



Umatilla and Walla Walla Basin Water Management Update

Chris Kowitz, North Central Region Manager
Greg Silbernagel, District 5 Watermaster
Luke Martin, District 23 Watermaster

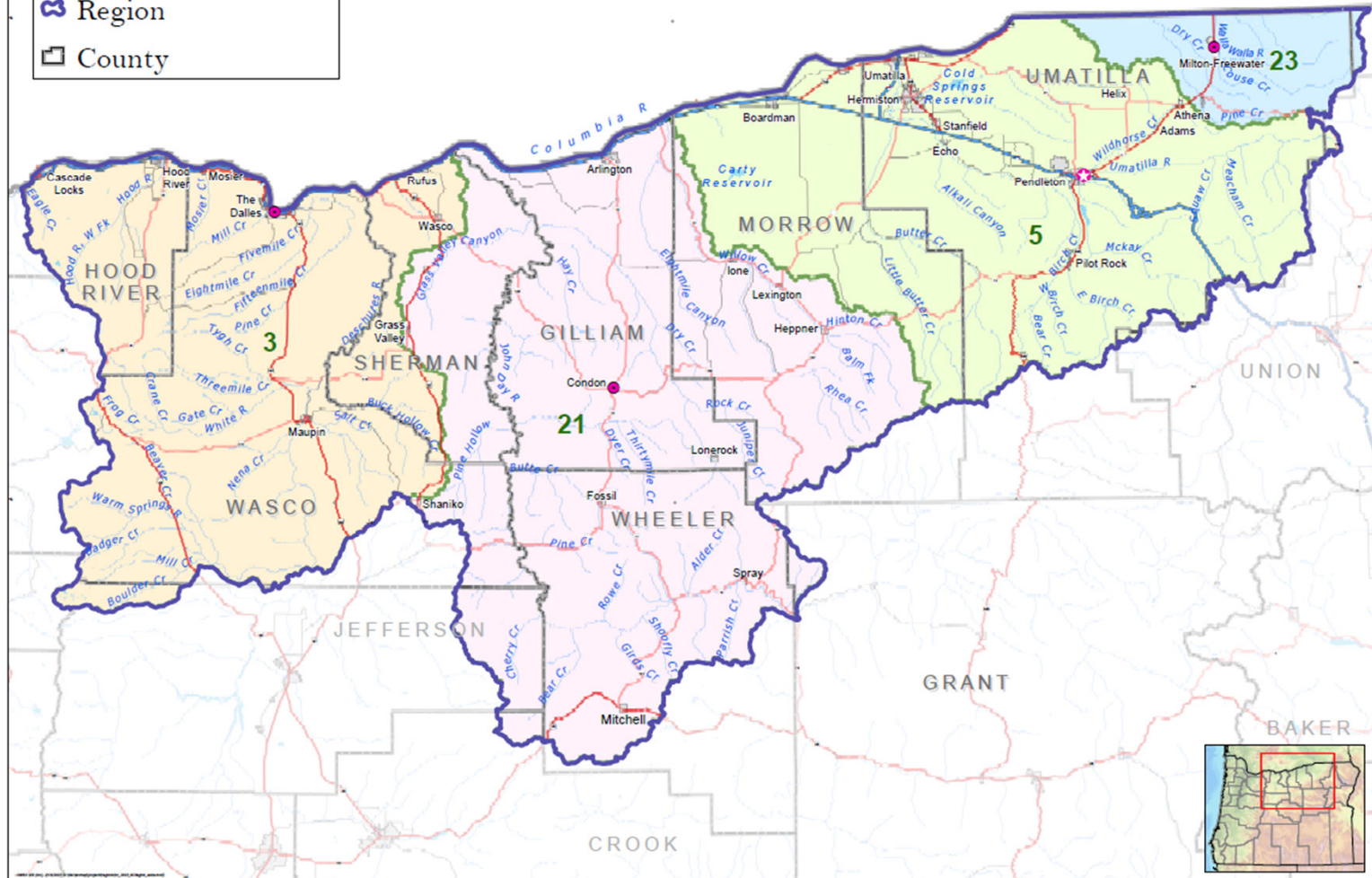
June 13, 2025

North Central Region Update

Oregon Water Resources Department NORTH CENTRAL REGION



- District office
- ★ Region office
- 🌿 Watermaster district
- 🌀 Region
- 🗺️ County



Regional Priorities

- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) Water Rights Settlement
 - 20-year process to determine the scope and attributes of the CTUIR's water rights in the Umatilla basin
 - Nearing finalization of the Settlement Agreement with the CTUIR and Federal negotiating teams
 - OWRD is preparing to begin implement the requirements of ORS 539.300

Regional Priorities

- Walla Walla Basin Bi-State/Tri-Sovereign Coordination

Memorandum of Understanding
between the
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
and
Oregon Water Resources Department
and
Washington State Department of Ecology
related to
The Management of Walla Walla Water 2050 Strategic

Plan of Study

Walla Walla Basin Study

Washington and Oregon
Columbia-Pacific Northwest Region

prepared by

Columbia-Pacific Northwest Regional Office
Project Management and Coordination Office
Rebekah Triolo, Project Manager

Water Management
Jen Johnson, Program Manager
Bob Lounsbury, Civil Engineer

Department of Ecology's Office of Columbia River
Thomas Tebb, Director
Scott Tarbutton, Hydrogeologist and Project Manager

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
Department of Natural Resources
Anton Chiono, Habitat Conservation Project Leader

Oregon Water Resources Department
Chris Kowitz, North Central Region Manager



Oregon
Tina Kotek, Governor

Water Resources Department
North Central Region
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May 9, 2024

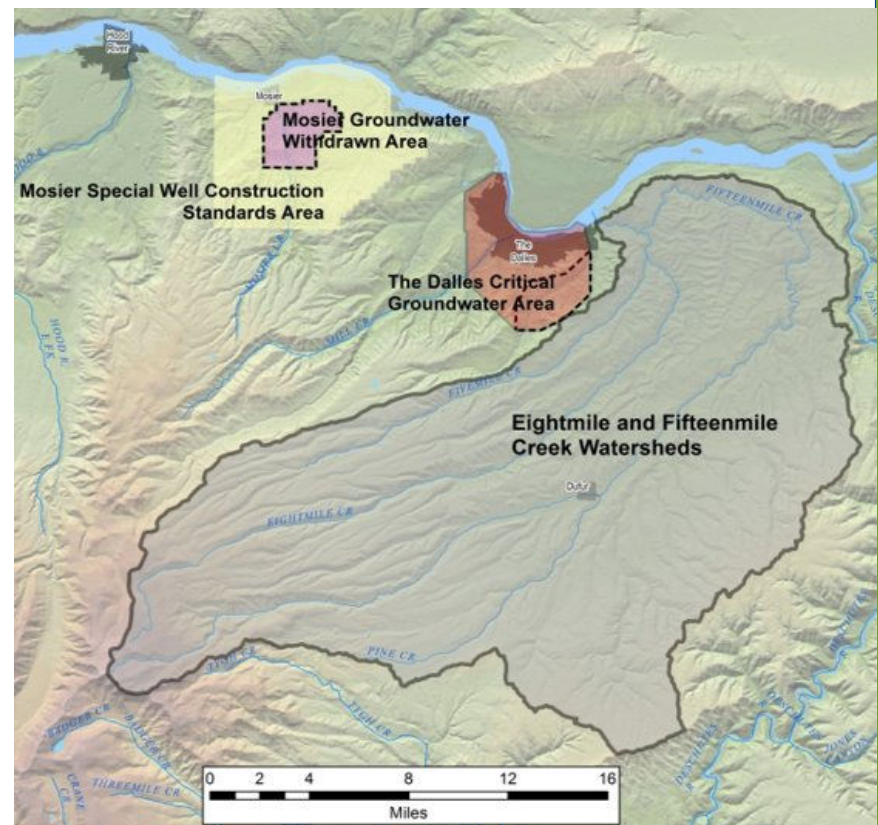
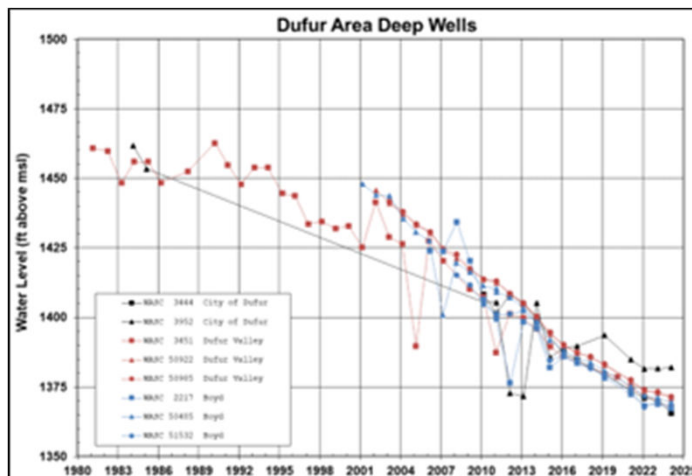
Jaime Short, East Region Water Resources Section Manager
Washington State Department of Ecology
4601 N Monroe Street
Spokane, WA 99205

Dear Ms. Short,

The State of Oregon, through the Water Resources Department, respectfully submits the attached Trust Water Right Application. The application, as well as this letter, serve as the State's official request to the Department of Ecology to recognize water protected instream in Oregon via the City of Walla Walla's Split Season Lease as developed water in Washington as defined in Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 90.90.120.

Regional Priorities

- 15/8 Mile Creek Groundwater Study
 - Groundwater level declines
 - Groundwater pumping interference with springs
 - Periodic stream desiccation



Regional Priorities

- Data Collection, Management, and Utilization



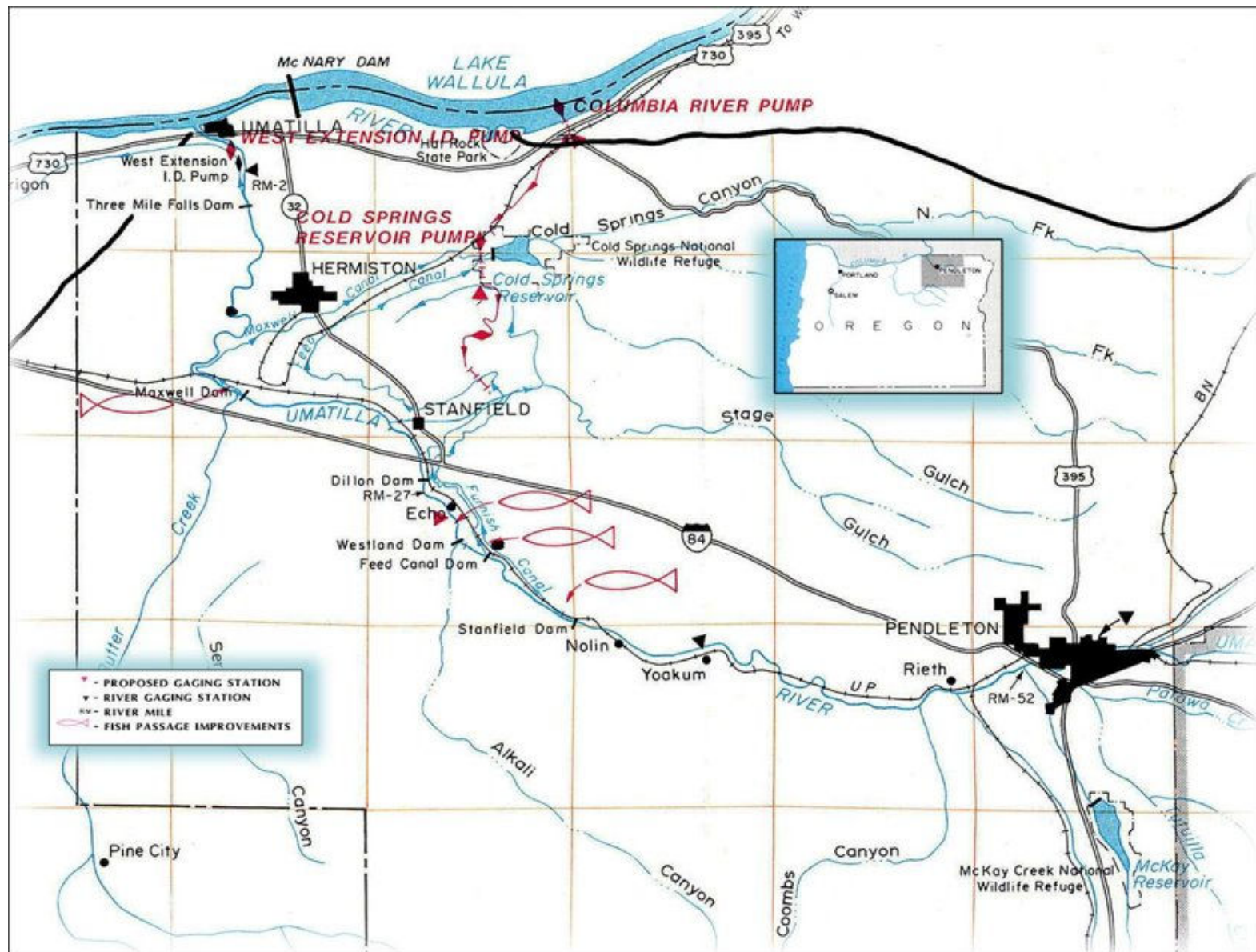
Umatilla Basin Update

Watermaster District 5

Umatilla Basin Statistics

- Umatilla and Morrow County
- 1,198,000 irrigated acres
- 4 critical areas and 1 classified
- Umatilla Basin Project
- Two federal storage projects
- Homeland of the CTUIR

Umatilla Basin Project





Three Mile Dam on Umatilla River- right bank.

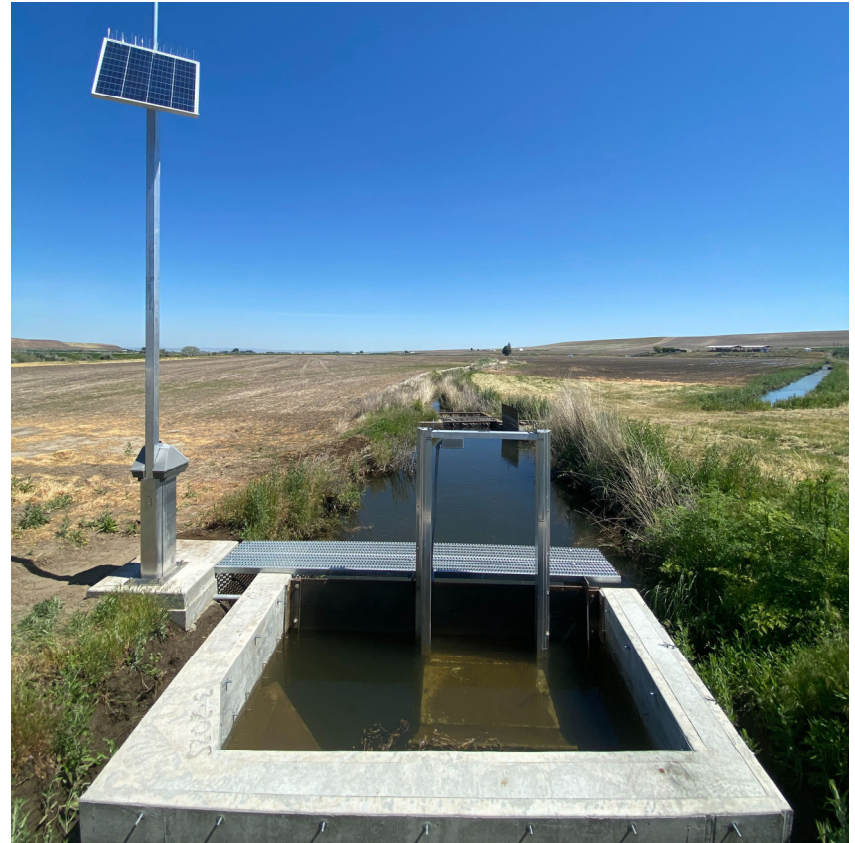




Butter Creek Flowmeter Project







Walla Walla Basin Update

Watermaster District 23

Walla Walla Basin

- Bi-State Water Resources Management
- Serious Water Management Problem Area (SWMPA)
- No federal water storage projects
- Homeland of the CTUIR



Image from wallawallariver.org accessed 6/6/2025

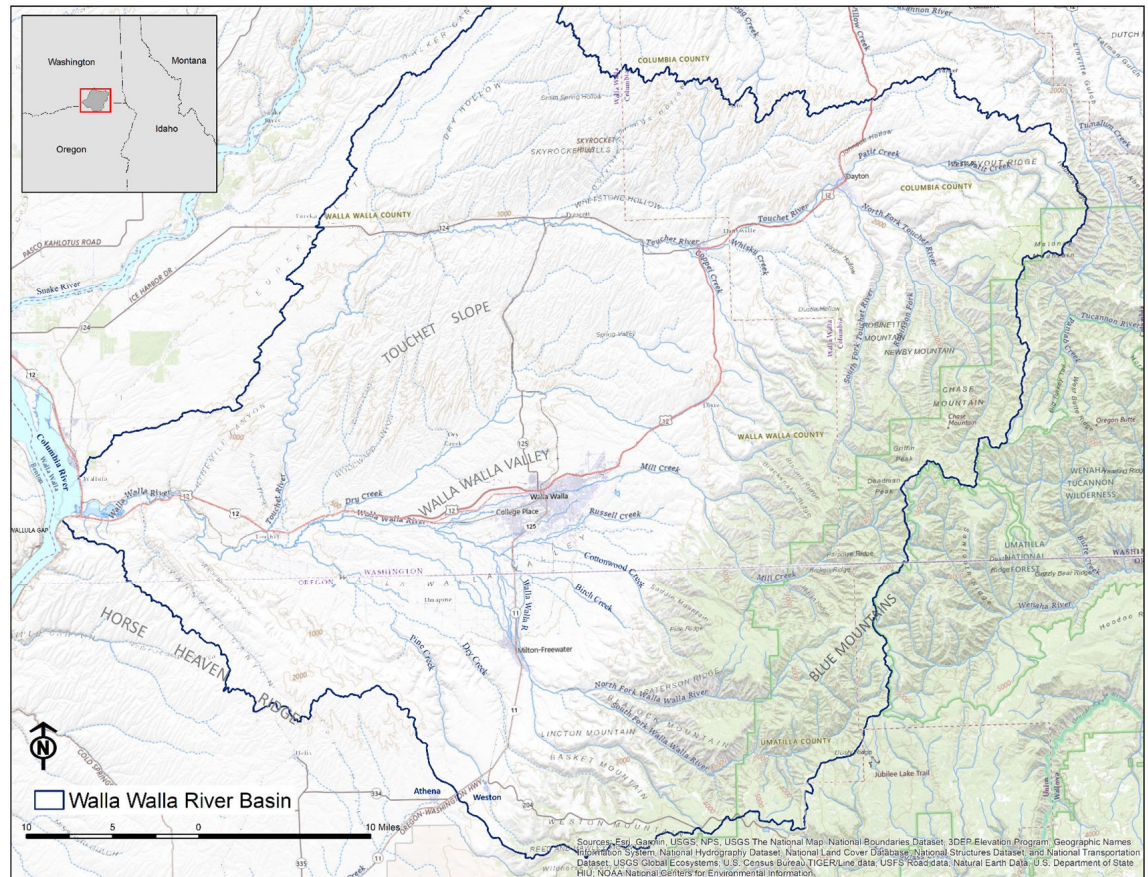
Bi-State Flow Management

- OWRD protects ~30 CFS at Nursery Bridge May – July and September
- As of 2024, instream rights protected in Oregon can be placed into trust with the Washington Dept. of Ecology and protected to the mouth of the Walla Walla River
- Expired USFWS CPSA for 25 CFS is still met voluntarily



USGS Groundwater Study

- Data collection is finished
- Draft writing in progress
- Study results in 2026



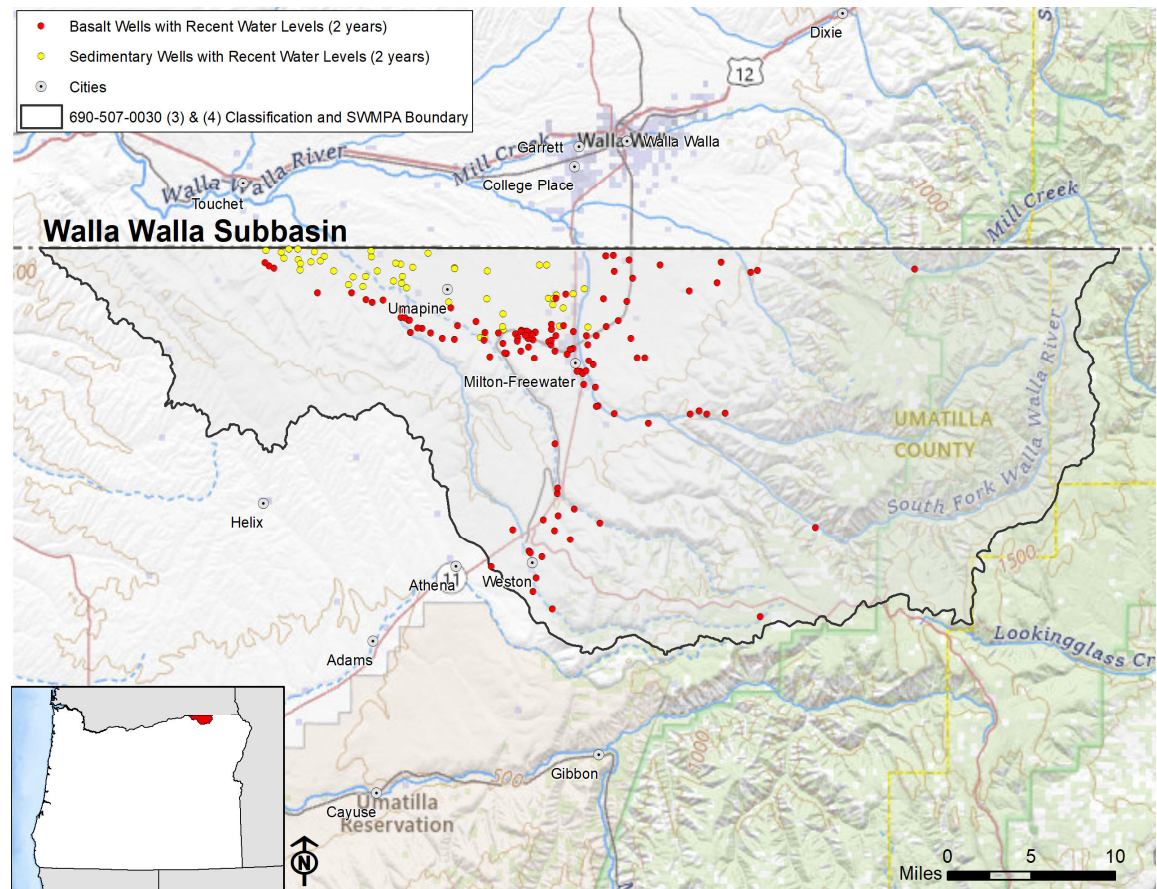
Bureau of Reclamation Basin Study

- Preliminary Investigation
 - Reviewing work completed
 - Water supply and analysis
 - Create surface water model
- Study results in 2026



Serious Water Management Problem Area (SWMPA) Update

- Rules adopted by the OWRC in 2017
- Flow meters required on basalt wells in District 23
- Bi-annual flow meter readings
- Quarterly GW data collection



OREGON



WATER RESOURCES
DEPARTMENT

Thank you!

Chris Kowitz

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