

Since 1964, we have supported the Columbia Basin Project and its future development. We protect its water rights and educate the public on the renewable resource and multiple-purpose benefits of the project.

Introducing Orman Johnson, 2015 League Chair

Orman Johnson was elected Chair of the Columbia Basin Development League Board of Trustees at the December Trustee meeting with his term starting this month. As a lifetime resident in the Othello-Connell area, Orman has grown and irrigated many different crops for 25 years which includes some organic acres. Orman majored in Agricultural Economics and has a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture



Orman and Gavin Johnson's landmark potato shed 12 miles east of Othello on Highway 26.

from Washington State University and he is president of Johnson Agriprises, a diversified farming operation in Adams County. Orman brings member and board experience from the East Columbia Irrigation District, Connell Grain Growers, Connell United Methodist Church, and Adams County Water Conservancy. Orman has been a League Trustee for over a decade.

114th Congress Kicks Off With Natural Resource Issues

Ian Lyle, Water Strategies LLC

At noon on January 6, 2015, both the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate convened for the 114th Congress. The first two weeks of session in both chambers saw resources legislation brought to the forefront. Following this trend, natural resource issues stand to play an important role in Congress over the next two years.

Legislation to authorize the Keystone XL pipeline was one of the first major legislative initiatives taken up by both chambers. On January 9th, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 3, the Keystone XL Pipeline Act, by a vote of 266 to 153, with 28 democrats supporting the bill. As of the writing of this article, the Senate is set to take up and pass this legislation as well. The Senate version of this legislation has 60 co-sponsors, the minimum necessary to avoid a filibuster in the Senate, but short of a veto proof margin. The pipeline will continue to face challenges

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From The Chair

Orman Johnson

These are exciting times as we close in on replacing our deep wells most of which are failing or producing less water each year. Some of us are thankful each day that our

pumps keep pumping. We can look forward to the day that we have enough water to raise an optimum crop on every acre of irrigated ground.

However, as we look forward to receiving water, the challenge of how farmers are going to pay for this huge investment becomes imminent. Each of us will have to decide if we can develop a plan that will work financially.

One concern that could make the cost of the Odessa water project go higher is if financing goes higher than presently budgeted. The East Columbia Basin Irrigation District (ECBID) has a Master Water Service Contract with the Bureau of Reclamation that expires in 2020.

The ECBID has made an effort to renew this contract, but the process is moving slowly. ECBID can obtain financing now, but it would probably be at a higher rate because the Master Water Service Contract has not been renewed. If we wait until it has been renewed, we run the risk that the interest rate increases. Also, projects that need to be completed won't be finished until financing has been obtained.

The League is focused now to assist by contacting the appropriate people that would be able to help expedite the renewal of the Master Water Service Contract—which could be one of your best investments in the future.

Have a great year!

114th Congress Kicks Off With Natural Resource Issues *Continued from page 1*

even after congressional authorization. President Obama has indicated his intent to veto legislation authorizing the pipeline. At the current time it does not appear that either chamber could muster the 2/3rd majority necessary to override a Presidential veto. This leaves the fate of the Keystone XL Pipeline far from certain.

CBDL Briefs Congressman Newhouse

Late last month representatives of the League, along with the three irrigation district managers of the Columbia Basin Project, met with Congressman Dan Newhouse to update him and his staff on the most critical issues affecting the Project. Newhouse has been given three committee assignments in the 114th Congress. They are the committees on Agriculture; Science, Space and Technology; and Natural Resources, which Doc Hastings chaired for four years. Chairman of the Board of Trustees Orman Johnson, Director of

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L-R: League Chair, Orman Johnson; SCBID Manager, Dave Solem; Congressman Dan Newhouse; District Director, Sharra Finley; League Director of Government Relations, Mike Schwisow; QCBID Manager, Darvin Fales; ECBID Manager, Craig Simpson.

CBDL Briefs Congressman ... *Continued from page 2*

Government Relations Mike Schwisow, and Executive Director Vicky Scharlau were joined by Dave Solem (South District), Darwin Fales (Quincy District) and Craig Simpson (East District) to discuss hydro-power development on the Project, the Master Water Service Contract with the Bureau of Reclamation, infrastructure reinvestment, loan guarantee programs available to irrigation districts, plus regulatory challenges including the Endangered Species Act, EPA's Waters of the U.S., and FDA's Food Safety Modernization Act. Considerable time was spent providing an update on the progress to date surrounding the Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program. The group shared how 87,000 acres are available for water that includes 7,700 from Coordinated Conservation programs, 10,000 acres from the Lake Roosevelt Incremental Releases program and 70,000 acres from the expansion of the East Low Canal with laterals to provide those farmers who currently use deep well water the opportunity to have access to surface water.

CBDL Plans Trip to Olympia

Annually, a delegation of Columbia Basin Development League representatives makes time during the legislative session to travel to Olympia to meet with policy makers. Led by Director of Government Relations Mike Schwisow, visits are scheduled with legislators representing Columbia Basin districts as well as others who can impact investment in the Basin. Overall, the trip is a tactic to fulfill a League goal: To create an environment conducive to implementing legislative, congressional, and agency actions.

Solid working relationships with legislators and other governmental decision-makers require ongoing maintenance. And, in addition to current Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program efforts, the League continues to



CBDL Trustees Jeff Schibel, Heath Gimmestad, Alice Parker, Milt Johnston, Dale Pomeroy, along with lobbyist Mike Schwisow visiting Senator Janéa Holmquist Newbry (center) in the 2013 Senate Chamber.

work long-term, toward full development of the Columbia Basin Project. Progress on both fronts depends on policy-makers who understand the value of irrigated agriculture and, specifically, the value of the Columbia Basin Project.

This year, the League is planning a visit to Olympia in February with funding a key point but continuing a focus on development of the Columbia Basin Project as well as promoting our friends and champions will be a focus of the trip.

LOOKING BACK

Water Projects Lauded June 18, 1959

Washington (AP) – Federal irrigation projects are pouring billions of dollars into the national and state treasurers, Congress was told Wednesday.

Reclamation Commissioner Floyd E. Dominy said benefits from the projects far outweigh the cost of the dams and other facilities needed to impound and use the water for food production.

Testifying at a Senate Appropriations subcommittee hearing on the Reclamation Bureau's fund requests for the coming year, Dominy said project benefits from 1940 have exceeded 3 ½ billion dollars. Construction and maintenance costs for the projects have totaled 3 billion.

He estimated federal income taxes from project areas have increased 340 million dollars over what they would have been without irrigation.

The many benefits which result from reclamation, in addition to a greatly broadened tax base, were listed by Dominy as including community and industrial growth.

Dominy's comments were made extemporaneously. He departed from his prepared statement in reply to a question by Sen. Carl Hayden (D-Ariz), appropriations chairman.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together."

*--Vincent van Gogh,
Dutch artist*

UPCOMING EVENTS

CBDL Board Meeting- Tuesday, March 17, 2015

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Big Bend Community College

ATEC Building, Hardin Room (#1837)

7611 Bolling St NE,

Moses Lake, WA 98837

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Marvin and Neil JV

Moses Lake Air Service Inc

Moses Lake Steel Supply

National Frozen Foods Corporation - Quincy

Odessa Dental Clinic

P&P Farms

Pacific Northwest Waterways Association

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