- Post invitations and develop press materials, September 2007
- Columbia River Summit, October 2007

2.6 Website Upgrades

Description of Activity: Redesign the Columbia River Program web page to better reflect the programs structure and increase its navigability. Include additional educational aids for greater transparency, including informational streaming video, flash media tutorials and graphics. Include performance standards around key program elements.

Task Lead(s): Tim Hill, Wendy Valdez

Task Milestones and Timing: Begin monthly staff meetings in Summer 2007 with water resources program web and plain talk staff to implement website upgrades.

2.7 Project Related Communication and Outreach

Description of Activity: Prepare outreach/communication plans; create advertising, notices, informational publications, and press releases. Conduct comment periods, meetings, and workshops in support of specific projects. Prepare and update the program's informational publications.

Task Lead(s): Tim Hill

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Prepare annual communication strategy for internal review, spring 2007. Update quarterly.

3.0 Inter and Intra Government Coordination

One of the main features of the Columbia River Program is the ongoing commitment to collaborate with Tribal, Federal, and local governments to develop water supplies for in-stream and out-of-stream uses. The program also invests in coordination within State government. The following projects highlight the commitment to collaboration with sister governments.

3.1 Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)

WDFW and Ecology have developed a work plan focused on coordinating joint interests in the Columbia River basin including assessments of Lake Roosevelt drawdown and the Potholes alternative feed routes, participation in the Technical Advisory Group, and inventory and assessment of impacts of large storage alternatives. WDFW staff also has an on-going communication opportunity as regular participants on the Columbia River Implementation Team and the PAG.

3.1.1 WDFW Policy and Operational Support

Description of Activity: Pursuant to 90.90 RCW, DFW will participate with Ecology in, and provide review and comment on operational aspects of implementation of the Columbia River Program. Activities include:

- Policy development, PAG participation, interagency coordination, product review, and contract administration
- Technical assistance on revision of supply and demand forecast
- Participation in decision making on instream water releases for instream flow enhancements

Task Lead(s): Teresa Scott

Task Milestones & Timing:

- Quarterly reports to the CRIT on progress of contract tasks;
- Provide and coordinate presentations to the CRIT and/or Ecology Director regarding progress on contract tasks;
- Coordinate GMAP products and reports between Ecology and DFW as appropriate;
- Annual Reports to Ecology conveying progress on contract activities, due by July 1, 2008 and July 1, 2009.

3.1.2 WDFW Technical Support for Project Funding, Water Acquisitions and Water Right Applications Review

Description of Activity: Provide technical expertise to Ecology in review and scoring of projects proposed for funding under the Columbia River Program. Continue to support Ecology by participation

in review of projects under the Columbia River Program to enhance stream flows for salmonids.

Task Lead(s): Teresa Scott

Task Milestones & Timing:

- Regular participation and engagement on TAG; Provide WDFW technical review for each project.
- Activities to be summarized in Annual Reports.

3.1.3 WDFW Support Regarding Large Storage and Lake Roosevelt Drawdown

Description of Activity: Coordinate agency activities and response to large storage, coordinate agency activities and response to Lake Roosevelt drawdown (e.g. impacts on Kokanee immigration), and study white sturgeon productivity.

Task Lead(s): Teresa Scott

Task Milestones & Timing:

- Quarterly reports of progress and activities.
- Written materials as requested by Ecology/BoR on aspects of large storage study and mitigation, as needed.
- WDFW will provide materials on impacts to fish and wildlife for a supplemental EIS on Lake Roosevelt Drawdown by November 15, 2007.
- Annual report to Ecology, summarizing activities and recommendations
- Preliminary recommendations to Ecology for mitigation of impacts to Kokanee from drawdown of Lake Roosevelt by September 30, 2008 and final project report to Ecology by December 31, 2008.

3.1.4 WDFW Support for Supplemental Potholes Feed Route and Source Substitution for Odessa Groundwater Irrigators

Description of Activity: continue support for analysis and shaping of feed route alternatives, provide support for analysis of alternatives for providing surface water supply to existing groundwater irrigators in the Odessa Subarea, study effects of feed route implementation on productivity within Moses Lake, and inventory fish species in Lower Crab Creek.

Task Lead(s): Teresa Scott

Task Milestones & Timing:

- Quarterly reports of progress and activities.
- Materials provided to Ecology for supplemental EIS on impacts of supplemental feed route on fish and wildlife by November 15, 2007 and Final project report to Ecology summarizing activities and recommendations by July 1, 2009.

- Interim project report on Moses Lake to Ecology, summarizing activities, mitigation recommendations, and potential future monitoring and evaluation by July 1, 2009.
- Provide to Ecology a scoping for full aquatic assessment for Lower Crab Creek by July 1, 2008, and interim project report to Ecology summarizing activities and findings by July 1, 2009. [Note that final report on phase 1 – salmonid inventory – is anticipated to be completed in 2010 and depends upon future funding.]

3.2 Bureau of Reclamation and the Columbia Basin Irrigation Districts

Description of Activity: Ecology entered into an Agreement in Principle with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Columbia Basin Irrigation Districts to provide a framework for the State of Washington, Reclamation, and the Irrigation Districts to work together to support projects designed to optimize existing management and exploration of new storage to provide additional water for priority uses at key times. Work under the AIP will continue, with the ultimate goal being completion of an agreement for Lake Roosevelt draw down.

Task Lead(s): Gerry O’Keefe, Derek Sandison

Task Milestones and Timing:

- See milestones for Feed Route 5.2.4, Lake Roosevelt Drawdown 5.2.5, Large storage feasibility 5.1.3, Yakima Storage Study 5.1.1.

3.3 Conservation Commission

Description of Activity: Ecology has committed to working with the Washington State Conservation Commission to help ensure the success of the water conservation portions of the program. Ecology understands the Commission’s experience in program development and management to fund conservation, through conservation districts, on private lands across the state. The Conservation Commission is fully invested in the program through participation in the Implementation Team, the Policy Advisory Group, the Grant Application Group, and facilitation of the Technical Advisory Group.

Task Lead(s): Jon Culp

Task Milestones and Timing: Ongoing

3.4 Colville Confederated Tribes

Description of Activity: The Colville Confederated Tribes are a key partner in management of Lake Roosevelt. Ecology’s Agreement in Principle (AIP) with the Tribes provides that Ecology will pursue replacement water for the Lake Roosevelt drawdown and will not seek additional draw downs under the Columbia Water Partnership. It also provides for other joint work, including, (1) providing for investigation of potential impacts of the Lake Roosevelt drawdown and compensation of the Colville Confederate Tribes for impacts; (2) creating an economic development capital fund for the Tribe; (3) creating a fisheries enhancement capital fund and provides for joint work on fisheries

management; and (4) providing for Tribal participation in investigation of the potential for new off-channel storage in the Columbia River system. Work under this agreement will continue.

Task Lead(s): Gerry O'Keefe

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Ongoing; see item 5.2.5; Assessment Report of Impacts from Lake Roosevelt Drawdown due October 2007.

3.5 Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation

Description of Activity: Ecology agreed to provide funding from the Account to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation to support a Feasibility Study of a Walla Walla pump exchange project. Refer to item 5.2.6

Task Lead(s): Gerry O'Keefe

Task Milestones and Timing: see item 5.2.6

3.6 Yakama Nation

Description of Activity: Ecology is providing support to the Yakama Nation for participation by tribal technical experts to review conservation projects as part of the Technical Advisory Group.

Task Lead(s): Gerry O'Keefe

Task Milestones & Timing: See item 2.2

3.7 Spokane, Warm Springs Tribes

Description of Activity: These tribes are also key partners in development and success of the Columbia Water program. Ecology will enhance communications and partnerships that assist tribes to participate and develop understanding and ownership of the Program.

Task Lead(s): Gerry O'Keefe

Task Milestones & Timing: Ongoing

4.0 Supply and Demand Forecasts

RCW 90.90 requires Ecology to complete an inventory of the Columbia River's water supply and to forecast future water supply and demand requirements. A number of efforts are underway or will begin in this biennium to improve Ecology's supply and demand forecasts.

4.1 Legislative Reports

Description of Activity: Ecology is required to report to the Legislature on Columbia River water supplies and likely demands. The report consists of two parts. The first, the Columbia River Water Supply Inventory, lists the conservation and storage projects available for acquiring water for in-stream

uses like ensuring adequate stream flows for fish and out-of-stream uses such as for farming and drinking water. The Supply Inventory Report will be updated annually. The second portion, the Long-Term Water Supply and Demand Forecast, looks at increased water demands due to population growth and the effect crop changes and global warming may have on water supply and demand.

Task Lead(s): Dan Haller, LeAnn Schuster

Task Milestones and Timing: (Updated reports due) November 15, 2007 and 2008

4.2 Agricultural Demand and Economic Forecast Study

Description of Activity: Demand by agriculture in the Columbia River Basin has the greatest potential to shape the need for future water supplies from the Columbia River. Ecology contracted with Washington State University in 2006 to begin looking at this issue. The results of this study were presented in Ecology's 2006 Legislative Report. A number of additional areas of investigation remain, including the following:

- How will global agricultural economics shape demand in Washington?
- What effect will climate change have on existing crop demands?
- What effect will emerging crops like wine grapes and biofuels have on existing crop demographics?
- How will population growth affect future demands for agriculture?

Task Lead(s): Dan Haller, Contractor Support

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Ecology sponsor feasibility work in September 2007 Funding Program
- Anticipated Funding Recommendation in September 2008
- Initiate Study, Spring 2009

4.3 Columbia River Basin Global Warming Study

Description of Activity: Ecology and other Columbia River Basin stakeholders are contracting with the Climate Impacts Group (CIG) to better understand the likely effects climate change will have on the water resources of the Columbia River basin. Concurrently, Ecology is contracting with Gary Flightner and Art Evans to naturalize flow records of approximately 70 gages in the basin. This concurrent study will enable the CIG to 1) better calibrate its models and 2) produce deliverables that comment on regulated flow. This information will be used to improve the next water supply and demand forecast legislative report for the Columbia River, which is due to the legislature by 2011.

Task Lead(s): Kurt Unger

Task Milestones and Timing:

- CIG Study initiated June 2007
- CIG Study completed June 2009
- Naturalized Flow Study initiated June 2007
- Naturalized Flow Study completed April 2008

4.4 Data & Information Technology

Using accurate up-to-date information to support good decision making is critical to the success of the Columbia River Program. Ecology will continue to develop and expand its data management capacity through the following projects.

4.4.1 Aerial Mapping

Description of Activity: Delineating irrigated land for water rights diverting from the Columbia and Snake River will help many of the program goals. It will help Ecology to better understand the gap between “paper” and “wet” water reported in the 2006 legislative report, it will aid in forecasting demand for water in the Columbia, and it will identify areas where change or new water right application need to be filed or compliance work performed. From 2006-2007, Ecology delineated 20% of lands diverting water from the Columbia River for 2003 and 2004 aerial photos, and 60% for the 2005 aerial photo. Ecology plans to continue this work in the 2007-2009 biennium.

Task Lead(s): Ron Dixon

Task Milestones and Timing: Complete 2005 aerial photo delineation by July 2008 and move towards finalizing the 2003-2004 aerial delineations for the next biennium.

4.4.2 Compliance and Technical Assistance

Description of Activity: The Columbia River Program fiscal note identified a need for three water masters to implement key elements of the Program. Ecology has prioritized its initial compliance work around its metering program to meet the legislative objective of publishing aggregate metering data on the web by 2009. Additional work in this in this biennium will include development of a water master in Wenatchee to provide local technical assistance on water right issues and enforcement activities related to Ecology’s trust water acquisitions. Ecology will also hire another staff in Wenatchee to assist in the Phase 2--Phase 3 metering roll-out and permit writing.

4.4.2.1 Metering & Monitoring

Description of Activity: Ecology will continue its new project to encourage voluntary participation in a metering program that will achieve measurement of 90 percent of surface and ground water diversions by June 2009. The program includes

support for the cost of installing metering devices; Ecology has allocated \$1 million to assist water users with the cost of purchasing and installing metering systems. After assessing the effect of its voluntary participation program, Ecology may issue administrative orders to meet compliance targets.

Task Lead(s): James Tennyson

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Phase I Bureau of Reclamation and 109 water rights from Priest Rapids dam to McNary Dam and on the Snake River to Lower Monumental Dam 2007 (76% of total water use). Assess voluntary compliance levels in July 2007 and issue administrative orders as necessary. Begin data collection for Phase 1 for the 2008 irrigation season (publish to web in 2009).
- Phase II 66 rights Wells Dam to Priest Rapids Dam (2% of total water use). Begin voluntary compliance program in 2008 for 2009 data collection, post to web 2010.
- Phase III 65 rights Canadian border to Wells Dam and McNary dam to Bonneville Dam (2% of total water use). Begin voluntary compliance program in 2009 for 2010 data collection, post to web 2011.

4.4.2.2 Technical Assistance and Compliance

Description of Activity: Ecology will hire a water master in the summer of 2007 to support technical assistance and compliance related activities for the Program. This position will help educate area water right holders on Program requirements and be a resource for technical assistance on water right issues. This position will also verify that Ecology's trust water acquisitions are protected. Finally, this position will work with water right holders that are not in compliance with State law (e.g. unauthorized use, uses outside of authorized areas, etc.). Consistent with RCW 90.03.605, Ecology will use technical assistance before issuing orders to achieve compliance.

Task Lead(s): Wenatchee Water Master

Task Milestones and Timing:

- 2007 and ongoing. Work with land-owners who may be using water without a water right or outside the parameters of an existing water right to achieve compliance with State law.
- Assist in Phase 2, 2008 voluntary metering compliance program.
- Assist in Phase 3, 2009 voluntary metering compliance program.

4.4.3 Development of the Columbia River Program Data System

Description of Activity: The Columbia River Program requires that Ecology develop a database of water resource information for parts of the Columbia and Snake Rivers by June 30, 2009. This project will be done in phases and will include water right mapping, water right info, trust water data, metering info, aerial photo delineations, stream gage links and many other data sources. This Phase 1 project will create the first part of that system by June 30, 2007; an interactive internet-based map for accessing mapped water right and claim data.

Task Lead(s):

- Project Co-Sponsors: Tom Tebb, Ann-Marie Sweeten, Tom Loranger
- Business Co-Leads: Dan Haller and Ron Dixon

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Phase 1 Interactive Web Map published June 2007
- Phase 2 Trust water data and images added to web map June 2008
- Phase 3 Metering data, aerial photo delineations, and water bank data added June 2009

5.0 Developing Water Supplies

Description of Activity: The Columbia River Program is pursuing multiple opportunities of developing new water supplies for instream and out-of-stream uses, including assessment of potential for new large off-channel storage on the mainstem Columbia River, surface storage in tributaries, aquifer storage (passive and recovery), conservation and acquisition.

5.1 Large Storage Studies and Assessments

5.1.1 Yakima Basin Storage Study

Description of Activity: The Bureau of Reclamation and Ecology are joint leads in preparing a Planning Report and EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act and the State Environmental Policy Act for the Yakima River Basin Water Storage Feasibility Study (Storage Study). The purpose of the Storage Study is to evaluate alternatives that would create additional water storage for the Yakima River basin and assess their potential to supply the water needed for ecosystem aquatic habitat, basin-wide agriculture, and municipal demands.

Task Lead(s): Derek Sandison

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Feasibility study/EIS initiated January 2007
- Draft EIS January 2008
- Feasibility study / final EIS January 2009

5.1.2 Odessa Sub-area

Description of Activity: Developing alternatives to groundwater for agricultural users in the Odessa Sub-area aquifer was identified as a priority under HB 2860. Ecology is working jointly with water managers in the Odessa Sub-area and the Bureau of Reclamation to explore options for delivering water through the Reclamation. The legislation provides \$16 million to continue feasibility studies related to off-stream storage development or enhancing existing storage projects and providing surface water to the Odessa sub-area, among other priorities.

Task Lead(s): Derek Sandison

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Appraisal report September 2007
- Feasibility Study / EIS initiated March 2008
- Draft EIS August 2009
- Feasibility Study / final EIS September 2010
- Design and permitting 2011

5.1.3 Mainstem Off-Channel Storage

Description of Activity: Ecology and the Bureau released an appraisal report for Columbia River off-channel storage in June 2007. This report identified three sites as having potential for further study: Crab Creek, Sand Hollow and Hawk Creek. \$600,000 is provided as a placeholder should the appraisal report recommend a project(s) for feasibility.

Task Lead(s): Derek Sandison

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Feasibility Study/EIS initiated April 2008 (provided Congressional authorization received)
- Draft EIS April 2010
- Feasibility study/ final EIS April 2011

5.1.4 Similkameen / Shanker's Bend Proposal

Description of Activity: The Okanagan Public Utility District has proposed to develop a storage facility at Shankers Bend, located a short distance upstream from the existing Enloe Dam. The site appears capable of impounding up to 1.3 million acre-feet of active storage across the Canadian border. A facility this size would inundate Canadian lands as well as lands adjacent to Palmer Lake in Washington. \$300,000 is provided for a consulting contract to conduct an appraisal level review of the site.

Task Lead(s): Dave Cummings

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Pre-Appraisal study initiated in Fall 2007
- Pre-Appraisal study submitted in 2008

5.2 Other Project Assessments

5.2.1 Kennewick Irrigation District Proposal

Description of Activity: Kennewick Irrigation District (KID) is proposing a Yakima River pump exchange project to benefit flows in the Yakima River below the Prosser Dam. KID would forego a portion of their diversion at Prosser Dam in exchange for increased diversions lower on the Yakima River and on the Columbia River. Yakima River flows would increase by approximately 400 cfs from Prosser Dam to Chandler Canal. From Chandler Canal to a new pump station at Kiona, Yakima River flows would increase by approximately 185 cfs. Additional diversions at the new Kiona pump station on the Yakima River would reduce the net water savings to approximately 138 cfs from Kiona downstream to the Columbia River. Operation of a new pump station at Edison Street on the Columbia River would create a 57 cfs deficit in Columbia River stream-flows. This deficit would be mitigated by conservation and acquisition projects funded under the proposed CSRIA Voluntary Regional Agreement.

Task Lead(s): Dan Haller, Tom Tebb

Task Milestones and Timing: Ongoing discussions to study alternatives.

5.2.2 Kennewick Aquifer Storage Proposal

Description of Activity: The City of Kennewick has proposed an ASR project that would take water from the Columbia River in the winter and reduce withdrawals in the summer. The pilot will help the state and municipalities develop a better understanding of permitting, economic, and environmental issue associated with increased use of ASR. Ecology is working with the city to develop an appropriate budget to support feasibility, design, and construction work.

Task Lead(s): Tom Tebb

Task Milestones and Timing: Ongoing discussions to study alternatives.

5.2.3 Potholes Supplemental Feed Route

Description of Activity: Ecology and the Bureau are studying a system enhancement designed to improve the reliability of water supply for the South Columbia Basin Irrigation District. In June 2007, the Bureau released a draft Environmental Assessment that identified two alternatives that could accomplish project goals: Frenchmen Hills

Wasteway conveyance and the Crab Creek feed route. Up to \$1.5 million is provided this biennium to begin implementation of alternative identified by Reclamation as well as for fish and wildlife enhancements.

Task Lead(s): Derek Sandison

Task Milestones and Timing:

- EPA application of NEPA, EA and Permitting September 2007
- Construction November 2007 – June 2008

5.2.4 Lakes Roosevelt Drawdown

Description of Activity: Ecology and the Bureau are studying a drawdown that would divert or release a total of 132,500 acre-feet from existing storage in Lake Roosevelt. During non-drought years 82,500 acre-feet of water would be used to provide the following:

- 25,000 acre-feet of municipal/industrial supply;
- 30,000 acre-feet of irrigation water for replacement of ground water supplies in the Odessa Subarea; and
- 27,500 acre-feet for streamflow enhancement downstream of Grand Coulee Dam.

During drought years an additional 50,000 acre-feet would be released:

- 33,000 acre-feet of water for Columbia River Mainstem interruptible water right holders; and
- An additional 17,000 acre feet for flow augmentation downstream of Grand Coulee Dam.

The non-drought year diversions and releases would result in approximately a 1-foot drawdown of the reservoir, and the drought year diversions and releases would draw the lake down another 0.6 foot. Prior to making decisions on water rights needed for the proposed drawdown, both Ecology and Reclamation will work with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Spokane Tribe of Indians, WDFW and the National Parks Service to address issues associated with the diversions and releases.

Task Lead(s): Derek Sandison

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Supplemental EIS initiated July 2007
- Draft SEIS December 2007
- Final SEIS March 2008
- Permitting April 2008

5.2.5 Columbia Basin Irrigation District Conservation

Description of Activity: RCW 90.90 directs Ecology to find a replacement water supply for irrigators in the Odessa. Ecology has previously partnered with the Columbia Basin Irrigation Districts to study and fund conservation projects for this purpose. In this biennium, Ecology has reserved \$30,000 for continued studies on how in-district conservation can be used to meet water supply needs in the Odessa.

Task Lead(s): Keith Stoffel

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Prepare scope of work, August 2007
- Final Study due Spring 2008

5.2.6 Walla Walla Pump Exchange EIS

Description of Activity: The Walla Walla Pump Exchange is one aspect of the Walla Walla River Basin Feasibility Study. This study, implemented by the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), in partnership with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) and Ecology, is focusing on the restoration of a viable ecosystem within the Walla Walla River Basin. The Feasibility Report and subsequent Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will evaluate and recommend alternatives that will contribute to restoration of instream resources and natural ecosystem functions and processes. Alternatives currently under evaluation include:

- Water Exchange: Piping water from the Columbia in a change of irrigation sources, reducing Walla Walla River diversions.
- Off-Channel Storage: Construction of storage reservoir to release spring runoff during low flow summer period.
- Irrigation Efficiency: Line leaky canals, replace canals with pipes.
- Water Rights: Purchase water rights from willing sellers.
- Channel Modification: Similar to the Irrigation Efficiency Option, efforts to reduce seepage in the Walla Walla River channel. Study partners (Corps, CTUIR) will evaluate EIS for compliance with NEPA; Ecology will initiate separate SEPA review of project documents.

Task Lead(s): David Cummings, Ecology SEA/SEPA staff

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Conceptual Design 2008
- Feasibility Study / EIS 2009
- SEPA Review 2009

5.3 Drought Insurance Program

Description of Activity: The Columbia River Water Management Act requires Ecology to develop water supplies for the Columbia River Basin that would provide a new uninterrupted supply of water for interruptible water right holders. Ecology is developing a Drought Insurance Program to meet this goal, which will include drought solutions such as storage (e.g. Lake Roosevelt Drawdown), options for dry-year leases to support water marketing during droughts, coordination with federal partners on drought strategies (e.g. BoR, BPA) and others. In 2007, Ecology has committed \$1 million dollars to run a dry-year lease auction to provide water to interruptible water users. Ecology will evaluate partnership opportunities with other groups, like Washington Rivers Conservancy and the Washington Water Trust and work to implement such a program with local objectives from watershed planning and counties.

During this biennium Ecology plans to start drought permit processing. It is Ecology's intent to secure agreements in advance of issuing drought permits in order to ensure the availability of water. Ecology will process drought permits in advance of a declared drought if the applications can be priority processed under WAC 173-152 (Hillis Rule), cost-reimbursement, or other means; or in a declared drought year, subject to a declaration by the governor

Task Lead(s): LeAnn Schuster

Task Milestones and Timing:

- August 2007: Develop Auction Timeline, Identify Partners and Complete Design
- September 2007: PAG Review
- Auction Announcement—October 2007, Columbia River Summit

5.4 Funding of Conservation and Small Storage Projects

Description of Activity: Ecology will work with watershed planning units, conservation districts and others to identify potential conservation and small storage projects to fund. An initial inventory of such projects was identified in the November 2006 Legislative Report and a revised draft inventory is due in September 2007. September 2007 will also start the first competitive Columbia River grant program where these projects will be able to apply for funding. The process will consist of a pre-application, an application, watershed planning unit consultation, technical review by the TAG, a recommended project list by Ecology for PAG input, and budgeting for legislative approval.

Task Lead(s): Al Josephy, Dan Haller

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Begin 2008 funding cycle September 2007 (pre-application)
- TAG review of projects April to June 2008
- PAG review of projects July 2008

- 2008/09 project list to the Legislature November 2008
- Begin 2009 funding cycle September 2008 (pre-application)
- TAG review of projects April to June 2009

6.0 Delivering Water to Out-of-Stream Users

6.1 Processing Permits in the Columbia River Basin

Description of Activity: The purpose of developing water supplies is to support instream and out-of-stream benefits. As soon as adequate supplies are developed (e.g. Lake Roosevelt Drawdown, conservation and storage through 2007 Grant Funding Program), Ecology will begin processing permits for new water rights. Until new supplies are developed and either in storage or in Ecology trust water program, Columbia River permit writers will focus on other elements of the program, which may include permit maintenance (e.g. moving existing permits to certificate phase) and change applications as necessary to support specific Columbia River Projects.

Stakeholders have questioned where the Columbia River Program “ends” and where permitting in the tributaries “starts”. Ecology plans to develop an integrated workplan with internal staff in this biennium and consult with stakeholder groups like watershed planning units, county commissioners and the PAG to clarify its permitting priorities. For this biennium, the Columbia River Program will generally focus new permits on the one-mile corridor from Bonneville to Canada (and Snake to Ice Harbor) because:

- The best source of water right information available to permitting staff coincide with this area due to Ecology’s mandate to publish an informational system by 2009 (e.g. mapping, metering, aerial delineations, etc.).
- The hydrogeology of the Columbia River Basin becomes significantly more complex and more focused on specific tributary issues outside the one-mile corridor.
- The Program has other dedicated staff for permitting in specific WRIA’s.

Ecology has adopted a rule (WAC 173-152) that describes its permitting priorities. Ecology’s choice to use the one-mile corridor is consistent with its rule to prioritize permitting around a single source. By the end of this biennium, Ecology will evaluate the potential to expand its permitting focus beyond the one-mile corridor and below Bonneville Dam with an aim towards finalizing internal staffing priorities by July 2009.

Task Lead(s): Dan Haller, Columbia River Permit Writers

Task Milestones and Timing: Develop new water supplies in 2007-2008. Begin new permitting in 2008. Finalize staff permitting responsibilities by 2009.

6.2 CSRIA Voluntary Regional Agreements (VRAs)

Description of Activity: In November 2006, Ecology initiated consultation with state and federal agencies, tribes and local government on a draft VRA. Ecology received significant comments through this consultation and is working with CSRIA to modify the VRA for public comment.

Task Lead(s): Gerry O'Keefe

Task Milestones and Timing: On-going negotiations with CSRIA followed by public comment (30 days).

6.3 Permitting Bureau Withdrawal

Description of Activity: In the fall of 2007, the Bureau plans to submit to new water right applications. These applications will request to take water from their 1938 'withdrawal', for the proposed Lake Roosevelt Drawdown. When the applications are received, they will be processed and the legal notice will be prepared. Reports of Examination (ROE) for these applications will be prepared following research and investigation by Ecology of existing Bureau water rights.

Task Lead: Lynn Maser

Task Milestones and Timing:

- Legal notice November 2007
- Draft ROE's, May 2008

6.4 Research Odessa Water Rights

Description of Activity: Distribution of new water from Bureau withdrawals will be made to those users who hold existing irrigation rights. In order to expedite delivery as water is made available, tentative determinations of extent and validity of existing rights need be made as soon as possible to minimize disruptions to processes. Existing mapping will be supplemented by water rights research and field visits, prioritized by proximity to the East Low Canal, to enable quick turnaround of irrigation district contracts once water is available.

Task Lead: Keith Stoffel, Odessa Permitting Specialist

Task Milestones and Timing: Hiring of ES2 Odessa Specialist 3rd Quarter 2007; Interim reports quarterly; List of tentatively confirmed water rights 2nd quarter 2009.

7.0 Managing Water for In-Stream Benefits

Description of Activity: HB 2860 requires Ecology to manage water in the Columbia River basin for in-stream benefits. To ensure this, Ecology has entered into a partnership with WDFW. Specific Columbia River Project activities with WDFW can be found in Section 3.1 of this plan. However, at a higher programmatic level WDFW is party to several important fishery co-management

agreements and habitat conservation plans that have developed specific goals and objectives for improving and enhancing ecological conditions for all Columbia River fish species

7.1 Hanford Reach Study

Description of Activity: Pursuant to E2SSB 6581, Ecology has contracted with WDFW, and other interested parties to study instream flows in the Hanford Reach of the Columbia River and their impact on the ecological condition of the Hanford Reach especially as it relates to the needs of Salmon and steelhead in that stretch of the Columbia River. Ecology is to submit a report to the Legislature with results from the Hanford Reach Fall Chinook Emergence and Rearing Study.

Task Lead(s): WDFW: Teresa Scott and Paul Hoffarth. Ecology: Tom Tebb

Task Milestones and Timing:

- July 1, 2007: End-of-project WDFW field report
- October 2007: USFWS Analysis Report (per subcontract through WDFW)

7.2 Hanford Reach Fall Chinook Protection Program

Description of Activity: Long term relationships have been established with WDFW, Tribal governments, USFWS, NOAA, BPA, interested stakeholder organizations, and the Mid-Columbia hydropower utilities to better manage flow fluctuations associated with hydropower production and its effects on the Hanford Reach. This 2004 Agreement between and among the mid-Columbia River Public Utility Districts, BOA, NOAA Fisheries, WDFW and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Indian Reservation was developed in conjunction with the May 2004 National Marine Fisheries' Priest Rapids Project Biological Opinion. The Agreement establishes the obligations of the Parties with respect to the protection of fall Chinook in the Hanford Reach of the Columbia River. The Parties agree that, during the term of the Agreement, flow regimes address all issues in the Hanford Reach with respect to fall Chinook protection and the impact of operation of the seven dams operating under Mid-Columbia Hourly Coordination, including the obligations of Grant, Chelan, and Douglas under any new licenses issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). This 2004 Agreement replaces and supersedes the original June 16, 1988 Vernita Bar Agreement.

Task Lead(s): Bill Tweit

Task Milestones and Timing: Ongoing regional coordination updates and activity meetings.

7.3 Technical Support for Water Acquisitions and Reviewing Water Rights

Description of Activity: As Ecology acquires for its Columbia River trust water program through funding of conservation and storage projects and through auctions (e.g. Columbia River Drought Insurance Program), WDFW

will provide technical support to Ecology at the watershed and stream-reach level to:

- Identify where and when flow enhancements can best benefit fish production;
- Assist with identifying and recommending potential water right acquisitions, conservation and small storage projects;
- Recommend modifications to water acquisition, conservation and small storage proposals to ensure best benefits for fish;
- Provide monitoring, tracking and reporting on the effectiveness of new instream water for fish
- Provide technical coordination within WDFW and between Ecology and WDFW and with others.
- Review water right transactions.
- Provide technical recommendations on water releases for instream flow enhancements.

Task Lead(s): Teresa Scott and Paul LaRiviere

Task Milestones and Timing: Ongoing as a part of Ecology's Water Acquisition Program