COLUMBIA BASIN DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE

SEPTEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Issue 8

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.

USBR Repayment Rates Lower than Expected

Mike Schwisow, CBDL Director of Government Relations

In the early stages of Columbia Basin Project (CBP) development, CBP lands were divided into designated farm blocks. These farm blocks informed the development of the CBP for water delivery. Each CBP irrigation district has a repayment contract, or Master Water Service Contract (MWSC), with the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) for lands within these farm blocks, allowing the districts to write water delivery contracts with farm block landowners. Through these contracts, repayment rates were set for landowners to pay USBR, through the irrigation district, for the Federal investment in CBP facilities such as Grand Coulee Dam, Main Canal, etc.

But not all CBP lands are neatly included within these designated farm blocks. For lands outside of farm blocks, the districts have additional MWSC's with USBR allowing them to write water delivery contracts with landowners of lands not designated as a farm block. In East Columbia Basin Irrigation District (ECBID), lands outside of farm blocks are mostly east of East Low Canal; primarily impacting landowners served by the Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program (OGWRP).

Last year, USBR extended ECBID's MWSC, for lands outside of designated farm blocks, for another 40 years. After the extension, USBR initiated a rate review and rate setting process to amend the MWSC's repayment rates. While the rates have not been amended in quite some time, USBR has the option to amend the rates every five years to better reflect current conditions.

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IN THIS ISSUE

USBR Repayment Rates Lower than Expected	1
MOU Governs Columbia Basin Project Development	1
From the Chair	2
Upcoming Events	2
QCBID Prepares for Construction and Maintenance Season	2
Quincy Farmers Event Raises Awareness for Agriculture and the CBP	3
WSDA Head Says He is a Fan of Columbia Basin	3
Culbertson to Speak at October CBDL Board Meeting	4
Growing Water Infrastructure Needs and Outside the Box Ideas	4
2016 CBDL Conference at a Glance	5

USBR's rate review and rate setting process includes a payment capacity study and an ability to pay analysis to estimate both the farmer and the irrigation district's ability to pay. Findings are used to inform landowner repayment rates for the Federal investment in CBP infrastructure.

In August, USBR notified ECBID that the rate review and rate setting process for this MWSC, impacting those landowners in the First Phase Continuation Area, was complete. The new rate is almost half of what was originally anticipated by ECBID: Good news for landowners. The rate set for 2017-2021 is \$3.89 per acre-foot. Since OGWRP contracts are for three acre feet, the repayment cost will be \$11.67 per acre, per year.

This is an important first step as USBR works toward the amendment of this MWSC to provide ECBID with contracting authority for the 70,000 acre Odessa Subarea Special Study water supply. USBR Commissioner Lopez is expected to issue a Basis of Negotiation soon that will allow USBR Regional Director Lorri Lee to negotiate this amendment with ECBID, making water supplies available for the entire OGWRP program.

MOU Governs Columbia Basin Project Development

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in 2004 between the State of Washington, specifically the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; the three Columbia Basin Project (CBP) Irrigation Districts; and the United States Bureau of Reclamation, Pacific Northwest Region, Columbia-Cascades Area Office (USBR). The MOU was an outcome of



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From the Chair

Orman Johnson

With fall at our doorstep, we turn our attention to finalizing plans for our Conference on November 3 at ATEC, Big Bend Community College in Moses Lake. This year's theme is "Infrastructure, Operations, and Maintenance - What it takes to keep the largest Reclamation project going." Check out our conference article for more information and complete the attached registration form or register online at www.cbdl.org.

Back by popular demand, CBDL will conduct a raffle with drawings throughout the event. Tickets are only \$1 each and will be available onsite.

In addition to conference details,

read on for updates on the Master Water Service Contract; the Memo of Understanding between USBR, Ecology, and the Irrigation Districts and its recent term extension; League Trustees raising awareness for the CBP; and an update from Quincy Columbia Basin Irrigation District.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CBDL Board Meeting Tuesday, October, 25 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM Simplot, Moses Lake

CBDL Conference Thursday, November 3 ATEC, Big Bend Community College, Moses Lake

MOU Governs Columbia Basin Project Development Continued from page 1

Governor Locke's Columbia River Initiative (CRI)., started in 2001 to make more water available to eastern Washington.

The MOU serves as the basis for cooperation, by each signing partner, to address Columbia Basin Project-related issues and the unmet needs of the Columbia Basin Project as well as Ecology's need for water to implement provisions of the Columbia River Initiative

Components of the MOU include a storage program, drought relief, provisions for municipal and industrial water supply, Odessa Subarea solutions, and Potholes Reservoir operations. Additional provisions include Lake Roosevelt incremental storage release. In the last year, the MOU term was extended from December 31, 2014 to December 31, 2024, ensuring a cooperative partnership into the future.

The partners meet regularly to review progress and coordinate actions by their respective organizations. The most recent meeting occurred in mid-August. CBDL Government Relations Director Mike Schwisow attended as a contractor for the Irrigation Districts and acted as moderator.

QCBID Prepares for Construction and Maintenance Season

As fall approaches, the three Columbia Basin Project Irrigation Districts are beginning to wind down their irrigation seasons.

Darvin Fales, Irrigation District Manager from the Quincy Columbia Basin Irrigation District (QCBID), reported that as irrigation deliveries are beginning to decline, routine maintenance efforts are starting to increase. Extra staff hours will be devoted to smaller jobs through September and October to prepare QCBID for larger maintenance and construction efforts planned once water delivery ends.

The full construction and maintenance season begins each year in November and runs through February. QCBID is currently looking for contractors for larger system improvements such as the concrete lining of earthen canals on Frenchman Hills, a primary focus during this construction season. When these higher elevation canals breach, there is potential for significant damage below. Lining the canals with a geo-membrane or concrete reduces erosion that leads to breaching, improves conservation, leads to better flow characteristics, and the project has a 30-40 year life span which decreases maintenance expenses.

QCBID is also working on a budget to assure funds are available to repair laterals and replace pumping plant transformers that are coming to the end of their useful life. These transformers serve pumping plants with capacity of 8,000-10,000 horsepower and this large scale makes replacing them a significant investment. 2

Quincy Farmers Event Raises Awareness for Agriculture and the CBP



Since 1981, the Quincy Farmer Consumer Awareness Day (QFCAD) event has given the public a firsthand look at what agriculture is all about, specifically within the Columbia Basin. The event demonstrates where groceries come from while providing opportunities for the public to talk with the farmers who grow them for a living. Over the years, the event has grown to include tours of area processing plants and farms, displays of farm equipment, information and commodity booths, educational talks, a farmer's market, parade, fun run, afternoon entertainment and activities, food booths, and much more. The result has been an event that links consumers to the source of their food and firmly credits agriculture with the economic vitality of the area.

This year, Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Director Derek Sandison was recognized as Honorary Farmer of the Year for his work promoting continued development in the Columbia Basin Project during his time with the Department of Ecology and now as Director of Agriculture.

Also during this year's event, CBDL Board Trustees, John Moody, Alice Parker, and Dale Pomeroy returned to represent the League at an information booth with displays and handouts.

Rooted in Eastern Washington – WSDA Head Says He is a Fan of Columbia Basin

By Sebastian Moraga, The Quincy Valley Post Register | September 9, 2016 | Reprinted with permission



Derek Sandison, WSDA Director.

Derek Sandison is not your everyday bureaucrat. Nope. He knows what it's like.

"I remember it was a lot of work," he wrote in an email from Olympia.

It, in this case, was the vineyard Sandison owned and ran in Ellensburg almost 20 years ago. Planting, training, trellising – Sandison has done it.

"Ultimately, it got too difficult to hold a full-time job and keep my vineyard," said Sandison, who followed his day job all the way to the state capital, where he heads the Washington State Department of Agriculture.

Sandison, FCAD's 2016 Honorary Farmer of the Year, said he still holds a soft spot for Central Washington and, in particular, the Columbia Basin, of which he declares himself a fan.

"As a kid, we used to go there from Port Angeles for vacations and it made a huge impression on me, especially the tremendous production and infrastructure there," he wrote in an email, adding "When I visit now, I feel a lot of pride and a great deal of gratitude that I was able to make a significant contribution to the expansion of the Colum-

bia Basin Project through my work on the Odessa Groundwater Replacement project."

The former head of the state's Department of Ecology, Sandison has a unique perspective on land issues in this state, from both a conservation standpoint and a farming standpoint.

As head of the Office of Columbia River at Ecology, the focus was on developing water supplies, Sandison wrote. Now at WSDA, "our support goes beyond water. Of course, water is vitally important to agriculture and I am still a passionate advocate for assuring adequate water supplies," he added. "Due to the broad sweep of issues here, we don't have the luxury of focusing on just one aspect of the industry."

His position as the leader of the state's department of agriculture allows him to witness the sometimes contentious relationship between the state and family farms.

"We recognize that it can be challenging for family farms," he wrote. "At WSDA we advocate for farmers, focusing on understanding the regulatory

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"It always seems impossible until it's done. "

-Nelson Mandela

Nevertheless, Sandison relishes the work that takes him to ag country a good 45,000 miles per year.

issues facing them and helping to identify solutions."

"It does consume my thoughts," he wrote. "The health and viability of the industry, including the food processors. That's why I fought so hard to secure additional water from the Columbia River for the Columbia Basin

Rooted in Eastern Washington – WSDA Head Says He is a Fan of Columbia Basin Continued from page 3

Project."

At the same time, even for a veteran such as himself, the job came with a bit of a learning curve.

"While I was already pretty familiar with many facets of agriculture, some issues have been new to me," he wrote.

One such issue was how to control invasive pests like the apple maggot and the gypsy moth, he wrote. Another such issue was the constant back-and-forth of trade relations.

"Working with the International Marketing Program, and going on overseas trade missions was an eye-opening for realizing how complex, fragile and important trade relations are" for the state and its ag industry, he added.

Such extensive traveling has helped him spread the gospel of Washington Ag in a broad range of forums, almost as broad as the number of crops grown in the Evergreen State. By his count, Washington farmers produce around 300 crops.

"Yes, most know us for our apples, but Washington's top crops include wheat, potatoes, hay, cherries, grapes, and hops. We produce more mint than any other state and our hops supply most of the country. But no matter what the crop is, Washington agriculture products are known literally around the world for their premium quality."

That reputation includes, of course, wines, a small point of pride for the former vintner.

"The attributes in our state such as location, latitude and climate produce very high quality grapes that make wines with great character," he wrote. "Washington ranks second in the nation for premium wine production and 40 percent of the grapes were planted in the last 10 years."

Asked if the winery boom was something he foresaw during his days as a winemaker, his answer leaves no room for doubt.

"Absolutely!" he wrote. "We have the right conditions to produce world-class wines."

Sandison, along with the 2016 Farm Family of the Year, will be honored at noon on the FCAD main stage.

Culbertson to Speak at October CBDL Board Meeting



Tim Culbertson, Manager, Columbia Basin Hydropower.

Tim Culbertson, Manager for Columbia Basin Hydropower (CBHP), will be speaking at the next CBDL Board Meeting on Tuesday, October 25 at Simplot in Moses Lake. CBHP is the power generation entity that was formed by the three Columbia Basin Project Irrigation Districts and focuses on developing electrical generation facilities in the Columbia Basin Project. Culbertson has over 43 years of executive management, power management, and overall utility operations experience in west coast utilities. He has testified before many Western State, Senate, and Congressional committees on energy issues and has served on the executive committees for the Large Public Power Council, Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee and the Public Generating Pool. He has also been heavily involved in Northwest energy issues serving as a member of the executive and energy committees at the Washington Public Utility Districts Association and has served on the regions' Wind Integration Steering Committee. He will update the CBDL Board on current progress on several Federal Energy Regulatory Commission licensed projects.

Growing Water Infrastructure Needs and Outside the Box Ideas

Ian Lyle, Water Strategies LLC



lan Lyle, Director of Government Relations, Water Strategies, LLC

In the United States we are fortunate that leaders like Theodore Roosevelt recognized the importance of water supply infrastructure. This foresight led to the creation of the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) and some of the most impressive works of engineering the world has ever seen. This investment in infrastructure has paid dividends many times over as the Western United States largely grew around the construction of these USBR water infrastructure projects. The combination of the water provided by these projects and the grit and determination of the irrigators that put this water to beneficial use has helped the West prosper for generations.

The value of water infrastructure has not changed since President Roosevelt's time. However, a number of factors within the federal appropriation process have made the allocation of federal dollars for water projects pale in comparison to the estimated infrastructure need. Recognizing budget limitations, Congress and water users have begun looking for alternative funding

Growing Water Infrastructure Needs and Outside the Box Ideas Continued from page 4

like the Water Infrastructure Financing Act which was signed into law as a part of the 2014 Water Resources Reform and Development Act, and the USBR Infrastructure Financing Act which has been introduced as a part of the California Long Term Provisions for Water Supply and Short-Term Provisions for Emergency Drought Relief Act.

Another water infrastructure financing proposal that has been discussed in draft form is the Water Infrastructure Loan Act or WILA. This draft proposal is modeled after an existing program used for rail infrastructure called the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) program. Congress has authorized the RRIF program twice and to date the program has loaned out over 2.7 billion dollars for railroad infrastructure improvements. The draft WILA proposal builds on the model set up by RRIF but directs resources toward water infrastructure.

Under the draft WILA proposal, a revolving loan fund would be set up within the Department of the Treasury and administered by the Department of the Interior. This loan fund would have \$35 billion in loan authority. Loans made under WILA could cover up to 100% of project costs and loan rates would be set at the T-Bill rate at the time the loan was made. This rate has ranged from 2.11 percent to 3.01 percent this year for a thirty-year loan. The loan repayment period would be determined in the loan agreement but the draft proposal would allow for loan repayment periods as long as 40 years. A minimum loan amount would be set at \$5 million and no loan maximum is mentioned in the draft proposal.

One unique part of the WILA proposal is that bill proponents believe the program could be structured so that it does not have a cost to the federal treasury and would therefore not run into score issues at the Congressional Budget Office. This, according to bill proponents, is possible because loan applicants would pay a credit risk premium at the time the loan was made. For RRIF loans, which WILA is based on, premiums have ranged between 2 and 8 percent of the total loan amount, this fee covers the estimated subsidy cost of the loan. This credit risk premium would eventually be applied to the loan as it nears term completion. This means that the upfront cost of the credit risk premium would eventually come back to the loan applicant.

With trillions of dollars of water infrastructure investment needed in the U.S. the WILA draft proposes a unique program that merits consideration. However, as with any proposed legislation, a number of challenges remain. Given the very short legislative calendar remaining in the 114th Congress the likelihood of WILA being introduced, passed, and signed into law is minimal. But the WILA legislative framework is something that a new congress may take interest in as it aims to address our nation's infrastructure funding needs.

2016 CBDL Conference at a Glance

The 2016 CBDL Conference, on Thursday, November 3, at ATEC, Big Bend Community College in Moses Lake, provides a unique opportunity for landowners, industry members, district staff, local leaders, elected officials, policy makers, and others to network, hear updates, learn about current issues, and share information. This year's theme is *Infrastructure, Operations, and Maintenance: what it takes to keep the largest Reclamation project going*.

CBDL will highlight successful and ongoing water delivery within the Columbia Basin Project due to the infrastructure built and maintained over the past 60+ years while also looking to future needs for continued delivery and development.



Speaker Highlight

Dr. Jennifer Adam is an Associate Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Washington State University. She is also the Associate Director of the Washington State Water Research Center. At the CBDL Conference, Dr. Adam will discuss the 2016 Columbia River Basin Supply and Demand Forecast.

Register by completing the attached form and emailing, mailing or faxing it to CBDL. Online registration is also available at *www.cbdl.org*.

Email Address – *info@cbdl.org* Mailing Address – CBDL, PO Box 745, Cashmere, WA 98815 Fax Number – 509-782-1203

Thank you to our 2016 CBDL Presenting Sponsor, the Washington State Potato Commission.



Additional Presentations

Infrastructure Needs, What it Takes to Keep Things Going Lorri Lee, USBR Pacific Northwest Regional Director

A View from the Canals

Dave Solem | SCBID Nate Andreini | ECBID Darvin Fales | QCBID Clint Wertz | USBR Ephrata Field Office

Politics and Federal Financing

Ian Lyle, Water Strategies, Washington DC

Next Steps for Odessa Ground Water Replacement Program

Construction | ECBID Staff Federal Funding and Financing | CBDL Government Relations Director Mike Schwisow State Funding and Bonds | Washington State Senator Judy Warnick



CONFERENCE and ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION

Thursday - November 3, 2016 -- ATEC Bldg 1800 Big Bend Campus, 7611 Bolling St NE, Moses Lake

<u>AFTERNOON</u> 1:00-5:00 Conference presentations	EVENING 5:00 Reception (no host) 6:00 Dinner, Annual meeting			
Company:	Dinner (Option:	Beef 🗆 Fish 🗆 V	/eg.
Please Print Name:	· ·			
Mailing Address:				
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	E-mail:(Important)			
Additional Attendee Names: Please Print				
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TICKET OPTIONS	QUANTITY	PRICE	<u>AFTER 10/21</u>	TOTAL
Full Registration (includes: Conference, Annual Meeting, & Dinner).		\$55 each	\$75 each	\$
Conference Only (afternoon)		\$27 each	\$40 each	\$
Annual Meeting/Dinner Only (evening)		\$43 each	\$55 each	\$
Company Table Display Display your company information during the annual meeting. Space is limited and is first paid, first served.		\$150 each		\$
		TOTA	AL PAYMENT S	6
Refund Policy : Upon written request, the Columbia Basin Develops administrative fee or \$10 (whichever is greater) provided the request October 7 will not be honored				
Please send check before Friday, October 2	8, to: CBDL, PO B	ox 745, Casl	hmere, WA 98815	
Since 1964, the CBDL has supported the Columbia Basin In	rrigation Project and	d its future de	evelopment. We prot	ect its water

ice 1964, the CBDL has supported the Columbia Basin Irrigation 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. Phone 509-782-9442 | Website <u>www.cbdl.org</u>

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