

# COLUMBIA BASIN DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE



*Ongoing construction work to bring sustainable surface water supplies to the Odessa Subarea*

Since 1964, the Columbia Basin Development League (CBDL) has supported the Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) Columbia Basin Project (CBP), which delivers essential water supplies to central Washington State. The CBDL's goal is the full development of the Columbia Basin Project; today, the focus is on preventing economic hardship and preserving the remaining ground water for domestic supplies, by replacing ground water withdrawals from the Odessa Aquifer with sustainable surface water supplies.

## **Aquifers in the Odessa Subarea are declining**

- Since 1980 ground water levels have dropped approximately 200 feet
- In some cases ground water must be pumped from wells as deep as 2,400 feet
  - Pumping water from this depth requires a great deal of energy
  - Often water found at this depth has high sodium concentrations
- As the aquifer continues to decline, more wells will have to be drilled or deepened at great expense and the number of total well failures will increase
- A local ground water management agency has estimated that if no action is taken 35 percent of the wells in the Odessa Subarea could go out of production by 2020

## **Dwindling ground water risks the economic vitality of the region**

- 3,600 jobs could be lost
- As much as an \$840 million could be lost annually
  - \$630 million in regional sales
  - \$211 million in lost regional income
- Economic impacts will harm farmers and surrounding communities

## The CBDL is working with state and federal partners to address this problem

- In 2013, Reclamation signed a Record of Decision (ROD) for the Odessa Subarea Special Study
  - The ROD's preferred alternative identifies replacing ground water with surface water delivered via the construction of infrastructure, including several siphons and the expansion of the East Low Canal
  - The ROD did not guarantee current or future federal funds for the project, but did indicate that Reclamation may choose to request funding at some future time
- The state of Washington has contributed nearly \$75 million towards the Odessa
- Reclamation has secured sufficient water rights from the State of Washington to serve 87,700 acres through this program
- The East Columbia Basin Irrigation District (ECBID) Board of Directors has designated 17,700 acres of that water supply for the initial 10,700 acre pump station/pipeline distribution system, with 7000 acres reserved for individual landowner contracts
- ECBID, on September 2, 2015, signed a 40 year renewal of their Master Water Service contract with Reclamation which facilitates ECBID bond sales to finance distribution system construction
- Construction of the initial distribution system that would serve 10,700 acres is targeted to begin in early 2016 with the goal of delivering water for the 2017 irrigation season
- To date construction is coming in ahead of schedule and significantly under budget

## CBDL request

- Reclamation update their economic and environmental analyses to reflect ECBID actual cost experience to support inclusion of funding in its budget request for the completion of the East Low Canal
- Federal partners consider funding of approximately \$25 million for completion of East Low Canal
- Reclamation immediately begin negotiations with ECBID to make the remaining water supply element available for the Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program through the Master Water Service Contract

###