

**RCW 89.12.190 Columbia Basin project—Findings—Source of surface water—Management of groundwater depletions.** (1) The legislature finds that conserved water from the developed portions of the federal Columbia Basin project can provide an immediate source of surface water to offset a limited portion of groundwater depletions within the undeveloped portions of the federal project extending the availability of groundwater for domestic, municipal, industrial, and agricultural uses. The department of ecology has adopted rules establishing groundwater management subareas within the federal Columbia Basin project. A primary purpose of some of the rules was to manage groundwater depletions that are occurring as a result of the department's decision to allow continued deep well agricultural irrigation in anticipation that development of the federal Columbia Basin project would continue at its historic pace and that project water would replace groundwater and recharge the depleted aquifer.

(2) The legislature also finds that recent studies have documented water conservation in areas served by project irrigation districts as a result of distribution system lining and piping and use of more efficient conveyance system technology. [2004 c 195 § 1.]