



## JULY 2017 NEWSLETTER

Volume 7, Issue 6

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.

### Construction in Central Washington Irrigation Project Continues to Advance

*Trista Crossley | Reprinted with Permission from Wheatlife.org, June 2017*

While irrigators in the Odessa Subarea aren't quite ready to cap off their irrigation wells yet, progress in the latest expansion of the 82-year-old Columbia Basin Project continues on-schedule and under-budget.

Mike Schwisow, director of government relations for the Columbia Basin Development League, a nonprofit group that advocates for development of the Columbia Basin Project, said there's about a year of work left on the East Low Canal, which is the backbone of the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program (OGWRP). The East Low Canal will bring Columbia River water from Banks Lake to approximately 87,700 acres in central Washington, replacing irrigation wells that currently rely on the declining Odessa Aquifer. The construction is being overseen by the East Columbia Basin Irrigation District (ECBID) and has been primarily funded by a 2013 \$26 million Washington State Department of Ecology grant. Initial estimates by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) put the cost of the completed canal work at more than \$58 million; actual costs are less than half that at just more than \$28 million.

"On the implementation side, I think it has gone well," Schwisow said, explaining that the ECBID is doing as much of the work as possible in house and closely managing the construction for the work they've contracted out. "Costs experienced for what the irrigation district has constructed have been excellent. Reclamation did the design and has

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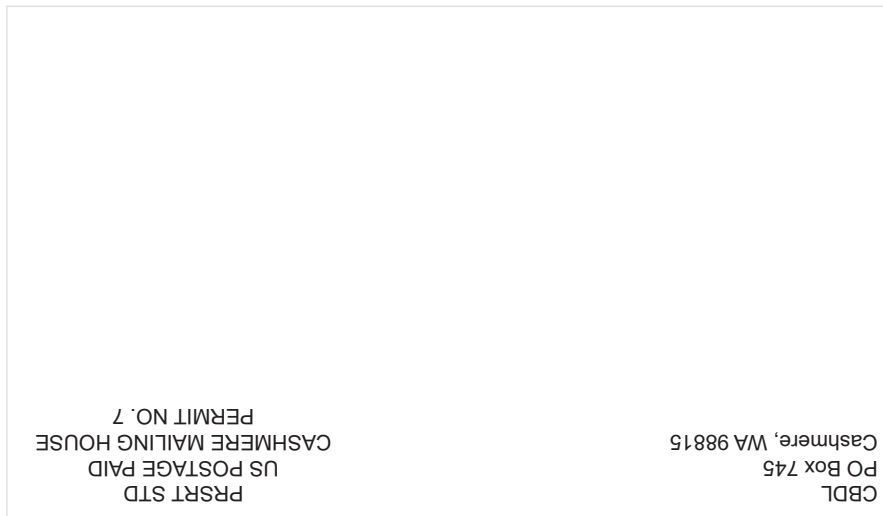
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oversight, but that was the limit of their participation. The irrigation district is much more nimble on contracts than the federal government can be, which has resulted in faster action and cost savings."

The finished work includes:

- Most of the East Low Canal expansion (it's about 95 percent completed);
- Adding the second barrels of the Lind Coulee siphons and installing control structures and gates;
- Building the second barrel of the Warden siphon; and
- Replacing one bridge that crosses the canal and modifying the canal geometry to preserve another, newer bridge that crosses the canal.

Schwisow said the work remaining on the canal will cost approximately \$25 million and includes building the Kansas Prairie siphons and five canal control structures and replacing nine bridges in Adams and Grant counties that cross the canal. Funding for the rest of the canal work will be funneled through the state's Office of Columbia River (OCR) as part of its budget, as well as through bond sales. Although the exact amount won't be known until the state legislature passes a capital budget (at the time of publication, the legislature was entering a second



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## From the Chair

*Kevin Lyle*

It is worth taking a moment to pause and reflect on the fact that during these crucial summer

months, ongoing and reliable delivery of water is happening in the Columbia Basin. The infrastructure built and maintained over the past 60+ years makes this possible. Let's never forget the rich history of the Columbia Basin Project and the economic vitality that it secures for our region, state, and nation.

The Columbia Basin Project: Continuing the Legacy is the theme of our 2017 League Conference. Let's join together on November 2 in Moses Lake to honor the past and turn our eye to the future as we move forward towards completion.

## Construction in Central Washington Irrigation Project Continues to Advance

*Continued from page 1*

special session), the governor's budget, the Senate budget and the House budget all included some funding for OCR.

"The approach the irrigation district and OCR has taken is they want to complete the East Low Canal portion of the project first. When it is at full capacity, then all the distribution systems can access the water from north to south. That's when system development can proceed at its own pace," Schwisow said.

While rebuilding bridges might sound like an insignificant part of the project, Schwisow explained that unless they are widened along with the canal, they create bottlenecks that impede the water's flow. Currently, construction crews widen the canal up to the bridges, leave the canal untouched under the bridge and then resume canal widening on the other side.

As work on the East Low Canal grinds to a finish, the ECBID is preparing to tackle the first distribution system to be installed, the EL 47.5 pipeline, named for its distance—47.5 miles—from the head of the East Low Canal. In October 2016, the ECBID sold \$16.8 million in tax-exempt municipal revenue bonds at a 3.87 percent issuance to pay for the EL 47.5.

"This particular system has had some struggles getting going. Being the first one out of the box is not a comfortable position to be in, because of unknowns and the system of normalized costs," Schwisow said. "Every farmer's situation is unique. Where they are in life. Are they ready to retire? The number of bad years they've had in a row. Everyone has to make their own decisions about this, because it is a lifetime decision. They are going to accept a water service contract and repayment for 30 years. It's been strained at times, moving forward with this first system."

Out of the 10,500 eligible acres on the EL 47.5, about 8,500 acres have signed up to receive the surface water.

ECBID's decision to normalize construction costs has drawn the ire of some landowners, not to mention at least one lawsuit, which has since been dropped. Under normalization, all landowners, regardless of how far they are from the canal, will pay the same amount in construction repayment costs. The ECBID has capped those costs at \$190 per acre. For landowners on the EL 47.5 system, the initial per-acre cost of the water is \$205.10 per year,

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **CBDL Board Meeting**

Wednesday, September 20  
 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM  
 ATEC, Big Bend Community  
 College  
 Moses Lake, WA

### **CBDL Annual Conference**

Thursday, November 2  
 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM  
 ATEC, Big Bend Community  
 College  
 Moses Lake, WA

## Construction in Central Washington Irrigation Project...

*Continued from page 2*

which includes ECBID's yearly operations and maintenance fees. If the combined construction costs of the whole system reach the maximum level set by ECBID, that per acre fee could increase to \$253.60. The Columbia Basin Development League is still investigating alternate financing routes, including improving the project's standing to attract more federal funding.

When Reclamation did its initial feasibility study, the project had a benefit-to-cost ratio of slightly more than one to one; to be eligible for federal funding, the benefits have to be at least equal to the costs. Schwisow said the process Reclamation used to estimate the cost of the project was very conservative, and now that actual costs are available, the league and the ECBID are working on a request to the agency to redo the benefit-cost analysis using real-world numbers. Schwisow thinks the benefits will stay the same, but the changes in the cost structure should yield a more beneficial ratio, which could improve the project's chances for federal dollars. It's a slim hope in an administration that is intent on cutting budgets across the board.

"Dollars are going down all throughout federal agencies, but that doesn't mean we aren't going to make our case. The federal government is still going to spend millions and millions of dollars, and we believe our project is worthy of some of that," he said. "The goal, obviously, is to get the price down to the point where landowners can afford to take the water. That's the key issue, but landowners will need to participate somehow. It's unrealistic to think we are going to get enough grant funds to pay for the entire project, but it is realistic to believe there is a reasonable balance point in the participation of landowners versus public participation, if you will. If you make it economical for landowners to participate and stay in business, then you achieve the public policy purpose of getting wells off the aquifer."

Since implementation of the project began, the transferability of water rights within the Odessa Subarea and what that might mean to the project has come into sharper focus. The stated purpose of the OGWRP was to move irrigators away from using deep wells that tapped the Odessa Aquifer and onto using surface water from the Columbia River. The remaining water in the aquifer could then be used for domestic purposes. As the ECBID began to map out the most effective placement of

the distribution systems, it became clear that some of those eligible wells would be too far away from the East Low Canal or too isolated to service in a fiscally prudent manner. Schwisow said they've already seen some landowners along the EL 47.5 pipeline transfer water rights to lands closer to the canal. In the end, this could lower construction costs by shortening the pipeline systems.

One change to the project is the implementation of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the ECBID and landowners. Under the MOU, landowners can be "involved in the financing and development of the design and construction of irrigation facilities" subject to the review and approval of both the irrigation district and Reclamation. Under the terms of the MOU, a group of landowners can choose to pay the construction costs of their pipeline system up front and avoid paying interest. However, they will still have to pay any normalized costs from the construction of the other pipelines.

"(The MOUs) do not change the funding methodology. The costs are normalized for all the systems. This has more to do with planning. It provides flexibility so groups of landowners can, working with the irrigation district, provide for planning and development of the systems. This is part of the overall learning process from experience in designing the EL 47.5," Schwisow said.

So far, the ECBID has signed two MOUs, one with a group of landowners on the EL 22.1 and one with the Marlin Hutterian Brethren who are on the EL 11.8. That system, the EL 11.8, wasn't on ECBID's original plan, but came about when the irrigation district offered 7,700 acres of water to irrigators who were on a pre-existing water contract waiting list. The Marlin Hutterian Brethren had 3,600 acres on that waiting list, and when their name came up last fall, Schwisow said the Brethren decided it was in their interest to have the ECBID do a distribution system for them. That agreement evolved into the MOU. Schwisow said he anticipates many of the future pipeline systems will use the MOU process.

Both the EL 22.1 and the EL 11.8 are in the planning and design phase now.

## League Urges Congress to Invest in Water Infrastructure

In June, the League sent a letter to Washington's congressional delegation encouraging Congress to allocate funding for water infrastructure above the Administration's Reclamation budget request for Fiscal Year 2018.

Washington state and the local community have invested significantly in the Columbia Basin Project, specifically in the Odessa Aquifer region to address well failures caused by Aquifer decline. These well failures have dire economic consequences. Studies examining the impact of Aquifer decline in this region have reported 3,600 jobs and \$840 million in annual revenues lost if action is not taken.

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"Great works are performed not by strength but by perseverance."*

*– Samuel Johnson, poet and author*

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## League Urges Congress to Invest in Water Infrastructure *Continued from page 3*

Since 2005, Washington state has contributed nearly \$75 million for water supply projects to the Odessa region, a significant state investment in a federally owned project. Local landowners have invested through repayment of municipal bonds secured by the East Columbia Basin Irrigation District. The local community ultimately carries the significant share of the costs for this effort.

In the letter, the League urges Washington state representatives to work with Reclamation to allocate \$25 million to help complete East Low Canal, a critical infrastructure project in the Odessa region.

The League called on the Federal government to fulfill their role. Investment in water infrastructure is a responsible investment in the nation's economy. Completing the East Low Canal will protect \$840 million in annual economic activity, including \$630 million in regional agricultural associated sales and \$211 million in regional income.

## League Advocates for OGWRP Funding

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) recognizes that Federal funding cannot meet all our nation's infrastructure demands. Consequently Reclamation is working to identify opportunities to foster public-private partnerships (P3). Reclamation developed a Request for Information (RFI) to gather feedback from private entities interested in investing in P3's for aging infrastructure and water supply projects.

This RFI sought general feedback on the potential of utilizing P3 funding to develop Reclamation projects. Utilizing P3 funding arrangements where feasible could free up scarce federal funds for projects that are not able to utilize private sector funds.

The League took this opportunity to provide a response to the RFI. In the response, Executive Director Vicky Scharlau highlighted that the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program (OGWRP) is a prime example of a successful P3 and requested that Reclamation keep the Columbia Basin Project in mind as they receive feedback from interested investors. The League implored Reclamation to fight for robust funding for OGWRP in the 2018 Fiscal Year and future budget requests.

## EL 47.5 Pump Station Progress

*Jed Crowther, Development Coordinator, ECBID*

The East Columbia Basin Irrigation District continues to make progress on the EL 47.5 pump station site. The attached pictures tell the story of foundation work for the water intake reservoir adjoining the East Low Canal. The purpose is to bring in the irrigation water from the canal and provide a steady source for efficient water delivery.



*EL 47.5 Pump station site.*

Next steps include the forming of a concrete deck floor above the wall structure, with the stability to mount the pumps and piping. Then, after the canal is emptied in the fall, the soil inside will be removed and serve as the water intake reservoir, direct from the main canal.

On a parallel course, engineering review is proceeding, together with pipeline design and easement acquisition. A hydraulic modeling study is also being performed to assure suitable water flow.

In summary, tasks are advancing together to achieve the result of providing reliable replacement irrigation water.



*EL 47.5 Pump station site construction progress.*




## Waiting for Water

The League's short documentary film has a name! *Waiting for Water* is currently nearing the end of production with North 40 Productions, an established film production company based in Wenatchee. The film will be released later this year.

*Waiting for Water* serves as a multi-purpose tool for advocacy, fundraising, public awareness, and education. The goal of the film is to connect the Columbia Basin Project with the hearts of stakeholders and inspire them to invest, maintain, and support the Project. League representatives will take the film to Olympia and Washington, DC when asking for state and federal support and funding. The League will also take the film to local government, business, and civic organizations to raise awareness among those who live and work within the Project. The film will be shared with schools and the media to foster and broaden stakeholder support and prioritization. *Waiting for Water* will be featured on the League's new website (to be launched later this summer) and shared via social media.

A comprehensive distribution plan has been developed to maximize the film's potential to create an environment conducive to effective actions that address threats to the Project. The Grant County Journal, Cherry Creek Radio, local television channel NCWLife, lifestyle television show Washington Grown, area school districts and colleges, and regional economic development councils and chambers are just a few of the organizations who have committed to promoting the film.

Anyone who lives, works, or plays in the Columbia Basin benefits from the economic vitality made possible by the Columbia Basin Project. Preserving and protecting the foundation of the region's vitality, quality of life, and a secure tomorrow is a shared responsibility. Contributions offset the costs of film production and distribution. Will you help? Donate by completing the inserted pledge form and return to CBDL.



# THE LEAGUE THANKS THE DONORS TO DATE WHO HAVE PROVIDED SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT:

WARDEN HUTTERIAN BRETHERN

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## The Columbia Basin Project: Continuing the Legacy

Keep your finger on the pulse of Columbia Basin Project developments, news, issues, and information at the 2017 CBDL Annual Conference, Thursday, November 2 at Big Bend Community College in Moses Lake!

Hear from issue experts, policymakers, irrigation district managers and staff, and more on the latest water policy, management, and funding issues relevant to your day-to-day and centered on the Conference theme: The Columbia Basin Project: Continuing the Legacy.

Join 150 Columbia Basin Project landowners, leaders, policy makers, decision-makers, and stakeholders to network, learn, and share information. View the League's new short documentary film, *Waiting for Water*, on the big screen!



The Conference schedule has been changed to better meet attendee needs and preferences! The Conference will begin earlier in the day and conclude by 5:00 PM.

### General Conference Schedule

9:00 AM	Registration and Check-in
10:00 AM	Presentations and Panel Discussions
12:00 PM	Lunch
1:00 PM	Presentations and Panel Discussions
3:15 PM	Annual Meeting featuring Keynote Speaker
4:00 PM	Reception and Raffle

Conference registration will be opening soon.

Gain unique industry exposure for your company and support the continued development of the Project through Conference sponsorship. Sponsorships are available at a variety of levels and offer opportunities for onsite signage, ads in the program, recognition from the stage, and more. Check out [www.cbdl.org](http://www.cbdl.org) or contact Becca Freimuth ([becca@cbdl.org](mailto:becca@cbdl.org)) for information.

## Regulatory Streamlining Efforts in Congress

*Annick Miller Rivera, Senior Policy Advisor, Water Strategies LLC*

As with the Columbia Basin, water infrastructure is a vital part of all communities. However, these important projects can take years of planning and environmental reviews to gain approval. All too often, federal environmental studies and permitting process can significantly delay a project and add thousands of dollars to the final project costs. There are currently two bills in the House of Representatives that address these issues.

To address the delays in the feasibility study timeline, Congressman Newhouse (R-WA) introduced H.R. 875—Bureau of Reclamation Water Project Streamlining Act. This bill requires Reclamation feasibility studies to be completed within three years, and have a maximum federal cost of \$3 million. The goal is to expedite the environmental planning and study process for new water projects so that projects are not perpetually stuck in “study mode.”

As Congressman Newhouse has stated, “Streamlining water storage and infrastructure projects will help communities in the arid West plan for the future... The growth of our communities and our ability to confront frequent drought depend on access to new water resources, so the framework for developing these projects should not be bogged down by delayed permits and endless reviews.”

The second bill, H.R. 1654, the Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act, was introduced by Congressman McClintock (R-CA) in response to the delays in the federal permitting process, especially the lack of coordination among federal agencies. The bill creates a “one-stop-shop” permitting process through the Reclamation for water projects. This framework is intended to reduce the delays by coordinating a unified review of a project. This bill passed, with bipartisan support, the House of Representatives on June 22, 2017. The legislation next goes to the Senate.

Both of these bills work to ensure that important water projects move beyond the study phase by streamlining burdensome regulations and cumbersome government permitting processes that have greatly slowed or stalled water projects.

### Help Us Save on Mailing Costs!

Help us save on printing and mailing costs by opting to receive an email version of this newsletter.

Visit [www.cbdl.org](http://www.cbdl.org) to sign up, or send us an email:

[info@cbdl.org](mailto:info@cbdl.org).



## Who Has Made a Difference?

Who are the leaders and influencers that have demonstrated steadfast commitment and played significant roles in Columbia Basin Project development? Who has made a long term investment of time and resources to protect the \$4 billion of cumulative economic activity generated each year within the Project?

Honor the heroes who have helped make history by supporting infrastructure reinvestment and continued development of the Columbia Basin Project, securing the region's future. Nominations are being sought for the 2017 League Perseverance Award and Honorary Life Member Award.

Visit [www.cbdl.org](http://www.cbdl.org) to nominate someone today. Nominations end September 8, 2017.

### Perseverance Award

Perseverance is the ability to carry on until you complete the task regardless of how hard it may seem. Recipients of this award demonstrate the ability to fight on no matter the odds.

#### Past Recipients:

2016	The Woods Family, Wenatchee
2015	Art Prior, Othello
2012	Alice Parker, Royal City



*2016 award recipient Rufus Woods accepts Perseverance award on behalf of the Wilfred Woods Family.*

### Honorary Life Member

Honorary Life Members have demonstrated their support of the Columbia Basin Project and its future development with tireless and significant dedication to efforts that advance the Project.

#### Past Recipients:

2016	Richard LeMargie
2015	Christine Gregoire
2014	Richard "Dick" Erickson

2014	Shannon McDaniel
2014	Bill Gray
2013	Senator Mark Schoesler
2013	Senator Judy Warnick
2012	Alice Parker
1991	Chan Bailey
1989	Joe Jantz
1988	Frank Shinn
1988	Reid Phillips
1987	Honorable Frank "Tub" Hansen
1987	Honorable Curt Smith
1987	Honorable Glynn Chandler
1983	Wistar Burgess
1983	Robert Kissler
1983	E. Roy Mundy
1983	Max Webb
1978	Hu Blonk
1977	William G. "Bill" Wolford
1977	Roger Thieme
1977	Honorable Henry M. Jackson
1974	David Gallant
1973	Sarge Hubbard
1971	Paul Hamilton
1970	William E. Rawlings
1969	C.J. Edwards
1969	James H. Dodson
1968	E.C. "Ned" Thomas
1967	Honorable Warren Magnuson
1966	Loen L. Bailie
1965	J.A. "Jake" Weber
1965	Don Damon
1965	Judge B.B. Horrigan
1964	Billy Clapp, Ephrata
1964	Frank T. Bell

## CBDL Membership Online

The League's website offers the choice to pay membership online.

New members can also sign up at the site.

Offering the ability to sign up online is just another way we are trying to better serve our members.

Go to [www.cbdl.org](http://www.cbdl.org) for more information.

## THANKS TO OUR 2017 MEMBERS

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Washington State Potato Commission

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Lincoln County Commissioners  
Nelson Irrigation Corp  
Quincy Columbia Basin Irrigation District  
Quincy Foods LLC  
Stahl Hutterian Brethren  
Twin City Foods, Inc.  
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Washington State Water Resources Association

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Anderville Farms Inc-Ellensburg  
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Basic American Foods  
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Big Bend Ag Appraisals

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Black Sands Irrigation District  
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BR Bair Farms Inc  
Brett & Bryan LLC  
Bruce & Diana Carlson Inc  
Campbell Kirson Farms LLC  
Canyon Crest Farms  
Carnosi LLC  
Carpenter McGuire & DeWulf PS  
Cecelia Quirk  
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Grange Supply Company of Odessa  
Grant County EDC  
Grant County PUD  
Grigg Farms  
H Lee Farms Inc  
HDR Engineering Inc  
Helena Chemical Company  
Hendrix Farms LLC  
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Lenwood Farms Inc  
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Lincoln County EDC  
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Moses Lake -Warden Air Service, Inc  
Nancy Franz  
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Phillips Family Farms, LLC  
Phillips Ranch Corp  
Piper Ranch  
Pomeroy Farms  
Port of Pasco  
Port of Royal Slope  
Port of Warden/Grant County District #8  
Prior Farms LLC  
Qualls Agricultural Laboratory  
R & J Lyle LLC  
R & L St. Hilaire LLC  
Radach Farms Inc  
RAFCO Inc  
Rex Harder

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Richard Quirk  
Richard Stevens  
RJ Circle Farms Inc  
Rod Rottinghaus Farms  
Rosebud Vineyards, Inc.  
RP Stucky Properties LLC  
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Tippett Company of Washington LLC  
Tom Downs Farms  
Treat Farms  
Triple C Land Company  
Underhill Farms Inc  
Vernon & Marilyn Phillips  
Viewpoint Bank  
Voss Farms of Pasco LLC  
Wacker Farm  
Wajer Farms Inc  
Walker Gravel LLC  
Washington Association of Wheat Growers  
Washington State - Office of Representative Joe Schmick  
Washington Winegrowers Association  
Wes King Ranch  
Wilbur Security Company  
William Riley  
Windflow Fertilizer Inc  
Windy Prairie Inc  
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Ephrata Chamber of Commerce  
Grand Coulee Dam Area Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Connell Area Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Othello Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Spokane Incorporated  
Moses Lake Chamber of Commerce  
Odessa Chamber of Commerce  
Pasco Chamber of Commerce  
Quincy Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Ritzville Area Chamber of Commerce  
Soap Lake Chamber of Commerce  
Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce