

Water Bank Summary Proposal

We are reviewing this water bank grant application under the 2023-2025 Water Banking Pilot Grants funding opportunity. This summary is posted for a 30-day public comment period. To provide comments on this proposal, use the comment form linked below and include the application number.

Application #: WRWBP-2325-Pasco-00035

Accepting comments: start 1/22/25 — end 2/21/25

Summary:

The City of Pasco applied for a grant to purchase water rights and develop a water bank. The Tri-Cities is the fastest growing area in the state and this growth has strained current water supplies in Pasco. Over the next 20 years, Pasco's population is estimated to increase by 60,000 with an associated 23,000 housing units needed to meet the expected population growth. In 2024 alone, there are approximately 2,000 housing developments under permitting review with the City. The City serves not just water users within Pasco but about 82 percent of the Franklin County total population.

The water bank will provide mitigation for new uses in Pasco's water service area, which sits mostly within WRIA 36, with a small southeastern portion in WRIA 33. The water bank will support mitigation of new year-round domestic, municipal, commercial and industrial uses, while adding instream flow benefits in the Columbia River. This will alleviate water supply issues for the City, support instream flow investment, ensure water rights remain in the basin of origin for the long-term security of the community, and provide a source for uninterrupted water rights for new uses within the City's urban growth boundary.

The City of Pasco proposes to use grant funds to:

- Purchase three water rights (up to 1,547 acre-feet) in WRIAs 33 and 36 to supply water for new uses within the City's urban growth boundary. The water rights are in hydraulic continuity with the McNary Pool and are senior to the Columbia River instream flow rule. Two of the water rights have a season of use from March 1 through November 1 and the third water rights has a year-round season of use.
- Permanently commit one-third of the water rights to instream use to meet the funding requirements set by the Legislature. The remaining two-thirds of the water rights will be used for Pasco's Water Bank.
- Set up a Water Bank including establishing a Rules and Guidance document, developing policies and procedures for managing the water bank, preparing templates and workflows, developing new city code, and completing internal and external outreach efforts.
- Negotiate a Master Trust Water Right Agreement with Ecology.

[Online Comment Form](#)

Read more about [Water Banking Pilot Grants Program](#)