

OFFICE OF COLUMBIA RIVER

MISSION

Aggressively pursue development of water supplies to benefit both instream and out-of-stream water uses.

OVERVIEW

In 2006, the Legislature tasked the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) to aggressively seek out new water supplies for both instream and out-of-stream uses. The same legislation set up the Columbia River Basin Development Account and authorized \$200 million to fund it. Ecology created the Office of Columbia River (OCR) to use these funds to develop new water supplies using storage, conservation, and voluntary regional water management agreements.

The Columbia River Policy Advisory Group assists OCR with policy development. It is composed of representatives from federal, state, local, and tribal governments, business and environmental groups, and water users.

Water made available in projects funded by OCR must be allocated so that two-thirds of stored water is made available for out-of-stream uses and one-third for instream uses. For the TLAC storage project that will return 370 acre-feet per year from storage, this means that approximately 244 acre-feet will be allocated to out-of-stream beneficiaries downstream of Winthrop. Approximately 122 acre-feet will be protected in Ecology's Trust Water Program in the Methow River and Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean. OCR's out-of-stream priorities include developing water for mitigation of pending and new water right applications, securing alternatives to groundwater for agricultural users in the Odessa subarea aquifer, and finding permanent supplies for interruptible water right holders on the Columbia River.

OCR has funded construction projects adding approximately 150,000 ac-ft of water to Eastern Washington's water supply. Another 175,000 ac-ft of water will be made available in the near term. More water is under long-term development tied to future demand projections.

Twin Lakes Aquifer Coalition

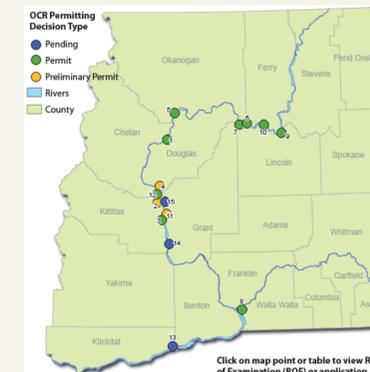
Sullivan Lake Project (Northeast Washington)



The Office of Columbia River will issue water rights from 9,400 of the 14,000 ac-ft of water supply OCR developed at Sullivan Lake. The remainder will be used to enhance instream flows to benefit fish. The 9,400 acre-feet will be split in half with 4,700 ac-ft going to new municipal/industrial and domestic water rights and 4,700 ac-feet allocated for all other types of water rights (i.e. irrigation, stockwater, etc).

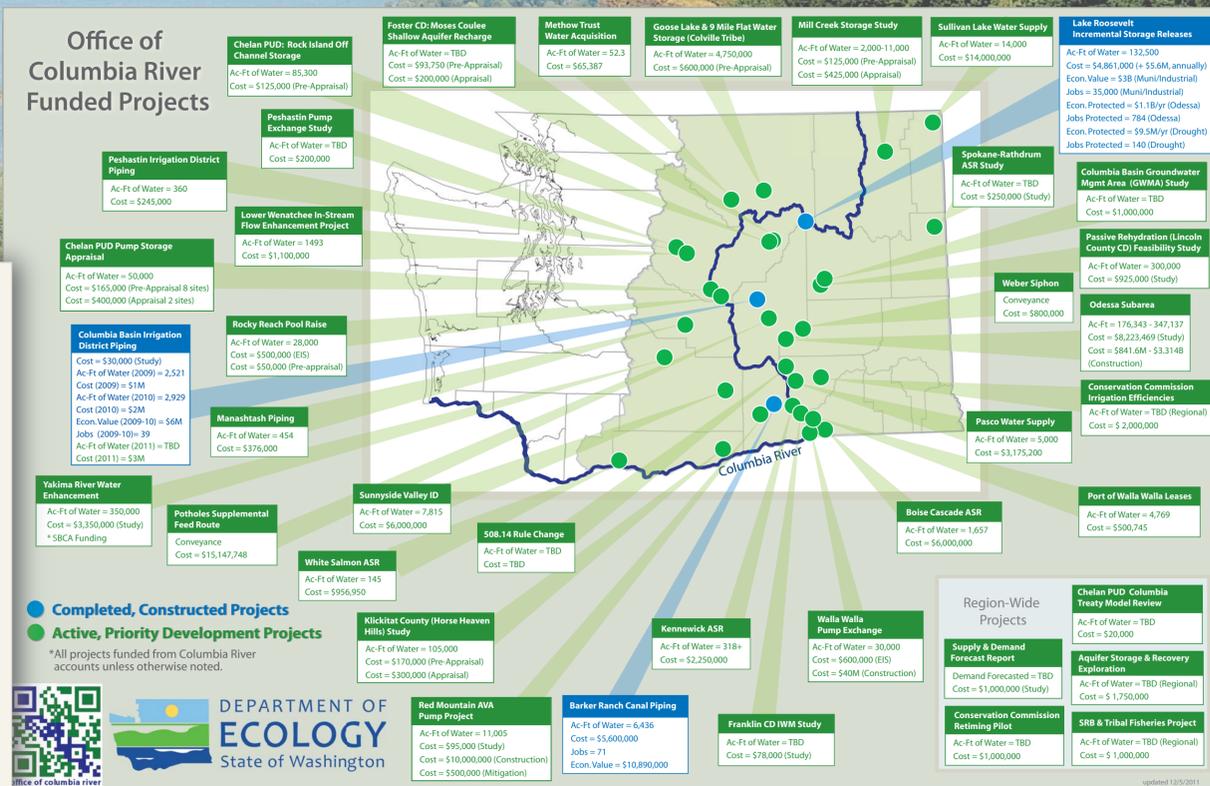
Municipal, domestic, industrial water rights issued from Lake Roosevelt

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) has approved the first water rights for municipal, domestic and industrial purposes from the Lake Roosevelt storage pool behind Grand Coulee Dam under the state's Columbia River water development program.



In total, the Lake Roosevelt Incremental Storage Release Program is making 25,000 acre-feet (8.1 billion gallons) of water available for new municipal and industrial (M&I) uses. Communities benefitting from this program include Cities of:

- Pateros
- Bridgeport
- Pasco
- Kennewick
- West Richland
- Housing developments in Lincoln County
- A recreational park near the Beebe Bridge in Douglas County
- A potato washing facility in Walla Walla County.



Projects Funded

OCR has developed separate grant processes for different types of water supply projects, including:

- Modification of Existing Storage
- New Storage
- Conservation
- Acquisition

OCR considers projects that will deliver permittable water to the Columbia River or one of its tributaries. Permittable water is water that is stored, retimed, or conserved through crop change, fallowing, capturing previously unused runoff, and other methods.

