

FINAL BILL REPORT

E2SSB 6874

C 82 L 08

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Regarding Columbia river water delivery.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Brown, Rockefeller, Kauffman and Rasmussen; by request of Governor Gregoire).

Senate Committee on Water, Energy & Telecommunications

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

House Committee on Appropriations

Background: Lake Roosevelt is the reservoir covering 130 square miles, created by the impoundment of the Columbia River by Grand Coulee Dam. The state has, in partnership with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Spokane Tribe of Indians, and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, crafted agreements addressing how to manage Lake Roosevelt water withdrawals. The Tribes are key partners because their reservations include large portions of Lake Roosevelt, and Grand Coulee Dam is within the Colville Reservation.

To boost water supplies in the Columbia River Basin, the state plans to release up to 132,500 acre-feet of water from Lake Roosevelt in drought years. This amount of water will lower lake levels no more than an additional 1.5 feet below current operations. This water will provide water to irrigators of 10,000 acres of land in the Odessa sub-area, some holders of "interruptible" water rights, and some municipal and industrial water right applicants. Additionally, this water will be held instream for endangered salmon and the health of the Columbia River.

Summary: The Columbia river water delivery account is created in the State Treasury. On July 1, 2008, and each July 1 thereafter for the duration of the agreements, the State Treasurer must transfer funds into the account from the General Fund. Monies in the account may be spent only after appropriation. The account consists of all monies transferred or appropriated to the account by law. Funds appropriated from the account are provided pursuant to separate agreements between Washington State and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Nation, and Washington State and the Spokane Tribe of Indians to support releases of water from Lake Roosevelt.

Additionally, Ecology must provide technical assistance to help affected counties identify and develop competitive project applications to benefit both instream and out-of-stream users, assist affected counties in exploring options to ensure water resources are available for current and future needs, and consider regional equity when making funding decisions on water supply applications.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	0	
House	95	1	(House amended)
Senate	49	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 1, 2008