

2021 Legislative Update

WRAC Update
May 10, 2020

Bills that Passed

HB 1143, Walla Walla Trust Water Rights

- Water right holders who have banked rights in the Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership's pilot water bank may temporarily donate these water rights into the Trust Water Rights Program.
- Donated water rights retain the same quantity as a trust water right that they held while banked under the pilot water bank for a period of 2 years.



Bills that Passed

SSB 5230, Groundwater Agreements

- Clarifies that Ecology and USBR may enter into agreements to co-manage and allocate groundwater that exists as a result of Columbia Basin Project operations without complying with procedures in RCW 90.44.130 on determinations of groundwater availability.



BUDGET



Water Banking Provisos

Capital Budget

- \$5M for a pilot grant program, \$2M of which is for applicants in the Methow

Operating Budget

- \$40K for policy work and reporting to the Legislature
- \$9M for a pilot grant program
- \$1M for administering the pilot grant program
- \$125K to the Washington Conservation Commission for a water bank in Okanogan County



Water Banking Provisos

Pilot grant program

- Total of \$14M for pass through funds to eligible entities
- Funds support development of water banks to serve *local water needs*, and acquisition of water rights for those banks
 - Banks must be in rural, headwater counties
 - Banks must preserve water rights for use in the county-of-origin and for permanent instream flow
- Strict eligibility criteria based on “ready-to-go” projects



Adjudications Proviso

Operating Budget

- \$1 M to prepare for an adjudication in the Nooksack basin and in the Lake Roosevelt/Upper Columbia basin (WRIA 58)
 - Won't file the adjudication in the Nooksack before June 1, 2023



Questions?