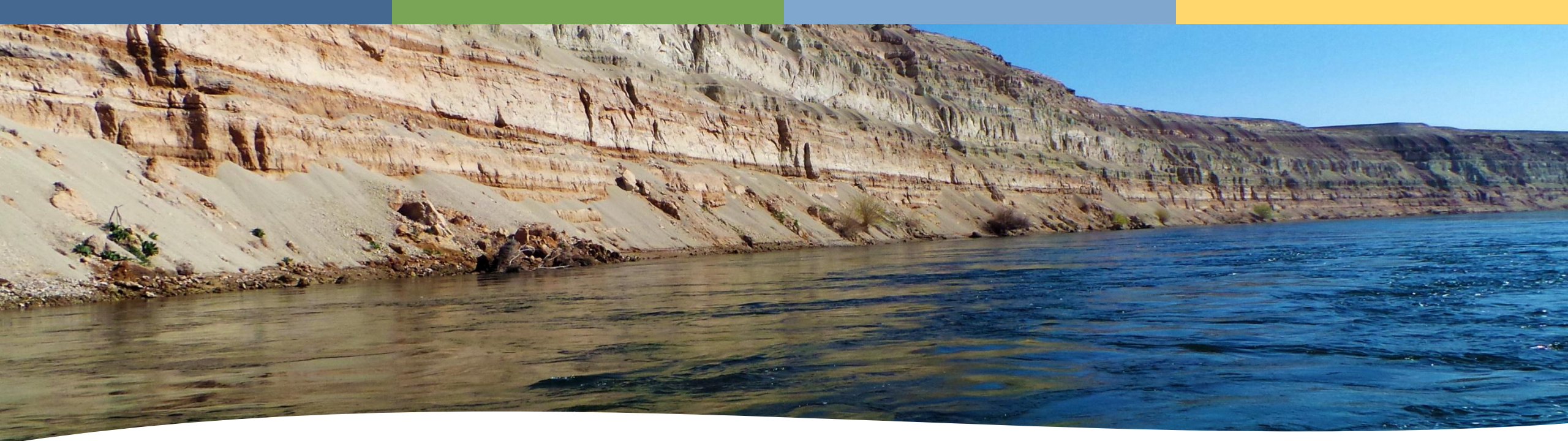




Office of Columbia River Drought Insurance Program Update

Scott Turner
October, 23, 2025



Office of Columbia River's Directives RCW 90.90.020

The department of ecology shall focus its efforts to develop water supplies for the Columbia river basin on the following needs:

- Alternatives to groundwater for agricultural users in the Odessa subarea aquifer
- Sources of water supply for pending water right applications
- **A new uninterrupted supply of water for the holders of interruptible water rights on the Columbia river mainstem that are subject to instream flows or other mitigation conditions to protect streamflows**
- New municipal, domestic, industrial, and irrigation water needs within the Columbia river basin

OCR/BOR
RCW 90.90.020
2008
FSEIS LRISRP

LRISRP

Interruptible
Water Rights

CR Drought
Insurance Program

Large
Agribusiness
WR Holders

Water
Banking

OCR
PRIVATE
APPLICANTS
RCW 90.90.020

Established in
~2008

Attempt to add
more water to
the program

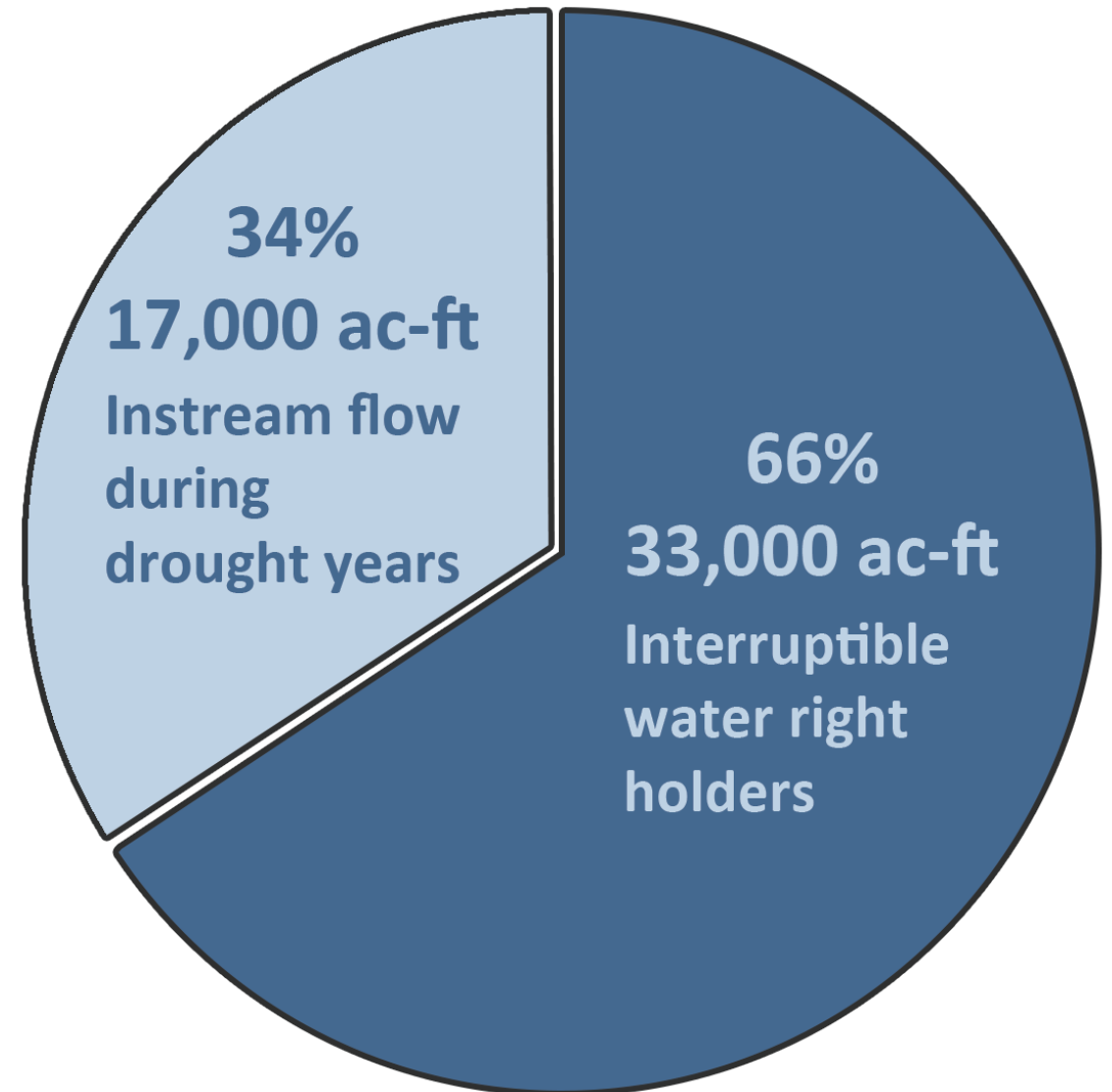
Switzler
Reservoir ?

Public Outreach

- 2008 FSEIS for LRISRP
 - Extensive public comment opportunities
- April 4, 2024, Columbia River Policy Advisory Group Presentation
- Ecology blog and WWM Newsletters
- WWM Podcast
- 2024 Columbia River Basin Water Supply Inventory Report
- OCR & Geosyntec Presentation at the 2nd Annual Eastern Washington Water Law Conference (2025)
- Water Banking Process
 - Public Notice, CR Consultation, Yakama Nation Enhanced Tribal Consultation, SEPA, Draft ROEs etc.

Additional 50,000 ac-ft released from Lake Roosevelt during drought years

- If April – Sept forecast at The Dalles Dam is at or below 60 MAF, 33,000 ac-ft from LRISRP becomes available to interruptibles
- Final Supplemental EIS discussed 6 alternatives for distributing water to interruptibles – with 3 preferred alternatives.
 - Even Distribution Allocation
 - Market-Based Allocation
 - Voluntary Enrollment
- Preferred method would provide Ecology maximum flexibility to meet its program goal



Interruptible Water Rights & Water Right Holders

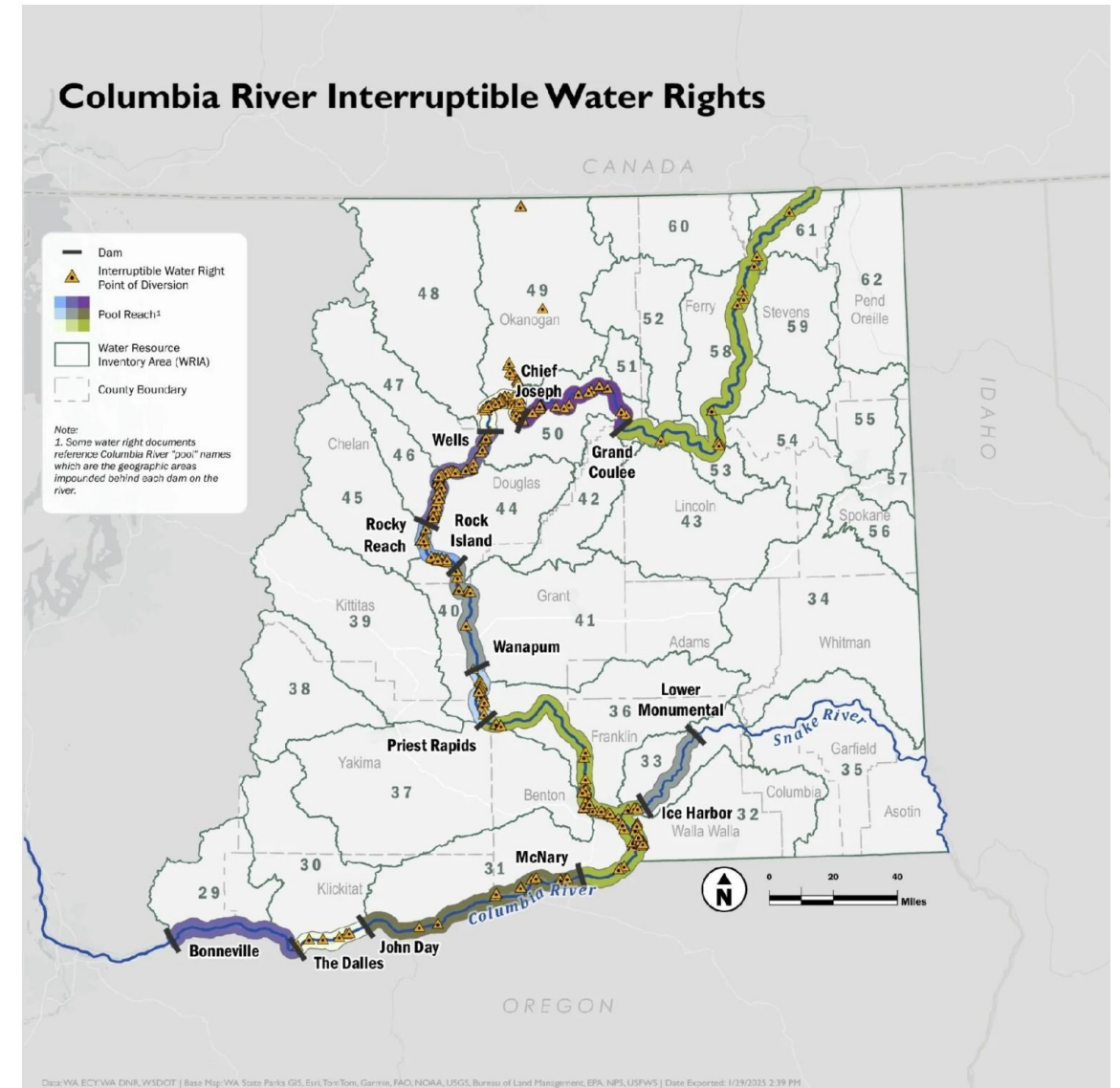
Water rights = 363

Water right holders = 260

Cumulative quantities > 300,000 af

Purposes of use

- Irrigation = 84%
- Municipal/Domestic/Commercial & industrial = 7%
- Multi-use = 9%



Contract with Consultant

Purpose

- Gather information for the demand side
- Analysis of the demographics
 - Identify Administrative Tasks
- Outreach and education
- OCR does not have the staff to focus on this task
 - Should be done prior to a drought year

Deliverables

- Investigate and assess Interruptible Water Rights
- Analyze demographics
- Create an informational Web Presence
- Perform outreach
 - Survey
- GIS Data
- Recommendations
 - Final Report
 - Legislative Report
 - CRPAG

Survey Results

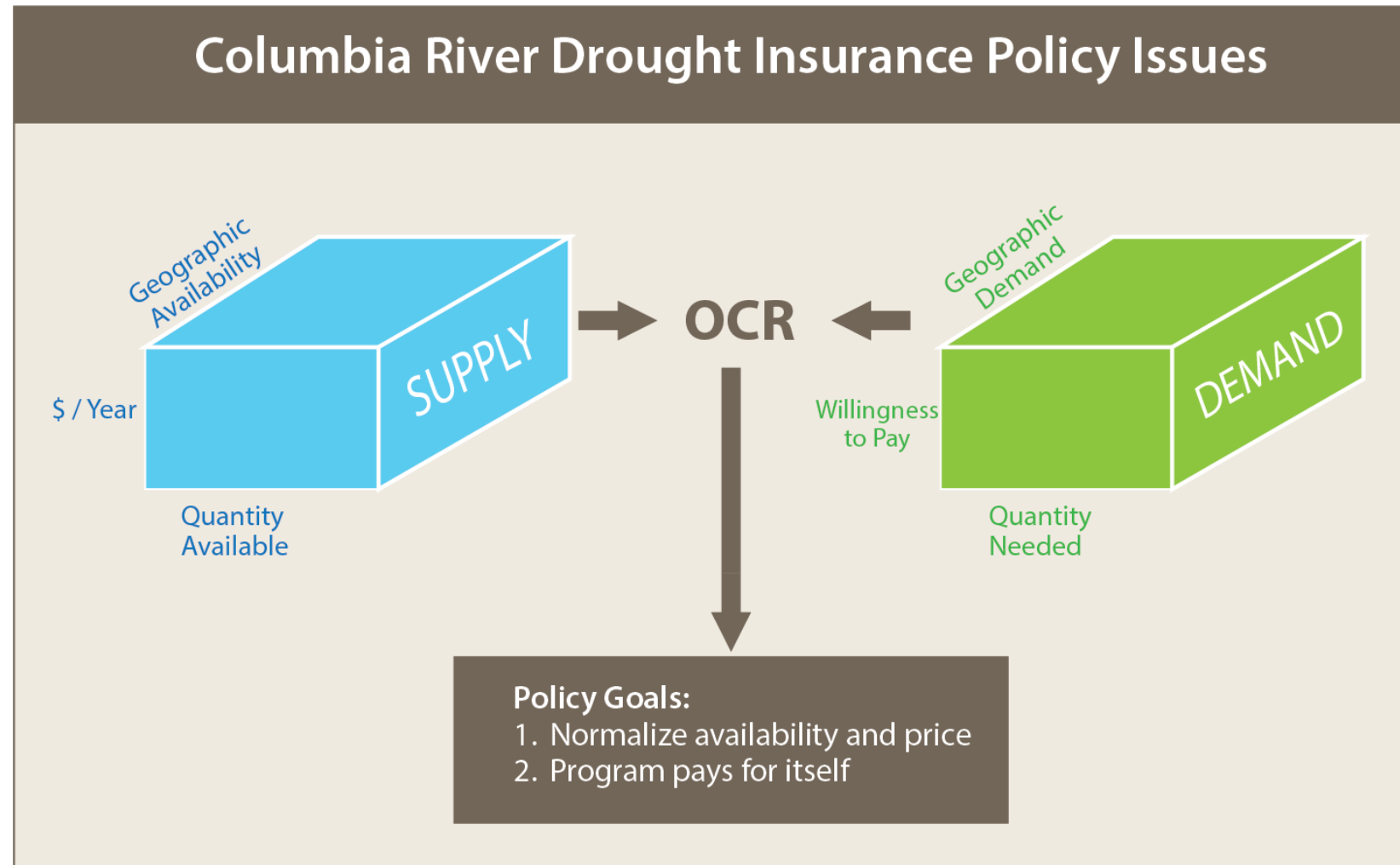
- 29 out of 260 water right holders responded (11% of water right holders)
- 96 of the 363 water rights were represented (26% of water rights)
- The 29 respondents hold 26% of the water rights

Some Interesting Answers

- Did you know your water right can be shut off in drought years?
 - 44.8% no
 - 55.2% yes
- Did you know this water right was last shut off in 2001?
 - 65.5% No
 - 34.5% Yes

Policy Discussion

- A successful program must balance many variables
- When more details are known, the PAG will be consulted about policy decisions
- Future legislative reports will summarize policy choices



Next Steps

- Continue working through the trust changes and water banking process to build more on the supply side.
 - We are just in the infancy of building supply.
- Report data and information in next legislative report.
- Report to the PAG more specific information about our outreach data.
- Develop policy question to bring back to the PAG.
 - 2008 FSEIS preferred alternatives and how to integrate LRISRP water in with banked water.
 - Geographical
 - Price