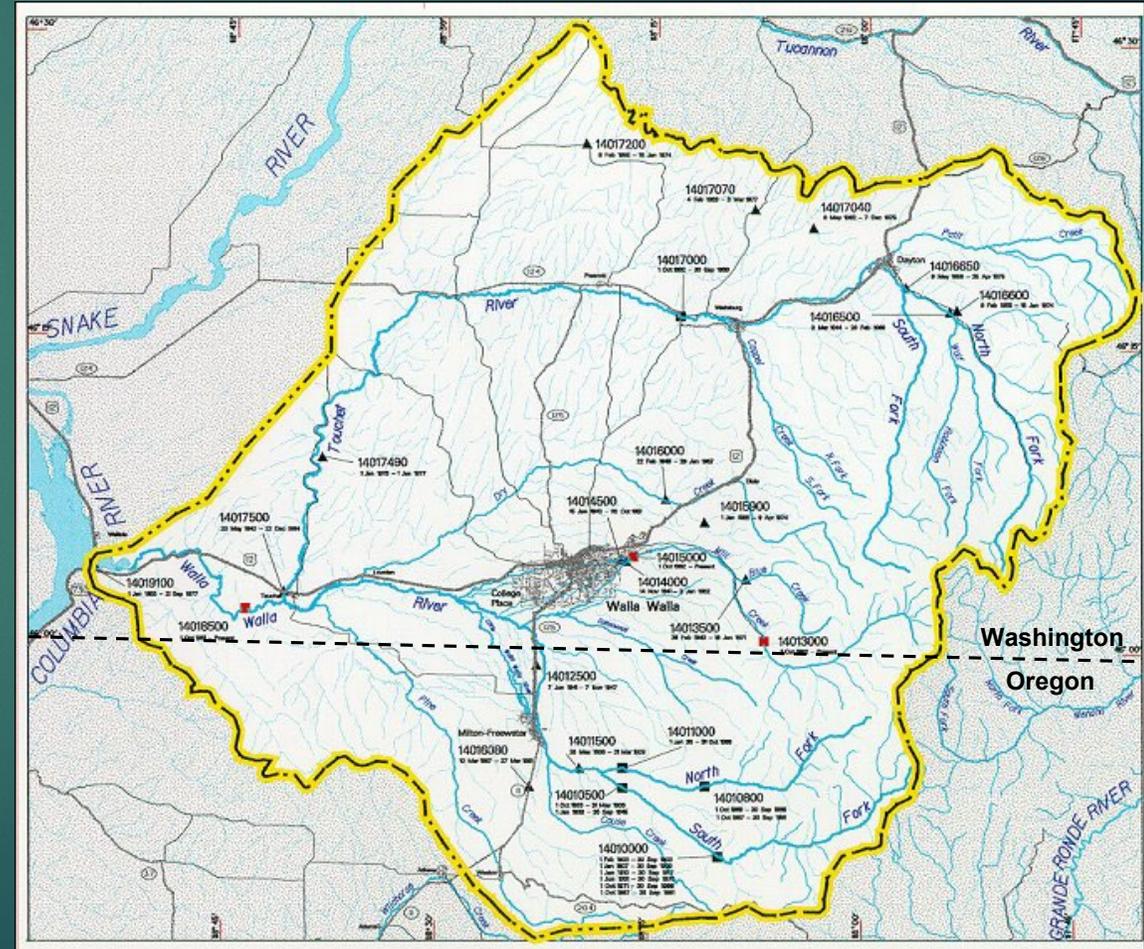
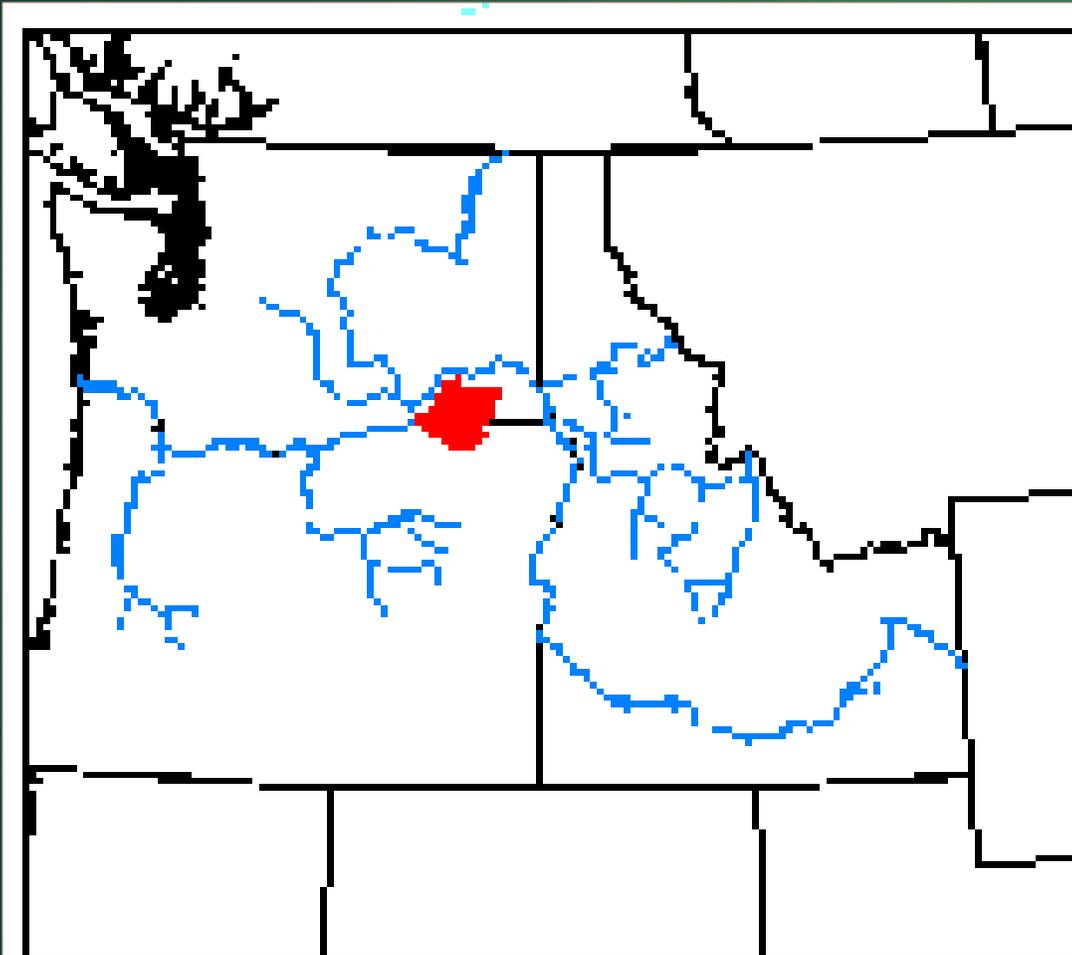


# Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership



HOUSE RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCE COMMITTEE  
JANUARY 16, 2019

# Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership



# Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership

- ▶ The was authorized by the legislature in 2009 and codified in RCW 90.92
- ▶ Set up for ten years to form and implement a local pilot watershed management program
- ▶ The local pilot program ten year period ends on June 30, 2019



# Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership

- ▶ During the pilot program, the Partnership has achieved some successes, for example:
- ▶ Over 150 water banking agreements allowing non-use of water without fear of relinquishment,
- ▶ Five local water plans providing flexibility to the water user in exchange for improved flow conditions,
- ▶ Two instream flow leases,
- ▶ Increased public awareness of water resources, and their uses,
- ▶ Bi-state Walla Walla River flow enhancement study and coordination with Oregon stakeholders



# Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership

- ▶ However, the Partnership has come to recognize the following challenges:
- ▶ The current authority and structure is insufficient to address the complexity and magnitude of the current and future water resource challenges,
- ▶ Current successes have not measurably increased flow conditions as intended,
- ▶ Lack of clear long term vision or strategy for successfully managing the water resources in the basin, and
- ▶ Lack of consistent and adequate funding



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- ▶ The Partnership is requesting the legislature to amend RCW 90.92 to allow existing elements of the pilot program to continue thru June 30, 2021 (two years), and perform the following tasks:
  - ▶ Coordinate with Ecology and the State Auditor Office to perform performance and financial audits
  - ▶ In collaboration with Ecology's Office of Columbia River, develop a thirty (30) year plan to address current and future water supply challenges,
  - ▶ Based on audit findings, change organizational structure and funding (potentially including Oregon interests as well)



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- ▶ **Tasks (continued):**
  - ▶ Implement near term recommendations of the Walla Walla River flow enhancement study,
  - ▶ Develop stakeholder support and coordinate with Ecology's Office of Columbia River for adopting the long-term plan through a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, and
  - ▶ Develop relationships and strategies to co-manage water resources in the basin with Washington and Oregon
- ▶ The two year extension of the local pilot program will be guided by a detailed work plan and schedule developed in coordination with Ecology



# Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership

- ▶ The Walla Walla Partnership respectfully recommends the legislature amend RCW 90.92 per the proposed bill, and
- ▶ Support Ecology's Office of Columbia River's Capital Budget request which includes \$1.5 million to perform the tasks described.



# Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership

## ▶ Contacts:

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