

WATER FOR THE ODESSA SUBAREA

RCW 90.90.020: "(3) The department of ecology shall focus its efforts to develop water supplies for the Columbia river basin on the following needs:

(a) Alternatives to groundwater for agricultural users in the Odessa subarea aquifer."

Lake Roosevelt Incremental Storage Releases: Annually, releases at Lake Roosevelt will draw down the lake by an additional foot, delivering 82,500 acre-feet of water. Of that, 30,000 acre feet will be used to replace groundwater withdrawals with surface water that will support 10,000 acres of farmland in the Odessa subarea. A second siphon at Weber Complex was constructed to convey the water to the portion of the Odessa Subarea located south of I-90.

Coordinated Conservation Plan: OCR assisted the Columbia Basin irrigation districts in developing a Coordinated Conservation Plan. Each year, Ecology funds conservation projects under the plan. Water savings are used to replace groundwater in the Odessa. From 2009 through 2014, OCR contracted projects netted water savings totalling 30,000 ac-ft, freeing up enough water to irrigate almost 10,000 acres of land.

Potholes Supplemental Feedroute: This project received funding from OCR to give flexibility and reliability to the Columbia Basin Project by providing an additional route for conveying project water to Potholes Reservoir. By easing demand on the East Low Canal, the project will allow surface water to be delivered more efficiently to Odessa lands currently served by groundwater. The Bureau of Reclamation chose Crab Creek and Frenchman Hills Wasteway to serve as the supplemental feedroute. Construction of Frenchman Hills Wasteway was completed in March 2008. Improvements at Crab Creek are underway.

Odessa Subarea Special Study: With funding from OCR, the Bureau of Reclamation conducted the Odessa Subarea Special Study to investigate replacing groundwater with surface water. The study's preferred alternative is a "Modified Partial Groundwater Replacement" It requires 164,000 ac-ft of water for up to 70,000 acres of land.

East Low Canal/Lind Coulee: East Low Canal/Lind Coulee: OCR is funding a project to widen 45 miles of East Low Canal from I-90 south to Scootney Wasteway and construct two siphons and a new gate at Lind Coulee Wasteway. Further funding is needed to add capacity to three other siphons downstream of Lind Coulee. The remaining infrastructure (pumping plants and pipelines) needed to move water from East Low Canal to the farms will be financed and constructed by irrigators. The project provides the capacity needed to deliver surface water to about 90,000 acres of land in the Odessa subarea.

