

Agriculture & Ecology Committee

HB 2133

Brief Description: *Requiring a site analysis for the construction of a water storage facility in the Wenatchee river basin.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Armstrong, G. Chandler, Linville, Grant and Schoesler.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Appropriates \$250,000 to the Department of Ecology (DOE) for fiscal year 2002 for an analysis of the availability of sites for the construction of a water storage facility in the Wenatchee River basin and the facility's potential to provide for improved instream flows and future water supply.*
- *Requires the analysis to be completed by June 30, 2003.*

Hearing Date: *2/27/01*

Staff: *Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).*

Background:

Chapter 90.82 RCW establishes procedures and policies for initiating watershed planning at the local level. If certain local governments choose to initiate the planning for one or more watersheds they appoint a planning unit to do the planning. The watersheds are referred to as water resource inventory areas (WRIA's). (RCW 90.82.060.) Of these, the Wenatchee River watershed is WRIA No. 45. (WAC 173-500-040.)

Under these laws, the planning unit must address water quantity issues in the WRIA's by conducting an assessment of water supply and use in the watershed and developing strategies for future use. (RCW 90.82.070.) The assessment must include strategies for increasing water supplies in the area in sufficient quantities to satisfy minimum instream flows for fish, future out-of-stream uses, and other purposes. These strategies may include elements for water storage. (RCW 90.82.070(2).)

In the 1998 state operating budget, \$300,000 was appropriated to the DOE to conduct a preconstruction analysis of Pine Hollow near the City of Yakima. The analysis was for determining the suitability of Pine Hollow as a site for the construction of a retainment dam and water storage reservoir and the site's potential for assisting anadromous fish and agriculture. (Section 303(3), Chapter 346, Laws of 1998.) In the 2000 state operating budget, \$300,000 was appropriated to the DOE for a preconstruction and feasibility analysis of an off-stream storage project proposed by the Roza Irrigation District at Washout Canyon. (Section 301(24), Chapter 1, Laws of 2000 2nd Sp. Sess.)

Summary of Bill:

\$250,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the DOE for fiscal year 2002. The appropriation is for an analysis of the availability of a site or sites for the construction of a water storage facility in the Wenatchee River basin and the facility's potential to provide for improved instream flows and future water supply.

The analysis must include an analysis of the geology and hydrology of potential sites and appropriate dam design and dynamics, and their impact on water-related issues. The analysis is to be conducted through contracts with Chelan County in consultation with the initiating governments of the watershed planning unit for WRIA No. 45. The DOE must consult with other interested parties including Indian tribes and agencies of the federal government regarding the scope of issues to be addressed in the analysis. The analysis must be completed by June 30, 2003.

Fiscal Note: *Requested on February 21, 2001.*

Effective Date: *The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.*