



# Frequently Asked Questions About Applying for Cost-Sharing for Columbia River Water Measuring Devices

Department of Ecology, Water Resources Program

## Background

Chapter 90.90 RCW directs the Department of Ecology (Ecology) to publish aggregate water measurement data on its web site by June 2009. Our goal is to encourage voluntary participation with Ecology's program in order to achieve measurement of 90 percent of surface and ground water diverted from the river within a one-mile corridor on each side of the Columbia River by June 2009. The data collected will be part of the development of the Columbia River Water Information System, a database designed to help the State "better understand current water use and instream flows in the Columbia River mainstem" (RCW 90.90.050).

The cost of installing meters will be shared between water right holders and the State ("cost-sharing"). Ecology has allocated \$1,000,000 to assist water users with the costs of purchasing and installing meters or metering systems.

### Q: What is eligible for cost-sharing?

**A:** Only meters installed at the point of diversion or withdrawal within one mile of the Columbia River are eligible.

### Q: What does cost-share funding cover?

**A:** Cost-share funding is **only for metering or measuring** a diversion or withdrawal. Cost-share funding is available for a meter and equipment for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition, or SCADA. SCADA consists of data-loggers, data transmission equipment (telemetry), and computer equipment for automating a system for the diversion or withdrawal. *(For more information about SCADA systems, please see [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/measuring/images/pdf/scada\\_systems.pdf](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/measuring/images/pdf/scada_systems.pdf)).*

Based on the information submitted in your application, the Conservation District will determine the amount of cost-share for a project. In some cases, Ecology may be asked by the Conservation District to assist in evaluating an application.

In complicated situations – for example, when there is more than one diversion/withdrawal associated with a water right -- you should ask the Conservation District or Ecology for guidance on completing an application.

### Q: When will cost-share funds be available?

**A:** Cost-share funds will be available after May 1, 2007.

### Q: How do I apply for funding?

**A:** The cost-share process will be handled through your local Conservation District. Ecology has, or will make, agreements with the Conservation Districts within the boundaries of the Columbia River Program to evaluate applications



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and disburse cost-share funds. The Conservation Districts will accept applications, prepare cost-share agreements, and disburse cost-share funding for the Columbia River Program.

You can get an application form from your local Conservation District. Once completed, submit it to the Conservation District for review and approval. If you are unsure about which conservation district to contact, please refer to the map at <http://www.scc.wa.gov/districts/map/>.

**Q: How will cost-share applications be prioritized?**

**A:** Cost-share applications will be prioritized according to geographical area, consistent with the three-phase approach of the Columbia River Water Metering Project. Metering/cost-share prioritizing will proceed over the next three years in specified areas, as follows:

- Phase 1 (2007): from Priest Rapids Dam down to McNary Dam, and up the Snake River to Lower Monumental Dam.
- Phase 2 (2008): from Wells Dam down to Priest Rapids Dam.
- Phase 3 (2009): from the Canadian border down to Wells Dam, and from McNary Dam down to Bonneville Dam.

See "The Columbia River Water Metering Project" focus sheet (Publication #07-11-010, <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0711010.html>) for more detail.

**Q: How is cost-share calculated?**

**A:** The cost-share percentage is based on the cost of the project. Eligible costs include design, purchase, installation, and initial calibration of measuring devices and/or SCADA. The **maximum cost share** for any project is \$45,000.

The table below outlines the cost-share range and percentage of cost-share above \$250.00:

Total Project Cost	State Cost-Share Percentage	Maximum State Share
\$0 to \$250	No Cost Share	0
\$251 to \$3,000	100% after \$250	\$2,750
\$3,001 to \$5,000	90% after \$250	\$4,500
\$5,001 to \$10,000	80% after \$250	\$8,000
\$10,001 to \$50,000	70% after \$250	\$35,000
\$50,001 to \$75,000	60% after \$250	\$45,000

**Q: What are my responsibilities for obtaining cost-share?**

**A:** You must submit an application, sign an agreement, install the equipment as stated in the signed agreement and submit a completed invoice to the Conservation District for reimbursement. You are responsible for the first \$250 of cost for a metering or measuring device.

**Q: What happens after I submit my application?**

**A:** The Conservation District or Ecology will review applications for completeness and eligibility. After reviewing an application, determining eligibility, and calculating the cost-share, the Conservation District or Ecology will:

1. Notify you by mail of the amount of cost-share you have been awarded.
2. Prepare and send a Metering Cost-Share Agreement for your signature. (Conservation District or Ecology representatives will already have signed it.)
3. Send you a billing invoice, along with the Cost-Share Agreement. This billing invoice is for your use, to bill the Conservation District/Ecology for their portion of your metering costs once the meter or measuring device is installed.

**Q: How do I get reimbursed?**

**A:** To receive reimbursement after the meter or measuring device is installed, you must submit the completed billing invoice along with copies of original invoices and receipts and the certificate of installation signed by the installer.

Note that the *latitude and longitude coordinates* of the point of diversion and location of the metering device should be included. If coordinates for latitude and longitude are not provided, you must provide access to Ecology or the Conservation District for determining latitude and longitude. Other agencies, such as the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, may be able to provide assistance in determining latitude and longitude.

Payment will be made within 30 days of receipt of all final documents.

**Q: What happens if the actual installation is different than stated in the agreement?**

**A:** If you decide to install *less* than stated in the agreement, the amount of cost share will be adjusted to actual costs. If you wish to install *more* equipment than identified in the agreement, an additional application should be submitted and either the original agreement amended or a new agreement signed.

**Q: Is there assistance for financial hardship?**

**A:** Yes. The percent of cost-share can be changed based on financial hardship. The maximum state share, in all cases, is \$45,000.00. To be considered for financial hardship, you should check the appropriate box on the application form. The following information must be submitted *with* the application form:

- The two most recent years of individual, partnership, or corporate tax returns;
- The two most recent financial statements for your business associated with water use;
- Current balance in personal and business savings and checking accounts;
- Other documentation that would support the request, such as statements from doctors, bankers, accountants, etc., verifying your financial difficulties.

Based on the information submitted, the Conservation District or Ecology will determine eligibility for financial hardship and determine the amount of additional cost-share funding.

*If you need this publication in an alternate format, please call the Columbia River Unit at 509-575-2490. Persons with hearing loss can call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability can call 877-833-6341.*