VOICE OF THE PROJECT

Supporting the Columbia Basin Project since 1964.



OUR MISSION

Serving as the voice of the Columbia Basin Project—advocating for completion and sustainable maintenance.



Grand Coulee Dam looking north.

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A GUIDE TO ADVOCATING FOR ADVANCEMENT: THE GRAND COULEE DAM

s a steadfast and unified voice for the Columbia Basin Project, CBDL is engaged in an ongoing effort to bring concise and meaningful educational materials to the Columbia Basin region illustrating the Project's multi-faceted benefits.

It can be hard to know where to start when you tell someone about the Columbia Basin Project for the first time. Obviously, it depends on the relationship they may or may not have with the Project, but more than anything, it depends on how you can communicate about it. The purpose of this article is to equip you with the tools to advocate for the Project no matter who you find yourself talking to.

Let's dig into a piece of infrastructure whose benefits mirror those of the Project itself; the Grand Coulee Dam.

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The Grand Coulee Dam: **Cornerstone of the Project**

Hydroelectric Power

Since its first pump was brought online in 1941, the Grand Coulee Dam has served as a testament to the power of innovative and responsible water management in the Pacific Northwest.

Hydroelectric power is widely regarded as one of the most renewable forms of energy, and the state of Washington is at the forefront of the renewable energy frontier thanks to the Dam's unparalleled output.

Washington produces the third most renewable energy of any state in the country, with over half produced by Grand Coulee Dam alone. Energy produced by the dam also drives down costs for electricity in Washington, and is supplied to seven more states; Oregon, Idaho, western Montana, and parts of California, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, and Canada.

A feat of infrastructure, the Dam is one of the largest concrete structures in the world and the largest power-generating complex in the United States and is managed and operated by the US Bureau of Reclamation. As such. it serves as the workhorse of hydropower on the Columbia River with three power plants, including the Nathaniel "Nat" Washington Power Plant, the largest of the three, producing about two-thirds of the total power generated by the dam. Just two of the "Nat" Washington Plant's six generating units can produce enough energy to power the city of Seattle for a year.

The two original power plants, the Right and Left Powerhouses, contain 18 original units brought online in 1950, and twelve additional pumps added in the subsequent three decades. Additionally, the John W. Keys III Pump-Generating Plant houses six pumps and six pump-generators. Collectively, the four powerhouses comprise the Grand Coulee Dam's power generation capacity. The Dam can generate over 6,800 megawatts annually, equivalent to 20 billion kilowatt hours and a quarter of the energy produced by the Federal Columbia River Power System.

The Grand Coulee Dam is not the only source of hydroelectric power generated by infrastructure in the Columbia Basin Project, however. Electricity production from the canals of the Columbia Basin Project commenced in 1982 when the Russell D. Smith plant became operational in Franklin County. Subsequently, six more hydropower facilities were established across Grant and Franklin Counties.

In the span of 40 years, hydropower generation has emerged as a favorable investment, serving as a reliable revenue stream. This income has been instrumental in covering expenses and funding enhancements for Columbia Basin Project landowners.

The continued expansion and modernization of hydropower facilities within the Project area present a unique opportunity. By amplifying this facet of the CBP, we emphasize its contribution to the region's energy sustainability, aligning with contemporary calls for renewable energy sources and reducing our carbon footprint.

Irrigation

Not only is the Grand Coulee Dam a modern marvel when it comes to producing renewable energy, it is also a key piece of the puzzle that is irrigation in the Columbia Basin Project. When the CBP first began delivering water from the Grand Coulee Dam in 1952, it sent water to about 66,000 acres of previously arid

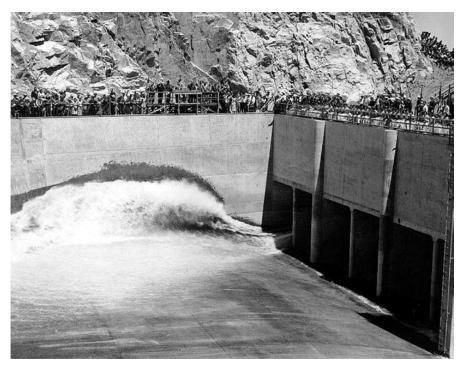


QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

Perseverance is not a long race; it is many short races one after the other.

- Walter Elliot





Ceremony for the first water delivery from the Grand Coulee Dam for the irrigation of the Columbia Basin, May 7, 1951. (Image courtesy of the University of Washington Library Digital Collection)

land. Today, that number is closer to 700,000, and the Project is not yet complete, aiming to serve one million acres.

The main facilities of the Project include Grand Coulee Dam, Franklin D. Roosevelt Lake, three power plants, four switchyards, and a pumpgenerating plant. Primary irrigation facilities include the Feeder Canal, Banks Lake, the Main, West, East High, and East Low canals, O'Sullivan Dam, Potholes Reservoir, and Potholes Canal. There are over 300 miles of main canals, about 2,000 miles of laterals, and 3,500 miles of drains and wasteways on the Project.

The Dam is the centerpiece of it all, providing nearly 11,000 farms, growing over 100 agricultural products, with irrigation water in east central Washington via the John W. Keys III Pump-Generating Plant, which serves not only to produce hydroelectric power, but also pumps water from Lake Roosevelt to Banks Lake to provide irrigation water to CBP farmers. The farmland irrigated by CBP water produces over \$5 billion in annual crop production value and animal production and food processing, and is vital to U.S. national food security.

Grand Coulee Dam is one of the greatest assets to the Columbia Basin Project in its mission to irrigate over a million acres of farmland in eastern central Washington, and supporting the farmers and communities who have called the region home for over a century. Though efforts to advance the CBP continue to make strides, acknowledging the impact of the Grand Coulee Dam and its many great benefits to the state and nation provide critical context to the importance of the CBP.

Biodiversity Conservation and Recreation

Lake Roosevelt--named for President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who championed the "New Deal" to promote economic growth after the Great Depression and was instrumental in the implementation and

funding of the CBP and Dam itself--is the upper reservoir of the Grand Coulee Dam. Banks Lake, the lower reservoir, serves to collect water that is then sent to irrigate farmland in the CBP boundaries.

Lake Roosevelt is the largest lake in the CBP stretching 151 miles from the Dam to the Canadian border. Its nearly 600 miles of shoreline and 80,000 acres of surface area provide plenty of space for visitors to fish, boat, swim, and even rent a houseboat from the Colville Tribe, who manages the portion of the shoreline within the borders of the Colville Indian reservation. The Spokane Indian reservation also borders the

Despite both reservoirs essentially being artificially created for the needs of the Grand Coulee Dam and Columbia Basin Project, they support biodiversity in the region and serve as recreational hotspots, especially in the summer. Additionally, Lake Roosevelt provides up to 5-million acre-feet of space for flood control, making it a valuable asset on many levels for the safety of the region.

Banks Lake is smaller at 27 miles long, stretching from Electric City just south of the Dam to Coulee City, with Steamboat Rock State Park on the northeastern shore. The lake has over 130 miles of shoreline and is a popular swimming, boating, and fishing spot with over a dozen species of catchable fish.

These amazing resources provide protection not only for the biodiversity and wildlife surrounding the lakes, but also protection for the communities around the lakes and the state of Washington.



CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF PROGRESS: THE LEAGUE TURNS 60



his year marks the 60th anniversary of the Columbia Basin Development League, a momentous occasion that celebrates six decades of dedication, innovation, and progress. Since our founding, we have been steadfast in our commitment to advancing the Columbia Basin Project, a vision that has transformed the region into a thriving agricultural hub.

Over the past six decades, our efforts have helped bring irrigated water to nearly 700,000 acres of land. This achievement not only highlights the remarkable progress we've made but also underscores the vital role the Columbia Basin Project plays in supporting local economies, communities, and the agricultural industry.

Our mission, however, is far from complete. With over 300,000 acres still to be irrigated, the Columbia Basin Development League remains focused on ensuring the full realization of this transformative project. Each acre brought under irrigation represents new opportunities for growth, sustainability, and prosperity for future generations.

As we celebrate our 60-year milestone, we reflect on the collaborative efforts that have driven our success. Our partnerships with the irrigation districts in the Project boundaries; local, state, and federal governmental agencies; community organizations; farmers; and stakeholders across the region have been vital to our success in advocacy. Together, we have built a legacy of growth and development that will endure for many years to come.

Looking ahead, the Columbia Basin Development League continues its commitment to the Columbia Basin Project. We invite you to join us in commemorating our 60th anniversary, celebrating our shared accomplishments, and renewing our dedication to a future of continued progress and innovation by becoming a member and saving the date for our Fall Conference and 60th Annual Meeting on October 29th!

Thank you for your unwavering support and partnership. Here's to 60 years of success and many more to come!



ODESSA GROUNDWATER REPLACEMENT PROGRAM **MILESTONES**

he East Columbia Basin Irrigation District (ECBID) celebrated a significant milestone with the groundbreaking of the EL 86.4 system, the second system under the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program (OGWRP). This event, attended by over 30 landowners, key partners, and elected officials, marks a major step forward in addressing groundwater depletion in the region. Construction began immediately following the ceremony.

The EL 86.4 system, funded through the \$32.8M appropriations in the 2023 Washington State Legislature Capital Budget, is a testament to the collaborative efforts of many stakeholders. This project is designed to provide irrigation water to the acreage within the Odessa Subarea Special Study, reducing costs for landowners and enhancing agricultural sustainability.

Tom Tebb, Director of the Office of Columbia River, highlighted the project's significance, stating, "This is a tremendous step forward for the OGWRP and our region. This project has been a labor of love, involving many partners, elected officials, and landowners over several vears."

ECBID Board President Duaine Anderson expressed gratitude, saying, "We have been working toward this moment for years. Everyone here brought the resources available to them for this project, demonstrating incredible collaboration and partnership."

The OGWRP is a regional effort to replace Odessa groundwater with Columbia Basin Project water, supported by over \$126 million in state funding and \$45 million from the Bureau of Reclamation. The ECBID has also contributed through \$16.8 million in municipal bonds. This project is crucial for ensuring long-term water availability and agricultural productivity in the region.

Washington State Representative Tom Dent reflected on the project's impact, sharing, "I remember this land from when I was a young boy and I'm grateful for the opportunity to be a part of such tremendous progress. This is a significant milestone for this region, our landowners, and our food system."



Equipment at the groundbreaking ceremony.



ECBID staff, board, partners, and landowners at the groundbreaking.



The end of the canal prior to EL 86.4.

USDA UNDER SECRETARY FOR FARM PRODUCTION AND **CONSERVATION ROBERT BONNIE VISITED THE OGWRP**

n June 6 Robert Bonnie, USDA Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation, visited the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program. The visit included tours of various public irrigation systems under construction, including the EL 47.5 Pumping Plant, the first ECBID pumping station completed within the project area.

The OGWRP, funded under the USDA-NRCS's Small Watershed Program (PL-566), aims to replace groundwater with Columbia Basin Project water. This visit by Under Secretary Bonnie highlights the federal commitment to accelerating the program's implementation.

The League has been a critical collaborator in coordinating stakeholders to advocate for federal funding for the OGWRP and was in attendance at the tour on June 6th.

Kristina Ribellia, Executive Director of the Columbia Basin Conservation District, emphasized the importance of federal support, stating, "USDA has become an important partner, contributing nearly \$50 million to help accelerate the implementation of the OGWRP's infrastructure over the last two years."

Craig Simpson, P.E., Secretary-Manager for ECBID, added, "We're excited to welcome Under Secretary Bonnie to the Odessa. This project has incredible momentum and collaboration across many key partners and elected officials."

Under Secretary Bonnie's visit underscores the USDA's interest in advancing this critical project, which builds on significant investments by the State of Washington, Reclamation, ECBID, and local producers.



The full tour group included conservation leaders, elected officials, and stakeholders from across the OGWRP.



Under Secretary Robert Bonnie and East Columbia Basin Irrigation District (ECBID) Secretary-Manager Craig Simpson stand in the test siphon at Lind Coulee



The tour caravan pulls around the corner to the Lind Coulee test siphon site.



Under Secretary Robert Bonnie speaks to Representative Mary Dye at the EL 47.5 Pump Station.

UPDATES ON FISCAL YEAR 24 AND 25 EARMARKS

n March, Congress completed the FY 24 appropriations process, with positive outcomes for the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program (OGWRP). Specifically, funding was secured in response to earmark requests submitted over a year ago by Grant and Adams Counties to replace bridges that are hindering OGWRP water deliveries as intended.

Following canal widening to increase delivery capacity to serve deep well irrigators, a number of bridges crossing the canal are creating bottlenecks where the canal cannot be widened until the bridges are removed or replaced. FY 24 appropriations funded replacement of the Road W bridge in Grant County for \$3,888,000, thanks to Senator Murray; \$3,978,000 was included for the Adams County Booker Road bridge replacement thanks to Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers; and \$1,700,000 will go toward engineering and design of five other bridges in Adams County thanks to Senators Murray and Cantwell.

Meanwhile, requests for FY 25 are underway and include \$4,066,878 for Rd 11 Bridge in Grant County.

In both instances, stakeholder letters of support have been an impressive and critical factor, demonstrating the broad base of support from state and local government to private enterprises.







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D.C. FLY-IN RENEWS CREATIVE COMMITMENT TO CBP PROBLEM-SOLVING

he League was in Washington D.C. in early May to advocate for the Columbia Basin Project and the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program (OGWRP). This year's fly-in included CBDL Executive Director, Sara Higgins; CBDL board member, Eli Stahl; landowner and East Columbia Basin Irrigation District board member Dennis Swinger Jr., Columbia Basin Conservation District Executive Director, Kristina Ribellia; Lamb Weston Sr. Ag. Operations Specialist, Michael Dixon; and Department of Ecology, Office of the Columbia River Financial and Projects Section Manager, Melissa Downes.

The League met with key congressional offices, House and Senate Committee staff, senior administration at Reclamation, and senior administration at USDA, National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), including Chief Terry Cosby.

Message points revolved around an extensive list of priority issues. Among them:

- Continued advancement of the Columbia Basin Project
- Adequate appropriations for the Columbia Basin Project line item in Reclamation's budget as well as the WaterSMART program regularly utilized by the CBP's irrigation districts for canal improvements
- Support for the Urban Canal Modernization Act to provide funding for extraordinary matienance projects on urban canals
- Prioritization of OGWRP by Reclamation
- Reauthorization of the Farm Bill
- Improvements to Farm Bill programs currently utilized for OGWRP construction
- Adequate appropriations for NRCS programs currently utilized for **OGWRP** construction
- Support of an earmark requests to fund an OGWRP bridge at Road 11

Reception of CBDL was positive. A session of out-of-the-box thinking to overcome an OGWRP funding obstacle was encouraging and will be further explored to enhance current OGWRP momentum. Additionally, the NRCS meeting with Chief Cosby and Regional Conservationist Astor Boozer provided valuable guidance. Columbia Basin Conservation District is preparing for another round of RCPP grant applications for OGWRP this summer, and Boozer and Cosby offered some considerations for strengthening the applications.



The CBDL team in Washington DC.

Advancement of the 2024 Farm Bill was regularly acknowledged on the Hill to be a challenge, primarily due to differences in political ideologies in the House and Senate versions. Farm Bill conservation programs have become critical to recent OGWRP progress, yet conservation programs are among the specific points of contention in the 2024 Farm Bill.

Immediate next steps following the trip carry a sense of "hurry up and wait" as Congress wades through appropriations bills and legislation and Presidential elections heat up. The possibility of a "lame duck" session post-election further emphasizes the seemingly endless wait. Nevertheless, CBDL continues to monitor developments, and message points are clear with opportunities to deliver them being leveraged as they arise. Overall, keeping the CBP and OGWRP at the forefront of discussion in key offices was a positive outcome of the trip that will serve advocates well in the coming months. \subseteq

THE RACE TO RESCUE A DECLINING AQUIFER IN CENTRAL **WASHINGTON: THE OGWRP FILM**

•he East Columbia Basin Irrigation District, Columbia Basin Conservation District, and Columbia Basin Development League have released a new film titled "The Race to Rescue a Declining Aquifer in Central Washington." This film underscores the urgency of the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program, detailing the program's impact on communities, the economy, and the environment.

Thanks to the support from the Washington State Legislature, the Department of Ecology's Office of Columbia River, and other partners, this film aims to raise awareness and garner further support for the vital work being done to address a declining aquifer by transferring deep well irrigators off the aquifer and onto a sustainable source of surface water.

The film is available on ECBID's and CBCD's websites in addition to CBDL's.

SAVE THE DATE: 2024 CONFERENCE & 60TH ANNUAL MEETING

he League's annual conference and 60th annual meeting is set for Tuesday, October 29 in Moses Lake. Annually, this event provides information about current and future efforts to develop, maintain, and improve the Project, including an update on the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program. While stakeholders are gathered, we also take the opportunity to recognize award recipients and outgoing board members for their commitment to the Columbia Basin Project, and we announce the outcomes of League board elections. Mark your calendars and prepare to join us. Registration will open in August. Interested in sponsoring this year's milestone event, contact julia@cbdl.org! 🗟



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: COLUMBIA BASIN DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

t is early, yet, but the League is already thinking about next year. 2025 board member elections will occur this October, with results announced at the League's 60th Annual Meeting on October 29.

Now is the time to voice your interest in board service as the Nominating Committee prepares to identify and select candidates for recommended inclusion on the ballot. Board service is a civic responsibility, and the current issues facing the Columbia Basin Project make it an important one. Interested individuals are requested to send their bio to sara@cbdl.org before July 31.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: COLUMBIA BASIN DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE ANNUAL AWARDS

eing recognized by your peers is a huge compliment. Now is the time to nominate someone you believe to be deserving of recognition for their involvement in the Columbia Basin Project through the years.

The Perseverance Award signifies someone who successfully showcases the ability to carry on and complete a task no matter how hard it may be. The recipient of this award will accurately demonstrate the ability to fight regardless of the odds.

The Honorary Life Member Award goes to someone who demonstrates support of the Project and its development with dedication to efforts that advance the Project, regardless of whether they are involved with the League.

Do these award descriptions bring someone to mind? Nominate them now and allow them to get the recognition they deserve at the CBDL 60th Annual Meeting on October 29!

Please email info@cbdl.org to receive a nomination form, or visit www.cbdl.org/about/the-league to download a form today. Nominations are due by July 31.



Chair Dale Pomeroy presents the 2023 Perseverance Award to Harold Crose.

RECLAMATION AND CBDL POCKET GUIDES ARE NOW AVAILABLE!

he League has once again partnered with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to produce an updated version of our tri-fold pocket Reference Guide to the Columbia Basin Project. This guide has been a key asset for the dissemination of accurate and current information about the Project for years and revamping the information in it is an exciting step in furthering effective and accessible information about the Project.

The updated pocket guide offers a succinct yet detailed overview of the Project featuring detailed statistics on hydropower capacity, irrigation infrastructure, crop and economic value, and more. CBDL is continuing to collaborate with our partners to distribute these guides.



Reference Guide The Federal Columbia Basin **Reclamation Project**

The Columbia Basin Development League, a private non-profit corporation, was established in 1964 to support the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project. The league's mission includes advocating continued development of the project, protecting its water rights and educating the public on the renewable, multipurpose benefits of the project.

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