RCW 90.44.040 Public groundwaters subject to appropriation. Subject to existing rights, all natural groundwaters of the state as defined in RCW 90.44.035, also all artificial groundwaters that have been abandoned or forfeited, are hereby declared to be public groundwaters and to belong to the public and to be subject to appropriation for beneficial use under the terms of this chapter and not otherwise. [1945 c 263 § 4; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-4.]