

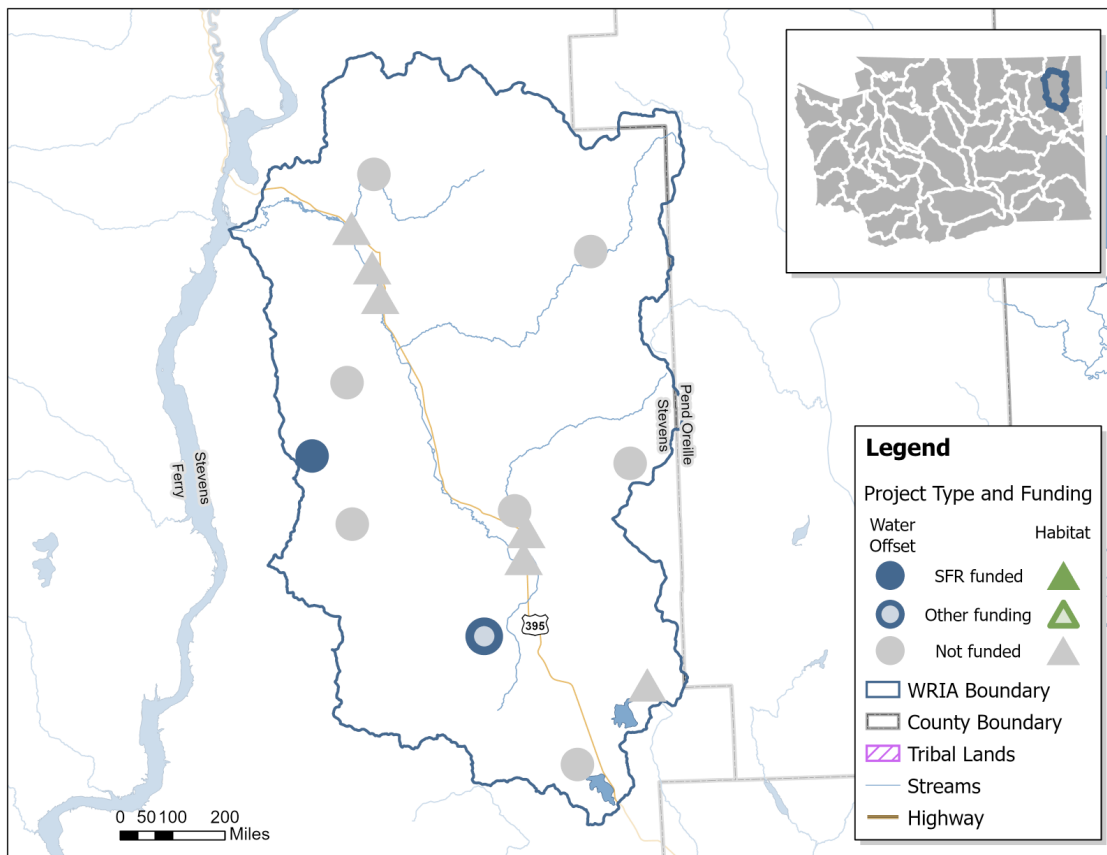
# Watershed Plan Implementation Assessment for the Colville Watershed

The Washington Department of Ecology adopted the Colville River Watershed Plan Addendum on June 25, 2020, as a part of the Streamflow Restoration law (RCW 90.94.020). The Colville River Watershed is also known as Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 59. Plan implementation is ongoing as local entities secure funding and develop their projects intended to offset the impacts on streamflows from new domestic permit-exempt (PE) wells and achieve a net ecological benefit.

Ecology assesses plan implementation periodically and conducts outreach to WRIA 59 partners and project sponsors to present information to the best of our ability. This assessment provides an update on:

- Local water offset and habitat projects (as defined in the watershed plan).
- Current and projected new domestic PE wells.
- Current estimated and projected consumptive water use impacts from these new wells.

## Projects in WRIA 59 (Colville Watershed)

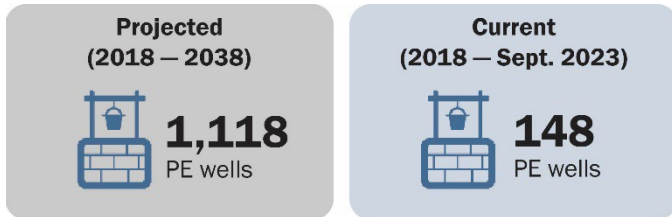


Approximate locations of projects in WRIA 59 from the adopted plan. Projects contribute to the anticipated net ecological benefit and offset the impacts from new PE wells. Projects are funded through either Ecology’s Streamflow Restoration (SFR) grant or other funding sources. Basin-wide projects are not shown on the map.

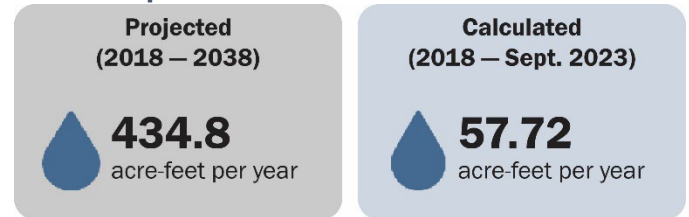
## Watershed plan implementation

Ecology is using the following parameters to track progress on plan implementation.

### Number of new PE wells installed

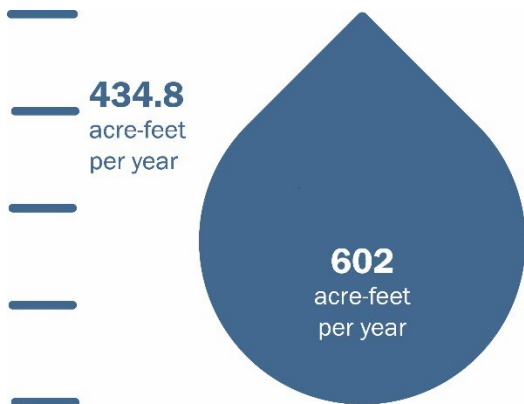


### Consumptive water use from PE wells



### Water offset from completed projects

We estimate the offset from completed projects exceeds the projected consumptive water use.



**Water offset projects completed: 2**

### Funding sources

Projects underway are funded either by Ecology’s streamflow restoration grants or other sources.



## Implementation snapshot

- Installation of new PE wells in WRIA 59 (Colville River Watershed) is proceeding at a slower rate than the local watershed plan projected (52% below the projected rate). Using the plan’s assumption of consumptive water use per new PE well, Ecology estimates the consumptive water use impacts from these new wells is also 52% below the projected rate.
- In 2019, 2020, and 2022, Ecology received a total of 6 applications seeking competitive Streamflow Restoration grant funding for projects in the WRIA 59 watershed plan. One of those projects received a score sufficient for a funding offer. Ecology awarded \$95,000 to Stevens County to complete the Stranger Creek water right acquisition, which contributes 36 acre-feet per year of water offset.
- The Waitts Lake Creek project was completed using funding from Ecology’s Office of Columbia River and contributes 451 acre-feet per year of water offset.
- Based on the current available information, the water offset benefit from completed projects exceeds the projected consumptive water use from new PE wells identified in the watershed plan.

## Watershed plan summary

The Colville River watershed planning unit met from February 2018 to November 2019 to develop a watershed plan addendum that:

- Projected 1,118 new PE wells from years 2018 to 2038.
- Estimated the impact of these wells on rivers and streams at 434.8 acre-feet per year.
- Identified 10 water offset projects,<sup>1</sup> 5 non-water offset projects, and 1 WRIA-wide project to provide a [net ecological benefit](#) to streamflows.

### Projected PE well growth and consumptive water use (years 2018 - 2038)



**1,118**  
PE wells



**434.8**  
acre-feet per year

### Projected streamflow benefits from planned projects



**752**  
acre-feet per year

A volume of 434.8 acre-feet is equal to about 214 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

## Benefits of WRIA 59 plan implementation



Initiates locally led solutions.



Improves rivers and streams in the watershed.



Offsets consumptive water use from rural homes.

## Streamflow Restoration Law (RCW 90.94)

In January 2018, the Washington State Legislature passed the Streamflow Restoration law (RCW 90.94) to help restore streamflows to levels necessary to support robust, healthy, and sustainable salmon populations while providing water for new homes in rural Washington.

Ecology has been actively implementing this law since its passage. Ecology, in coordination with state and local agencies, Tribal governments, and non-profit organizations has funded, led, and supported a range of 15 diverse local watershed plans across the state. Ecology, with generous support from the Legislature has also implemented a competitive grant offering to help state and local agencies, tribal governments, and non-profit organizations implement projects in their local watershed plans required by this law.

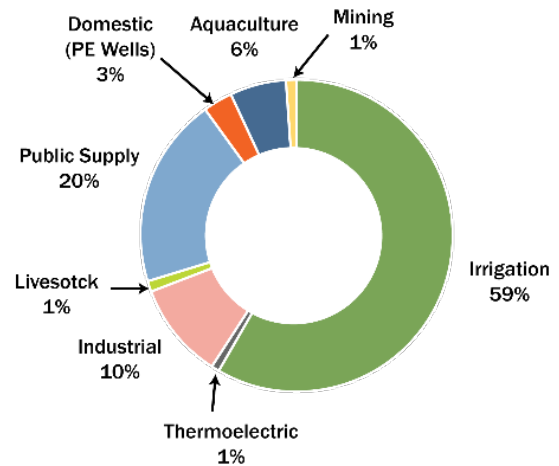
<sup>1</sup> From NEB Guidance (Publication number 19-11-079): Offset is the anticipated ability of a project or action to counterbalance some amount of the new consumptive water use over the next 20 years (2018 – 2038). Offsets need to continue beyond the 20-year period for as long as new well pumping continues.

## Consumptive water use in Washington State

Significant resources and collaboration went into statewide and local planning and ongoing local plan implementation to offset water use from domestic permit-exempt wells in Washington State.

Consumptive water use from these wells accounts for about 3% of water use in Washington, a small portion compared with other consumptive water uses.

### Consumptive Water Use in Washington State



Data adapted from U.S. Geological Survey's report on Water Use in Washington (2015).

## Webpages

- [Streamflow Restoration](https://ecology.wa.gov/StreamflowRestoration): ecology.wa.gov/StreamflowRestoration
- [Streamflow Restoration Grants](https://ecology.wa.gov/StreamflowGrants): ecology.wa.gov/StreamflowGrants

## Publications

- [Streamflow Restoration Competitive Grants Status](#): Publication number 22-11-026
- [Streamflow Restoration Planning Update](#): Publication number 21-11-015
- [Final Guidance for Determining Net Ecological Benefit](#): Publication number 19-11-079

## Other Resources

- [WRIA 59 Watershed Plan Addendum<sup>2</sup>](#) (PDF)

Watershed partners and project sponsors can update Ecology on the status of plan implementation by emailing [WRProjects@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:WRProjects@ecy.wa.gov).



Streamflow restoration program  
WRProjects@ecy.wa.gov  
360-688-8928



To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-6831 or email at WRPubs@ecy.wa.gov, or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341

<sup>2</sup> <https://apps.wa.gov/ecology/docs/WaterRights/wrwebpdf/wria59/WRIA59WatershedPlanAddendum.pdf>