

**RCW 89.16.050 Powers and duties of director of ecology.** In carrying out the purposes of this chapter, the director of the department of ecology of the state of Washington shall be authorized and empowered:

To make surveys and investigations of the wholly or partially unreclaimed and undeveloped lands in this state and to determine the relative agricultural values, productiveness and uses, and the feasibility and cost of reclamation and development thereof;

To formulate and adopt a sound policy for the reclamation and development of the agricultural resources of the state, and from time to time select for reclamation and development such lands as may be deemed advisable, and the director may in his or her discretion advise as to the formation and assist in the organization of reclamation districts under the laws of this state;

To purchase the bonds of any reclamation district whose project is approved by the director and which is found to be upon a sound financial basis, to contract with any such district for making surveys and furnishing engineering plans and supervision for the construction of its project, or for constructing or completing its project and to advance money to the credit of the district for any or all of such purposes, and to accept the bonds, notes, or warrants of such district in payment therefor, and to expend the moneys appropriated from the reclamation account in the purchase of such bonds, notes, or warrants or in carrying out such contracts: PROVIDED, That interest not to exceed the annual rate provided for in the bonds, notes, or warrants agreed to be purchased, shall be charged and received for all moneys advanced to the district prior to the delivery of the bonds, notes, or warrants and the amount of such interest shall be included in the purchase price of such bonds, notes, or warrants: PROVIDED FURTHER, That no district, the bonds, notes, or warrants of which have been purchased by the state under the provisions of the state reclamation act, shall thereafter during the life of said bonds, notes, or warrants make expenditures of any kind from the bond or warrant funds of the district or incur obligations chargeable against such funds or issue any additional notes without previous written approval of the director of ecology of the state of Washington, and any obligations incurred without such approval shall be void;

To sell and dispose of any reclamation district bonds acquired by the director, at public or private sale, and to pay the proceeds of such sale into the reclamation account: PROVIDED, That such bonds shall not be sold for less than the purchase price plus accrued interest, except in case of a sale to an agency supplied with money by the United States of America, or to the United States of America in furtherance of refunding operations of any irrigation district, diking or drainage district, or diking or drainage improvement district, now pending or hereafter carried on by such district, in which case the director shall have authority to sell any bonds of such district owned by the state of Washington under the provisions of the state reclamation act, to the United States of America, or other federal agency on such terms as said United States of America, or other federal agency shall prescribe for bonds of the same issue of such district as that held by the state of Washington in connection with such refunding operations;

To borrow money upon the security of any bonds, including refunding bonds, of any reclamation district, acquired by the director, on such terms and rate of interest and over such period of time as the director may see fit, and to hypothecate and pledge

reclamation district bonds or refunding bonds acquired by the director as security for such loan. Such loans shall have, as their sole security, the bonds so pledged and the revenues therefrom, and the director shall not have authority to pledge the general credit of the state of Washington: PROVIDED, That in reloaning any money so borrowed, or obtained from a sale of bonds it shall be the duty of the director to fix such rates of interest as will prevent impairment of the reclamation revolving account;

To purchase delinquent general tax or delinquent special assessment certificates chargeable against lands included within any reclamation district obligated to the state under the provisions of the state reclamation act, and to purchase lands included in such districts and placed on sale on account of delinquent taxes or delinquent assessments with the same rights, privileges, and powers with respect thereto as a private holder and owner of said certificates, or as a private purchaser of said lands: PROVIDED, That the director shall be entitled to a delinquent tax certificate upon application to the proper county treasurer therefor without the necessity of a resolution of the county legislative authority authorizing the issuance of certificates of delinquency required by law in the case of the sale of such certificates to private purchasers;

To sell said delinquent certificates or the lands acquired at sale on account of delinquent taxes or delinquent assessments at public or private sale, and on such conditions as the director shall determine;

To, whenever the director shall deem it advisable, require any district with which he or she may contract, to provide such safeguards as he or she may deem necessary to assure bona fide settlement and development of the lands within such district, by securing from the owners of lands therein agreements to limit the amount of their holdings to such acreage as they can properly farm and to sell their excess landholdings at reasonable prices;

To employ all necessary experts, assistants, and employees and fix their compensation and to enter into any and all contracts and agreements necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter;

To have the assistance, cooperation and services of, and the use of the records and files in, all the departments and institutions of the state, particularly the office of the commissioner of public lands, the state department of agriculture, Washington State University, and the University of Washington; and all state officers and the governing authorities of all state institutions are hereby authorized and directed to cooperate with the director in furthering the purpose of this chapter;

To cooperate with the United States in any plan of land reclamation, land settlement or agricultural development which the congress of the United States may provide and which may effect the development of agricultural resources within the state of Washington, and the director shall have full power to carry out the provisions of any cooperative land settlement act that may be enacted by the United States. [2013 c 23 s 557; 1983 c 167 s 248; 1977 c 75 s 93; 1972 ex.s. c 51 s 5; 1943 c 279 s 1; 1935 c 7 s 1; 1933 ex.s. c 13 s 1; 1923 c 132 s 1; 1919 c 158 s 5; RRS s 3008.]

**Liberal construction—Severability—1983 c 167:** See RCW 39.46.010 and note following.