

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SHB 2874

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Authorizing the department of ecology to enter into agreements to allocate Columbia basin project waters.

**Sponsors:** By House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology (originally sponsored by Representatives Schoesler and Grant).

**House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology**  
**Senate Committee on Environment, Energy & Water**

### **Background:**

The Columbia Basin Project of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation receives its waters from Franklin D. Roosevelt Lake behind Grand Coulee Dam. The project is delivered water by way of Banks Lake and currently includes over 600,000 irrigated acres. The Department of Ecology (DOE) has entered into an agreement with the bureau and has adopted implementing rules for managing certain comingled ground waters associated with the project in the Quincy area. Under these rules, the DOE may issue water use permits, including those for using waters stored artificially by the bureau as part of the project.

### **Summary:**

The DOE may enter into agreements with the United States for the allocation of ground waters resulting from the Columbia Basin Project. The agreements must be consistent with authorized purposes of the project, federal and state reclamation laws, and federal rate and repayment contract obligations regarding the project. The agreements must provide that the DOE grant an application to use the water only if it determines that the application will not impair existing water rights or project operations, or harm the public interest. Use of any water allocated under the agreements must be contingent upon the issuance of licenses by the United States to approved applicants.

Before implementing the agreements, the DOE, with the concurrence of the United States, must adopt rules establishing the procedures for implementing the agreements and the priorities for processing applications. The DOE may accept funds to cover any administrative and staff expenses that it incurs in connection with such an agreement. The DOE must report to the Legislature annually until December 1, 2007, on this subject.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House 98 0

Senate 46 2 (Senate amended)

House 96 0 (House concurred)

**Effective:** June 13, 2002