Irrigation Efficiency Policy Considerations for District Comment

Jon Culp, Water Resource Programs Manager
Commission Action Request
November 30th, 2017
Staff Policy Recommendations:

**Add:**

- Hold Downs—recognition of consumptive use water savings
- CPDS application and contract
- Public benefits for eligibility:
  - Water Quality
  - Farmland Protection
  - Drought Vulnerability
  - Flow Retiming
- **Revise** eligibility language to reflect proviso—statewide
Staff Policy Recommendations:

Remove:
- the 5% rule
- Administrative functions of the program historically provided by Ecology
- Target Stream Priority Protocol pilot
- Project Eligibility Guidelines related to Water Acquisition Program
- Period of Performance and any other redundant language covered under general SCC Grant Procedures
Cascadia CD: “We support any changes that create additional incentive for landowners to utilize this program”.
Ask for a delay in looking at statewide eligibility to see how other eligibility related policy changes will impact program demand.

Okanogan CD: Ask for a delay in looking at statewide eligibility to see how other eligibility related policy changes will impact previously prioritized basins restricted from participation prior to other policy change recommendations. Especially the 5% rule.
Both commenting districts are concerned that a revision in policy to open eligibility statewide will exhaust the funding. Both had viable projects not eligible because of one or more of the policies we are seeking to change excluded eligibility. Collectively, both have three of the original 16 critical basins.
The budget proviso states:

*The state conservation commission shall give preference to projects located in the sixteen fish critical basins, other water-short or drought impacted basins, and basins with significant water resource and instream flow issues. Projects that are not within the basins described in this subsection are also eligible to receive funding.*
The program has operated on a first come-first served basis for over 20 years. One option could be to switch to an application period with a funding prioritization process based on the proviso. Another option would be to keep the first come format but develop a prioritization method as an overlay to mirror the proviso.
Staff to set up Subcommittees:

- Hold Down Revision
- Small Investment Program Tract
Potential Motion:

Move to approve policy recommendations as presented (as amended).
Thank you!

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