

# Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation First Foods Policy Program

Regarding Funding Priorities (173-566-150)

1. The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation First Foods Policy Program supports allowing funding to be used outside those basins required to plan under RCW 90.94 and not limited funding solely to projects that offset new impacts.

2. Please consider the following recommendations regarding 173-566-150:

173-566-150 (1)(a): It is unclear why designated planning basin immediately receive the highest funding priority. Recommend requiring direct connection to, or at a minimum consistency with, ongoing plan development or metering pilots in those designated basins to achieve the highest priority for funding.

173-566-150 (1)(a): Recommend adding to the highest priority, projects that are consistent with and that would advance objectives of watershed plans developed under RCW 90.82. WRIA 32 worked very hard to achieve an instream flow rule and permit exempt well program but the Walla Walla River continues to run dry during the summer, native fish species are still struggling, and the projects needed to address those issues without undermining consumptive uses require funding.

173-566-150 (1)(b): Recommend adding species of cultural significance to tribes. There are recovery efforts through Washington for many culturally significant aquatic species that were extirpated prior to federal and state action (Walla Walla Basin spring Chinook)

173-566-150 (2)(b)(ii): Recommend removing as a priority or identifying riparian and fish habitat as a low priority within this "Streamflow Restoration" funding program. Every cent of the \$300 million can and should be used on efforts to address inadequate flows and offsetting actions that would worsen flow conditions. There are existing funding sources and programs dedicated to habitat improvement.

3. Recommend making it clear how RCW 90.94 and the \$300 million funding program interact with and potentially impact other Washington programs and funding sources. Existing programs and funding sources that help fund similar projects and objectives include, but are not limited to, the Washington Irrigation Efficiency Grant Program, the Office of Columbia River, and the Washington Water Transactions Program.