

Access to Federal Stored Water Willamette Basin

Willamette Basin Project Overview

- **1954/1968 – USBOR filed water right applications**
- **1996 – Storage certificates issued to USBOR**
- **Water Rights: store water for irrigation use only**

Access to Stored Water Issues

- Storage water rights - irrigation only
- Storage space not allocated***
- Cost of water/contracting program



Seeking Access to Stored Water

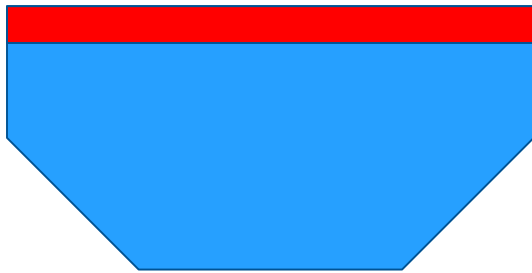
Long Process, Few Results

- **1994: Reservation Request**
- **1996: Willamette Basin Reservoir Study**
- **2000: Study put on hold due to ESA listing**
- **2008: SWMWP Report**
- **2008: Biological Opinion (Bi-Op) issued**

Seeking Access to Stored Water (*Bi-Op*)

- Conversion of stored water minimum perennial streamflows
- ORS 540.045(3) – stored water released in excess of water rights is “natural flow”
- Potential for unintended consequences – upper basin and tributaries

North Santiam River



Contracted
Storage

Natural
Flow/Public
Waters



Contracted
Storage

Protected
Stored Water
Releases

Natural
Flow/Public
Waters



United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 17, 2014

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army
108 Army Pentagon
Washington DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy,

As you make your decision
U.S. Army



JOHN A. KITZHABER, MD
GOVERNOR

April 9, 2012

Colonel John W. Eisenhauer, P.E.
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District Office
1125 NW Couch Street
Portland, OR 97209

Re: Willamette Basin Federal Storage Project

Dear Colonel Eisenhauer,

As you know, water stored in the Willamette Basin Federal Storage Project is essential to meeting future needs for irrigation, municipal water supply, economic development, ecological restoration and species recovery in Oregon's most populated river basin.

Recognizing the importance of this resource starting in 1996, the State of Oregon, through the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) began working cooperatively to develop a coordinated water resource plan for the use of stored water in the basin. Under the "Willamette Basin Reservoir Study," the USACE and OWRD worked together with a broad group of stakeholders to evaluate changes in the operation, storage, and allocation of water in the Project to better serve current and future water resource needs.

The Reservoir Study, however, was "put on hold" in 2000 following the listing of Willamette River populations of salmon and steelhead as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Although NMFS issued the biological opinion for the Willamette Project in 2008, the dialogue began with the Reservoir Study has not been reintroduced. The time is ripe to begin these efforts anew.

As an Action Agency under the 2008 Biological Opinion, I understand that the USACE must take steps to protect water resources for protection and recovery of important fish resources. While I support efforts needed to protect and recover ESA-listed species, the potential actions required to fulfill the obligation raise a number of questions for the State of Oregon and stakeholders in the Willamette Basin. These questions include:

- How much of the 1.64 million acre-feet of water stored in the Willamette Basin Project is needed to implement the Biological Opinion and on?
- How will the remaining stored water be allocated among competing uses?
- How will the allocation of water in the Willamette Basin Project be managed to protect stream and riparian habitat and public recreation?

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OREGON WATER UTILITIES COUNCIL
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I. Background

The federal storage projects in the Willamette Basin (Willamette Basin projects) consist of 13 reservoirs that store 1.64 million acre-feet of water for later use. The reservoirs are managed and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) issues contracts for storage space for water to be used for irrigation.

Control Acts of 1938 and 1950 authorized the USACE to construct and operate the Basin projects. Congress authorized the projects for flood control, the release of stored water for generation of hydroelectric power and for the several conservation uses, including: potable water supply; and reduction of stream pollution in the interests of public health and recreation.

Suppliers in the Willamette Basin will require additional water supply to meet growth and economic development. The stored water in the Willamette Basin projects is a valuable resource. The stored water in the Willamette Basin projects is a valuable resource. The stored water in the Willamette Basin projects is a valuable resource.

The Willamette Basin Project

Use of stored water from the Willamette Basin projects is a valuable resource. The stored water in the Willamette Basin projects is a valuable resource. The stored water in the Willamette Basin projects is a valuable resource.

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April 23, 2012

JOHN A. KITZHABER, MD
GOVERNOR

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
2134 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman DeFazio:

I am asking for your assistance in taking advantage of a unique opportunity to address water resource needs within Oregon's Willamette Basin. With more than 70 percent of Oregon's population located in the Willamette Basin, this effort could have a profound economic, social, and environmental effect for decades to come. Your leadership in encouraging the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to re-engage along with stakeholders in a state/federal water resources planning effort in the Willamette Basin is critically important to this process.

The Willamette Basin contains 13 federal storage reservoirs that comprise the Willamette Basin Federal Storage Project. Combined, the storage reservoirs have capacity to hold 1.64 million acre feet of water that is needed for irrigation, municipal use, economic development, ecological restoration and fish recovery opportunities in Oregon.

Congress authorized the Willamette Basin Federal Storage Project for numerous uses, including irrigation, hydropower, navigation, recreation, water quality, potable water supply, and fish and wildlife purposes. However, to date, only contracts for irrigation water use have been issued. In 1996, recognizing the need for a state/federal partnership, the State of Oregon and the USACE began working cooperatively on a "Willamette Basin Reservoir Study," which was intended to evaluate changes in the operation, storage, and allocation of water in the Project to better serve current and future water resource needs. The Reservoir Study was "put on hold" in 2000 following the listing of Willamette River stocks of salmon and steelhead under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The Reservoir Study was to be restarted after the National Marine Fisheries Service's issuance of a biological opinion. The biological opinion for the Willamette Project was issued in 2008. To date, the Reservoir Study process has not been reintroduced.

As Governor, I made funding of the Willamette Basin Reservoir Study a high priority in 1996 and a significant investment of the State's general fund budget was dedicated to this effort. Now, over fifteen years later, as Oregon finalizes its first-ever Integrated Water Resources Strategy, it is time to renew this process and discuss allocation of the Project's stored water. This effort in the Willamette is essential to meeting the Strategy's intended outcomes of integrating management of water quantity, quality, and habitat as well as the instream and extractive interests tied to them.

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Recommended Plan For Reallocation

USACE's Tentatively Selected Plan Alternative D November 2017			USACE Agency Recommended Plan Alternative C September 2018	
Use	Volume (AF)	Percent	Volume (AF)	Percent
F&W:	962,800	60%	1,102,600	69%
M&I:	73,300	5%	159,750	10%
AI:	253,950	16%	327,650	21%
Joint Use:	299,950	19%	0	0%

Current Focus of OWUC

- Monitor consultation process and “reasonable and prudent measures”
- Support Alternative C
- Resolve storage water right transfer issue
- Explore strategies to reduce cost of stored water for M&I use
- Collaborate on implementation strategy



Questions?