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OUR MISSION

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A LOOK AT FY25 CONGRESSIONAL FUNDING ACTIVITY

From budget line items for the Columbia Basin Project (CBP), to prioritization of the Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program (OGWRP) and USDA NRCS programs that are or could fund OGWRP construction, the League is monitoring Congressional developments that directly impact the CBP and OGWRP interests. In most instances, advancement of funding bills is slow going; among other distractions, this year's elections are the focal point, and the outcomes could have significant implications for future funding avenues. Below is a status update on priority interests.

Farm Bill Update

In May, H.R. 8467, the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024 passed out of the House Agriculture Committee, but no floor vote

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has been scheduled. On the Senate side, also in May, Senate Agriculture Committee Chairwoman, Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) released a detailed section-by-section summary of the Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act of 2024, but no specific text has been released. No action has been taken on either piece of legislation so both chambers are preparing for a scenario that would temporarily extend the farm bill, which expires on September 30th, 2024, to after elections at the earliest. The future of NRCS programs beneficial to OGWRP—like RCPP and the Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (PL-566)—are tied to passage of the Farm Bill. RCPP funding levels would be maintained at the mandatory amount of \$300,000,000, annually, for example, which aligns with the League’s request this year.

Appropriations Process

The Federal government is only funded through the end of the FY25 fiscal year so if Congress does not pass its 12 appropriations bills, or a continuing resolution (CR) by the end of September, the government will shut down until either of these are passed. Currently, the House has passed five of the 12 appropriations bills: Defense, Homeland Security, Interior—Environment, Military Construction-Veterans Affairs, and State-Foreign Operations, while the Senate hasn’t passed any. At this point, it is not likely that either chamber will pass additional appropriations bills, but rather negotiate the bills in conference as part of a minibus or omnibus package.

Appropriations Bills

Energy and Water (S.4927/H.8997)

FY25 Columbia Basin Project funding levels are recommended at \$18,310,000 in both the Senate (S. Rept. 118-205) and House (H. Rept. 118-580) Energy and Water Appropriations

Committees, with \$9,656,000 for Resource Management and \$8,654,000 for OM&R. Neither appropriations bill has passed and is more likely to be taken up in conference. The total funding level is lower than the League’s ask to return funding to the FY23 enacted amount of \$21,020,000. This line item is critically important to the maintenance of reserve works within the CBP, like Grand Coulee Dam.

Agriculture (S.4690/H.9027)

Of total FY25 NRCS appropriation recommendations, FY25 Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations funding levels are recommended at \$51,255,000 (\$26,255,000 of which is for Congressionally Directed Spending) in the Senate and \$20,000,000 in the House. This provides a sense of the trajectory for future PL-566 funding that may be of benefit to OGWRP. Noteworthy is that OGWRP’s capacity for expending funds in a given fiscal year exceeds recommendations for this nationally competitive program. This helps to clarify expectations and emphasize the importance of diverse funding sources.

Community Project Funding/ Congressional Directed Spending Requests

County bridge crossings where East Columbia Basin Irrigation District has widened the East Low Canal to increase delivery capacity for OGWRP are in need of replacement. In recent years, the federal earmark process has advanced this challenging project for bridges that do not otherwise qualify for replacement funding as they are not in a state of disrepair. Grant County’s Community Project Funding request of \$4,066,878 to Congressman Dan Newhouse for the replacement of Bridge 248 Road 11-SE was approved by House FY25 Transportation, Housing and Urban



QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

A noble purpose inspires sacrifice, stimulates innovation and encourages perseverance.

- Gary Hamel



Development Committee. On the Senate side, Senator Cantwell's Congressionally Directed Spending request of \$4,067,000 for the bridge passed out of the Senate THUD committee. It should be noted that when a member of the House and a member of the Senate both request funding for the same project, the highest amount of the request is what will be funded. Both bills will now be taken up in conference, as part of a minibus or omnibus package negotiation.

Requested Report Language

Report language requested by the League for the Columbia Basin Project passed out of both the House and Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Committees. Notably, and new this year, each committee includes requested language addressing continued advancement of the Columbia Basin Project:


House Energy and Water Development Committee:

Columbia Basin Project—The Committee is aware of the Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program within the Columbia Basin Project to deliver surface water to the Odessa Subarea. The Sub-area groundwater is being withdrawn at a rate beyond the aquifer's capacity to recharge, and aquifers in the Subarea are quickly declining. Groundwater is virtually depleted to such an extent that water must be pumped from wells as deep as 2,400 feet. Water pumped from such depths is hot and has dangerously high sodium concentrations. The Committee supports Reclamation's partnership in the program to provide farmlands in Central and Eastern Washington with surface water supply through operational changes in the storage and delivery system and urges Reclamation to move forward to implement the program.

The Committee understands the importance of continuing to build the Columbia Basin Project. Reclamation is directed to provide to the Committee not later than 180 days after enactment of this Act a briefing on the costs and benefits of continued progress. The briefing shall consider impacts to local Tribal populations, salmon habitat, agricultural production and employment, and food security.

Senate Energy and Water Development Committee:

Columbia Basin Project—The Committee supports Reclamation's partnership in the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program to provide farmlands in Central and Eastern Washington with surface water supply through operational changes in the storage and delivery system and urges Reclamation to move forward to implement the program.

Columbia Basin Project Report—Reclamation is directed to develop a report using existing data and science on the continued development of the Columbia Basin Project originally authorized in 1945. The report shall examine the costs and benefits of advancing the project giving equal consideration to the following priorities: (1) local Tribal population, (2) salmon habitat including recovery and restoration, (3) agricultural production and employment, and (4) food security. Reclamation shall provide the report to the Committees on Appropriations, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and the House Committee on Natural Resources within 18 months of enactment of this act. 



 The "Washington Grown" logo features the words "washington" in a simple font and "grown" in a green font with a leaf icon. Below the logo, a list of local TV stations and their broadcast schedules is provided. The background of the text area shows two people in a field.

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CBDL RECOGNIZED WITH QUINCY'S HONORARY FARMER OF THE YEAR

The annual September Quincy Farmer Consumer Awareness Day (FCAD) is an event the League has participated in for a number of years. This year, in addition to staffing an information booth, the League's Executive Director, Sara Higgins, was also selected as the event's Honorary Farmer.

Annually, FCAD is a unique opportunity to celebrate farmers and agriculture in the region. Big farm equipment impresses parade attendees, crop and geological tours are offered, local produce is available for sale, and numerous other vendors and entertainment turn out to showcase their goods and celebrate. This year, the fifth generation Kallstrom family was recognized as the Farming Family of the Year.

The Honorary Farmer nod acknowledged the League's advocacy work for the Columbia Basin Project. Higgins, joined by her husband, Brian, and League Board Chair, Dale Pomeroy, were towed along the parade route by FCAD Chair, Wyman Duggan atop his tractor. 



[L-R] League Board Chair Dale Pomeroy, Executive Director Sara Higgins, and FCAD Chair Wyman Duggan hold CBDL sign at FCAD on Saturday, September 14.



Higgins holds "I (heart) EATING" sign on the Honorary Farmer trailer during the FCAD Parade.



Former League Board member, longtime supporter, and annual FCAD volunteer John Moody staffed the League's information booth at Quincy Middle School throughout the event.

COLUMBIA RIVER TASK FORCE CREATED BY WHITE HOUSE


In a press release in June, the White House announced the formation of an interagency Columbia River Task Force (CRTF) aimed at coordinating efforts across federal agencies to restore native fish populations to the river. Additionally, the administration released a report detailing how federal dams on the Columbia have negatively impacted Tribes in the region as part of ongoing efforts to partner with Tribes and state in the Pacific Northwest to balance clean energy, transportation, irrigation, and municipal water needs with the return of those native fish populations to both the Upper and Lower Basin.

The CRTF was created by the White House Council on Environmental Quality and is co-chaired by Acting Deputy Secretary of the Interior Laura Daniel-Davis, Deputy Secretary of Energy Dave Turk, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Assistant Administrator for Fisheries Janet Coit. Other agencies represented on the Task Force include the Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Transportation, the Office of Management and Budget, and the White House Council on

Environmental Quality.

The Biden-Harris Administration emphasized the tension between Federal dams continuing to deliver the “renewable energy and many other benefits” to the region and trying to mitigate the harm they can inflict on Tribes in the region, and the CRTF’s commitment to both goals.

Though the release identifies multiple benefits of the federal dam system, irrigation, power, and agricultural organizations in the region have expressed concerns regarding the task force’s ability to adequately address their stakeholders’ needs.

The League will feature a presentation on the Columbia River Task Force by Clark Mather, Executive Director, Northwest River Partners, at our upcoming Conference on October 29. The intent will be to breakdown an understand of the CRTF, its purpose, and its implications. Register at www.cbdl.org/support/annual-conference to attend and learn more. 



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COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY MODERNIZATION EFFORTS TO BE FEATURED AT CONFERENCE

By Roland Springer, Deputy Regional Director, Columbia-Pacific Northwest Region, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

The United States and Canada reached agreement in principle on the key elements for a modernized Columbia River Treaty regime in July, an important milestone in negotiations. This common ground focuses our efforts on how the two countries will work together for the next 20 years, including how we protect vulnerable communities from flooding, advance our clean energy goals, and improve the ecosystem that has sustained Tribes and Indigenous Nations since time immemorial.

The United States and Canada will now work to draft a Treaty amendment reflecting the elements of the agreement in principle (AIP). Each country is initiating domestic processes to cement the next chapter in stewardship of this precious shared natural resource.

Among the outcomes of the AIP is a continued 50-50 split of the increased power the U.S. could generate as a result of how B.C. operates its treaty dams.

Called the Canadian entitlement, it will be in place until 2044. The amount of power it represents has always been projected to decline over time. In the short term, the volume will be lower than in recent

years, but toward the end of the term, it will be higher than it would have been had no AIP occurred.

The AIP also includes new monetary payments to Canada, indexed for inflation, for flood-risk management and additional benefits; access to U.S. power transmission by Canada; support for ecosystem health; and considerations for tribal interests, recreation, and tourism.

Some provisions of the enduring Treaty concluded on September 16, 2024. To cover the period prior to entry into force of the Treaty amendment, the United States and Canada are preparing interim measures that transition implementation of Treaty operations to a modernized future that benefits the people and environment on both sides of the border.

Roland Springer, the Department of the Interior's representative on the negotiations team, will speak about potential effects on operations of the Columbia River system, and Grand Coulee Dam in particular, and how changes in operations could impact resources and interests in the vicinity of Grand Coulee Dam at the League's Conference & 60th Annual Meeting on October 29th in Moses Lake, WA. [S](#)



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CULTON CONSULTING JOINS THE CBDL TEAM

The League is proud to welcome Culton Consulting to our advocacy team that represents the Columbia Basin Project to policy makers at the local, state, and federal levels!

John Culton founded Culton Consulting after serving 12 years as the Eastern Washington Director for Senator Patty Murray, where he gained a thorough understanding of the state's issues and built an extensive network of relationships in its urban and rural communities. John is a graduate of Washington State University. John will be working with CBDL to advocate for Columbia Basin Project advancement and investment at the federal level.

Kylie Peterson served as top aide to a high-ranking member of democratic leadership in Washington's House of Representatives for many years, before becoming a lobbyist. With integral relationships forged with legislators and executive agencies, Kylie advocates with the valuable lens of a policymaker. Paired with an intimate knowledge of the legislative process, Kylie is an astute government relations strategist. Kylie will be working with CBDL to advance the Columbia Basin Project at the state level.

The addition of Culton and Peterson comes as longtime CBDL lobbyist Mike Schwisow moves toward retirement after almost 20 years of service with the League. Mike is a Ritzville native and Agricultural Economics graduate of Washington State University. A registered lobbyist since 1976, Mike's past clients have included the wheat, fruit and dairy producer associations and the Washington Potato Commission, as well as the Columbia Basin irrigation districts, and Washington State Water Resources Association. Mike also served as Deputy Director of the Washington Department of Agriculture during the Spellman and Gardner administrations.

Mike has been an invaluable resource for the League and policymakers, alike. His wealth of knowledge and understanding of complex issues is deep. We're going to miss him, but we're excited to welcome John and Kylie. In the month and a half they've been with CBDL, they've been extremely active in outreach and information-gathering.

Mike will wrap up his services at the end of the year, currently focused on the transition to Culton Consulting. Be sure to congratulate Mike and say hello to John and Kylie at the League's Conference and 60th Annual Meeting on October 29. [S](#)



John Culton (Culton Consulting)



Kylie Peterson (Culton Consulting)



Mike Schwisow (Schwisow & Associates)



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NRCS' OGWRP INVESTMENTS MOVING TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION ON THREE LOWER SYSTEMS

By Audrey Rhodes, Columbia Basin Conservation District RCPP Program Manager


With USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) investment in the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program (OGWRP) reaching \$49.4 million, the USDA has emerged as a key partner, accelerating efforts to bring the remaining phases of the OGWRP to fruition. The Columbia Basin Conservation District (CBCD) and partners have been successful in securing these funds by leveraging the State of Washington's recent investments, nearly dollar for dollar. This momentum is bolstered by NRCS' Small Watershed Program (PL-566), Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), and WaterSMART Program, and is further supported by over \$240 million in investments from the State of Washington, Bureau of Reclamation, East Columbia Basin Irrigation District (ECBID), and dedicated landowners over the last decade.

Most recently, construction continues on the EL 86.4 public system, which is one of the three lower OGWRP systems on East Low Canal (EL 80.6, 84.7, and 86.4) that are now funded and moving forward.

Construction of the EL 86.4 on-farm buildout is set to begin as soon as the current cultural resources survey and consultations conclude, with water delivery slated for Spring 2025. EL 86.4 will convert 5,426 acres from deep well irrigation to Columbia River surface water. This shift will eliminate 16 wells and conserve a staggering 16,143 acre-feet (5.3 billion gallons) of water annually in the Odessa Subarea Aquifer.

CBCD applied for an additional six RCPP proposals in July 2024 for the EL 11.8 and 22.1, including \$141 million in requests with \$71.9 million in partner contributions, CDBL among them. NRCS is scheduled to announce awards in October. These potential awards to OGWRP and this upcoming legislative session will largely influence efforts to continue implementing OGWRP over the next couple of years.

Meet CBCD's New RCPP Program Manager

With the influx of RCPP funding for OGWRP in recent years, Audrey Rhodes joined CBCD in May of this year to serve as the RCPP Program Manager. Audrey is a Moses Lake, WA native and aspires to contribute to the conservation of natural waterways, expansion of sustainable agricultural practices, and the promotion of soil health throughout the greater Columbia Basin area through strong landowner relationships. 



Construction at the EL 86.4 site (Courtesy of Mike Baden, Washington State Conservation Commission)



USDA Under Secretary Bonnie and the full tour group of partners, including CDBL, elected officials, and landowners, at the Lind Coulee Siphon earlier this year. (Courtesy of Nate Gallahan, NRCS-Washington)

JOIN US FOR THE CBDL CONFERENCE & 60TH ANNUAL MEETING ON OCTOBER 29!

Registration is officially open for the CBDL Conference & 60th Annual Meeting on October 29th at Big Bend Community College in Moses Lake, WA!

This annual event is always a great opportunity to gather Columbia Basin Project stakeholders, facilitate productive conversations, and spread awareness of the work being done by Columbia Basin Project partners, all while celebrating the support of our members. This year is extra special as the League celebrates 60 years of advocacy and support for the sustainable investment in and maintenance of the Columbia Basin Project.


This year's theme is The Power of the Columbia: A Confluence of Multiple Interests, Multiple Benefits. The day will kick off with updates from the Columbia Basin irrigation districts, a deep-dive into the constraints and opportunities for meeting M&I water needs in the Columbia Basin Project, and an update on Upper Columbia fish passage efforts. Over lunch, the League will present its 60th Annual Meeting, highlighting our work this year and individuals who have been integral to the Columbia Basin Project's growth over the years.

The afternoon portion of the program will feature discussion of the Columbia River Task Force, and the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program and funding avenues, Columbia Basin Project funding, and Columbia River Treaty modernization. Finally, U.S. Representative Dan Newhouse (WA-4th District) will present the closing keynote.

As the agenda continues to be developed, additional details will be made available.

Make sure you register before October 14th to save with early bird registration! Not sure what your calendar looks like yet? Registration is available on-site! We want to make sure you can attend and learn all about Columbia Basin Project topics that impact your daily life.

Register today at www.cbdl.org/support/annual-conference or by scanning the QR code. 




COLUMBIA BASIN
DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE


CONFERENCE & 60TH ANNUAL MEETING

THE POWER OF THE COLUMBIA: A CONFLUENCE OF MULTIPLE BENEFITS, MULTIPLE INTERESTS


Dive into the benefits, progress, and future of the Columbia Basin Project and celebrate 60 years of the League!




KEYNOTE SPEAKER
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE
DAN NEWHOUSE



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OCTOBER 29, 2024
BIG BEND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MOSES LAKE, WA

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Membership in the Columbia Basin Development League is more than a nonprofit contribution; it's your chance to leave an indelible mark on the region we all call home. As one of many partners dedicated to the advancement of the Columbia Basin Project, CBDL is strengthened by our relationships with organizations and policymakers across the state and country, all fueled by the support of our members.

Stay in the loop on all things CBP, support our advocacy and educational work, and even score a deal on Conference registration! Becoming a member of the League helps us help you, and we're forever grateful!

The League has demonstrated our dedication to CBP advancement for 60 years and this unwavering pursuit is paying off in dividends. We are more invigorated for the future than ever, and we hope you'll join us in our mission. 2025 membership will open in October.

Visit www.cbdl.org/support/membership for more information. 



60 YEARS COLUMBIA BASIN DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE

Thank you to our members!

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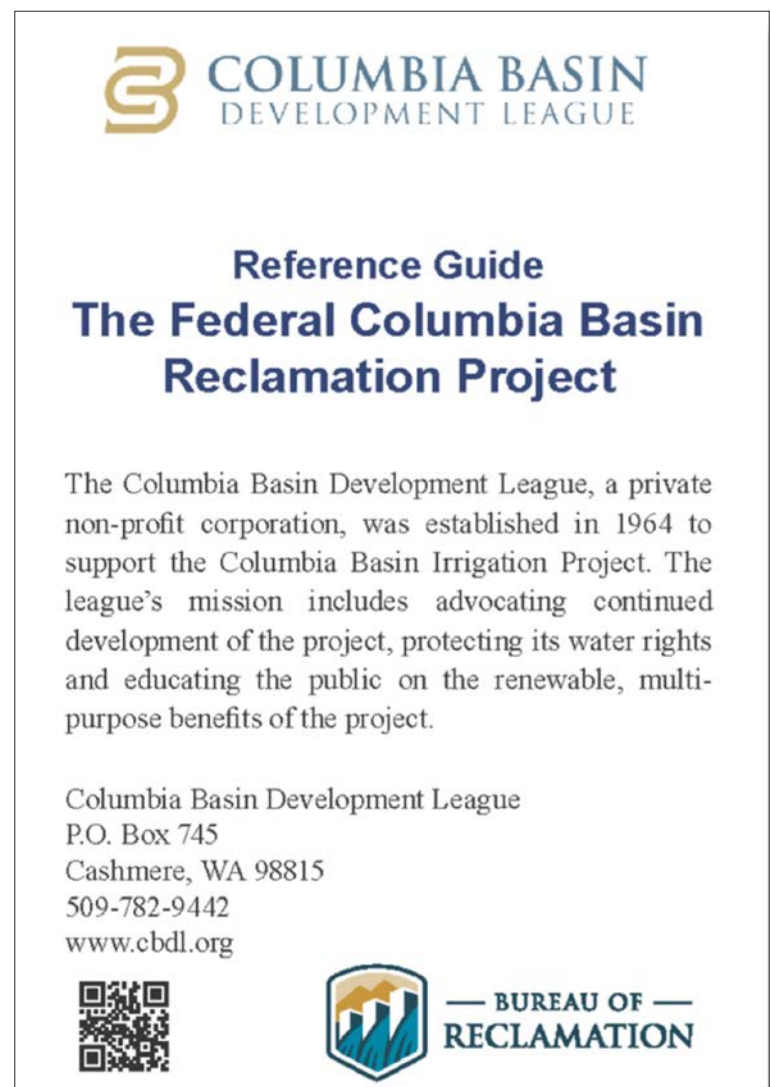
Join + Support + Belong

RECLAMATION AND CBDL POCKET GUIDES ARE NOW AVAILABLE!

The 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.

Contact info@cbdl.org for your own copies. 





COLUMBIA BASIN DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE

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, multi-purpose benefits of the project.

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PREMIER



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Big Bend Electric Cooperative
Grant County Commissioners
Warden Hutterian Brethren

UNDERWRITER

Adams County Commissioners
CHS Inc. dba Sun Basin Growers
East Columbia Basin Irrigation District
Johnson Agripries
KeyBank, Moses Lake
McCain International / McCain Foods USA
RH2 Engineering
S&C Ranching Inc
South Columbia Basin Irrigation District
The McGregor Company

SUPPORTER

Connell 76 LLC
GTM Transformations LLC
Kennewick Irrigation District
Port of Pasco
Quincy-Columbia Basin Irrigation District
Washington State Tree Fruit Association
Zirkle Fruit Company

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Kagele Family Farms LLC
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Lincoln County Conservation District
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Marvin and Neil Joint Venture
Mary Shinn
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Windy Prairie Inc

RECIPROCAL

Grand Coulee Dam Area Chamber of Commerce
Greater Connell Area Chamber of Commerce
Greater Spokane Incorporated
Moses Lake Chamber of Commerce
Othello Chamber of Commerce
Pasco Chamber of Commerce
Quincy Valley Chamber of Commerce
Washington State Water Resources Association
Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce