

Water Bank Summary Proposal

We are reviewing the 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-YaCoPS-00038

Accepting comments: 1/29/2025 – 2/28/2025

Summary:

Yakima County Public Services Department has applied for a second water bank grant to purchase water rights.

The existing Yakima County Water Resource System (YCWRS) was designed to only serve permit-exempt uses and does not function as a general-purpose water bank. Establishing a water bank will help the county meet obligations under the Growth Management Act, provide stable water supplies for food storage and processing, protect the agricultural economy during drought, and protect instream flows, especially in streams such as the Ahtanum and Cowiche creeks.

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires the County and all other municipal jurisdictions within the county to estimate water supply needs for a 20-year timeline. The Cities and County coordinate on the County-wide planning policies as the first step. Anticipated water use demand in unincorporated Yakima County is about 100 new rural single-family residences in a year, and infrequently other minor rural uses, totaling about 11 acre-feet per year in perpetuity. The water bank will supply mitigation water for new uses and satisfy GMA planning requirements for assured water supply into the future, ideally for the County, cities, and other Group A systems.

Yakima County previously applied for a grant to establish a water bank and acquire water rights. Ecology is still reviewing the previous application. This second application proposes to acquire another water right for the water bank. This proposal will fund the following:

- Due diligence and acquisition costs for Blue Slough (side channel of the Yakima River) water rights, which are:
 - Approximately 23 acre-feet of senior water rights, which are:
 - Water rights are for irrigation (April 1-Oct 31) and continuous stock water use.
- One-third of the acquired water right will be permanently dedicated to instream flows to meet the funding requirements set by the Legislature.

[Online Comment Form](#)

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