
**Agriculture & Ecology
Committee**

HB 2874

Brief Description: Authorizing the department of ecology to enter into agreements to allocate Columbia basin project waters.

Sponsors: Representatives Schoesler and Grant.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows the Department of Ecology to enter certain agreements with the United States for allocating groundwaters related to the Columbia Basin Project.

Hearing Date: 2/8/02

Staff: Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).

Background:

The Columbia Basin Project of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation receives its waters from Franklin D. Roosevelt Lake behind Grand Coulee Dam. The project is delivered water by way of Banks Lake and currently includes over 600,000 irrigated acres. The Department of Ecology has entered an agreement with the Bureau and has adopted implementing rules for managing certain comingled waters associated with the project. Under these rules the department may issue water use permits, including those for using waters stored artificially by the Bureau as part of the project. (WAC 173-134A-090.)

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Ecology (DOE) may enter into agreements with the United States for the allocation of Columbia Basin Project waters stored underground either intentionally or incidentally to the irrigation of the Columbia Basin Project. The agreements must be consistent with authorized purposes of the project, federal and state reclamation laws, and repayment contract obligations of the United States regarding the project. Before implementing such an agreement, the DOE, with the concurrence of the United States, must adopt rules establishing the procedures for implementing the agreement. The DOE may accept funds to cover any administrative and staff expenses that it incurs in connection with

such an agreement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.