
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 3309

Brief Description: Regarding the Columbia river water delivery account.

Sponsors: Representatives Ormsby, Kretz, Blake, Linville and Kenney; by request of Governor Gregoire.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Columbia River Water Delivery Account pursuant to separate agreements between the State of Washington and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Nation and the the State of Washington and the Spokane Tribe of Indians.

Hearing Date: 2/4/08

Staff: Colleen Kerr (786-7168).

Background:

In 2006, the Legislature enacted the Columbia River Basin Water Supply Act relating to water resource management in the Columbia River basin. A priority of this act is the development of new water supplies that includes storage and conservation for the economic and community development needs of people, as well as the instream flow needs of fish.

Summary of Bill:

The Governor and the Legislature are in the agreement with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Nation and the Spokane Tribe of Indians to jointly support the additional releases of water from Lake Roosevelt by the Bureau of Reclamation. The state intends to share a portion of the benefits derived from the Lake Roosevelt water releases and to mitigate for any impacts such releases may have on the tribes.

The new releases of water from Lake Roosevelt will provide:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

- new surface water supplies for farmers to replace diminishing ground water supplies in the Odessa aquifer;
- new water for municipalities with pending water right applications;
- enhanced certainty for agricultural water users with interruptible water rights during times of drought; and
- increase instream flows for fish.

The Columbia River Water Delivery Account is created in the State Treasury. Funds appropriated from the account are provided pursuant to the separate agreements between the State of Washington and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Nation (Colville Nation), and the State of Washington and Spokane Tribe of Indians to support additional releases of water from Lake Roosevelt. The State Treasurer shall transfer funds from the General Fund on July 1, 2008, and on each July 1st thereafter in amounts to satisfy the following provisions:

- On July 1, 2008, \$3,775,000 shall be distributed to the Colville Nation. On July 1, 2009, \$3,625,000 shall be distributed to the Colville Nation. Each July 1 thereafter for the duration of the agreement, an amount equal to the previous year's distribution, as adjusted for inflation, shall be distributed to the Colville Nation.
- On July 1, 2008, \$2,250,000 shall be distributed to the Spokane Tribe of Indians. each July 1st thereafter for the duration of the agreement, an amount equal to the previous year's distribution, as adjusted for inflation, shall be distributed to the Spokane Tribe of Indians.

Amounts may not be distributed from the account unless the Director of Ecology has certified in writing to the State Treasurer that the agreement is still in effect.

The Department of Ecology will receive funds:

- for distribution to local governments adjacent to Lake Roosevelt to mitigate for negative impacts caused by releases of water from Lake Roosevelt; and
- for an independent analysis of legislative options to protect rural communities in northeast Washington for disproportionate economic, agricultural, and environmental impacts when upstream water rights are purchased and transferred for use, or idled and used as mitigation, in a downstream watershed or county.

Appropriation:

\$2,000,000 to the Department of Ecology for local governments.

\$150,000 to the Department of Ecology for independent analysis.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 3, 2008.

Effective Date: This bill takes effect July 1, 2008.