



ECBID had another successful water season. The 2023 irrigation season has come to a close and District staff again worked to be responsive to landowners while continuing to provide reliable water at a sustainable cost. Staff and partners made significant progress on a number of projects, including securing \$32.8M from the Washington State legislature through the Office of Columbia River and working with partners to secure \$39.9 million through the NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program, as well as securing a Water Smart grant that will allow the District to further critical efforts. Throughout the year, District staff hosted a number of tours, including the NRCS Chief and staff, Senator Maria Cantwell, Stanford University students, and more. Additionally, online water ordering and bill pay services were added to our website for accessibility this year.

Your East Columbia Basin Irrigation District team has a number of key initiatives outlined for 2024, and we look forward to providing additional updates as the season draws closer. I invite you to visit ecbid.org or read on to learn more about the efforts of the ECBID team.

Best,
Craig Simpson P.E.
 Secretary-Manager,
 East Columbia Basin
 Irrigation District



MEET YOUR BOARD

The East Columbia Basin Irrigation District is governed by a five-member Board of Directors responsible for guiding District operations and policies. Current Board members are:

- Don Osborne**
DIVISION 1 [✉ dosborne@ecbid.org](mailto:dosborne@ecbid.org)
- Reid Baker**
DIVISION 2 [✉ rbaker@ecbid.org](mailto:rbaker@ecbid.org)
- Dennis Swinger**
DIVISION 3 [✉ dswinger@ecbid.org](mailto:dswinger@ecbid.org)
- Duaine Anderson (President)**
DIVISION 4 [✉ danderson@ecbid.org](mailto:danderson@ecbid.org)
- Kevin Lyle**
DIVISION 5 [✉ klyle@ecbid.org](mailto:klyle@ecbid.org)

The Board meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 10:00am unless otherwise changed by the Board. Meetings are held in the District boardroom, 55th North 8th Avenue, Othello, WA and are open to the public.



Year IN REVIEW

2023 was another productive year and several key projects advanced in significant ways. For the full list of accomplishments please visit <https://ecbid.org/year-in-review/>. We are pleased to report the abbreviated list of accomplishments below:

- Delivered a reliable water supply to landowners consistently throughout the irrigation season.
- Received a record amount of funding, \$32.8M, from the Washington State Legislature capital budget to assist in the planning, designing, engineering, and development coordination of the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program (OGWRP).
- Worked with partners to secure \$39.9M in NRCS awards for the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program.
- Began offering online water ordering.
- Established online payments.
- Joined with partners to host Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief Terry Cosby and approximately 30 invited guests for a tour of the OGWRP.
- Started work on the OGWRP watershed planning effort, known as the PL-566. When completed, this plan will assist in obtaining future funding for the design and construction of the OGWRP's remaining large infrastructure projects. As of the end of 2023, the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was added to the Federal Register and available for public comment.
- Hosted Senator Maria Cantwell and staff for a tour of the OGWRP and met to discuss program needs.
- ECBID Secretary-Manager spoke as an invited panelist at the Family Farm Alliance annual conference.
- ECBID Development Director spoke as a panelist at the Water Law conference.
- Hired a District Engineer, Julio Gonzalez.



Project Focus

ODESSA GROUNDWATER REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

The Odessa Subarea aquifer continues to experience significant declines in groundwater levels and is at critical risk of leaving farms, 22 towns and approximately a quarter million people across four counties without a source of water.

When the federal government began the Columbia Basin Project nearly a century ago, the goal was to bring water to over 1 million acres of cropland. But the project was only partially completed and stalled out, leaving much of the land dry. As a temporary solution, the state issued permits to allow farmers to drill deep wells and tap into the Odessa aquifer to irrigate their land.

Many of the groundwater wells in the area are currently drilled to a depth of 800 to 1,000 feet, with some as deep as 2,100 feet. Some wells in the area have been reported out of production. Drilling deeper wells is not feasible because deeper water may not be available, may be potentially unusable, or may be too expensive to access.

With time of the essence, several agencies, organizations, elected officials, and landowners have come together to find a long-anticipated solution.

Labeled as the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program, or OGWRP, this current effort is focused on building the necessary infrastructure to exchange existing groundwater rights for the expected Columbia Basin Project water.

With the first OGWRP system becoming operational in 2021, several local, state, and national partners have joined efforts, securing \$72.7M in 2023 to further efforts to bring OGWRP mainline extensions and on-farm buildout efforts for three additional systems.

The solution to a decades-long challenge is becoming a reality due to the focused and consistent efforts of District staff and partners, including ECBID, the Columbia Basin Conservation District (CBCD), USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Washington State Department of Ecology's Office of Columbia River, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Columbia Basin Development League (CBDL), local, state, and federal elected officials, and the landowners themselves.



Focus for 2024

The ECBID and several partners worked together in 2023 to secure funding to continue development of the OGWRP system. The state allocation of \$32.8M received by ECBID was leveraged to secure an additional \$39.9M in NRCS funding to further mainline extension and on-farm buildouts for the EL 80.6, 84.7 and 86.4 systems. Construction on these systems is expected to begin in early 2024.

Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

WATER TURN-ON DATE: ANNOUNCED AT FEB. BOARD MEETING

- Yearly assessments mailed: January 15
- Seasonal changes: Applications must be received prior to February 28
- RRA needs to be completed prior to water delivery for blocks 48, 461 and WSCs
- Frost control permit application: Must be submitted by February 28
- Priming ELC March 20-24
- First half assessment due: April 30
- Early combinations deadline: April 30
- Combination deadline: May 31
- Late combinations deadline: After June 1
- Board candidate filing opens: October 4
- ELC begins dewatering: Oct 20-24
- Second half assessment due: October 31
- Supplemental & Excess bills are sent out by mid-November and due December 31
- Board meetings: First Wednesday of every month unless changed by the Board

*Dates subject to change and will be posted at <https://ecbid.org/calendar/>

ECBID BY THE NUMBERS:

Parcels Served	4,653
Landowners Served	2,779
Varieties of Crops grown	112
Percentage of assessed acres under sprinkler irrigation	87
Groundwater Replacement acreage being developed	70,000
Groundwater Replacement acreage under contract	18,992.80
Economic annual value of irrigated crops	2.66 Billion
East Low Canal design capacity	4,500
Miles of canals	86
Miles of laterals	527
Miles of drains	917
Pumping Plants	53
Pumping units	100
Total amount of grant money awarded in 2023	\$34,071,114.29 <small>*as of 11/13/23</small>
Power Generation Revenue	\$2,416,304 <small>*as of 11/13/23</small>
2023 Water Assessment	\$78.08
2023 Reserved Works	\$3,280,839.58

WATER USAGE:

2023	263,813 SFD	523,141 AF
2022	259,867 SFD	515,435 AF
2021	294,722 SFD	584,568 AF

SFD: 1 SFD (Second-Foot-Day) is the volume of water represented by a flow of 1 CFS for 24 hours
AF: 1 Acre-Foot is the volume of water required to cover one acre of land to a depth of one foot

We're Hiring

The District periodically has open staff positions. If you enjoy a supportive and fast-paced environment, we encourage you to visit

 ecbid.org/open-positions/ for a current list of opportunities.

The mission of the East Columbia Basin Irrigation District is to provide reliable irrigation water at a sustainable cost to landowners

Located in central Washington State, the East Columbia Basin Irrigation District is the largest district in the state, with authorization to irrigate 472,000 acres. Currently, 170,075 acres are developed and managed by 4,500 landowners within the federal Columbia Basin Project. Additionally, the District is involved in the development of 87,700 acres associated with the Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program (OGWRP). The District provides a reliable supply of water that irrigates the cropland that produces food shipped domestically and internationally.