WATER RESOURCE INVENTORY AREA 53
LOWER LAKE ROOSEVELT WATERSHED
PHASE 2 - LEVEL 1 HYDROGEOLOGIC TECHNCIAL ASSESSMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In 1998 the Washington State Legislature passed ESHB 2514, the Watershed Management Act which was codified as RCW 90.82, to provide a framework for locally based watershed planning and resource management. The primary goals of local watershed planning are to assess the status of water resources within local watersheds and determine how to balance competing demands for water within the watershed. A stated purpose of the statute is "...to develop a more thorough and cooperative method of determining the current water situation in each water resource inventory area of the state and to provide local citizens with the maximum possible input concerning their goals and objectives...."

The Watershed Management Act establishes a process to assess five water resource elements and develop strategies for future water resource management. These five, water quantity, water storage, water quality, habitat, and instream flows, are the basic elements that may be addressed in watershed planning. While watershed planning is not mandatory, the Act mandates that any plans that are developed through the watershed planning process must address water quantity. It is left to the discretion of local "Planning Units" whether or not to address the other four elements of watershed planning (water storage, water quality, habitat and instream flows). Instream flows may be addressed by the Planning Unit, or may be referred to Ecology for action. By unanimous vote, Ecology may be requested to change an existing instream flow. With unanimous agreement of governmental members and majority support of non-governmental members of a planning unit, Ecology will adopt a rule to implement an instream flow on a stream where a minimum flow has not yet been set.

There are 62 watersheds designated within Washington State, as described in WAC 173-500. The Lower Lake Roosevelt Watershed was designated as Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 53. In 2008, the Lincoln County Planning Department, as directed by the Lincoln County Commissioners, began evaluating and organizing the initiating governments in WRIA 53 to participate in watershed planning. The WRIA 53 Planning Unit was formed in January 2008 under the guidance of the Watershed Planning Act (RCW 90.82). The initiating governments consisted of:

- Lincoln County – (lead agency)
- Okanogan County
- Ferry County
- Grant County (opted out)
- Davenport (largest City)
- Seven Bays Water Association (largest water purveyor)

The Colville and Spokane Tribes were also invited to participate. However, both tribal governments opted not to participate in the Lower Lake Roosevelt Planning effort. Letters representing their intent not to participate in the planning process are presented in Attachment A.

On June 3, 2008, Grant County sent a letter to Lincoln County that they were opting out of the WRIA 53 planning process in accordance with RCW 90.82.130 (Attachment A). In addition, the National Park Service and the US Bureau of Reclamation was invited to participate in the process. Both Federal agencies agreed to participate, but only in an advisory role. The Planning Unit currently consists of approximately 50 members consisting of local agencies, city and town representatives, County Commissioners, local private water purveyors, ranchers and farmers, and private citizens.

After completion of the Phase 1 – Organizational Phase in June 2008, the Planning Unit voted to proceed into Phase 2 and conduct this Phase 2 - Level 1 Technical Assessment for the Water Quantity element.

1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

This Level 1 Technical Assessment has been prepared for WRIA 53 – Lower Lake Roosevelt Watershed in accordance with the requirements of Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 90.82. The study area includes a portion of the watershed that is located mostly within northern Lincoln County with smaller portions in northeastern Grant County, southern Ferry County, and southeastern Okanogan County (Figure 1). The portions of the watershed located in Okanogan and Ferry Counties are within the boundaries of the Colville Indian Reservation. The Colville Confederated Tribes is under a resolution to not participate in any RCW 90.82 Watershed Planning activities. Therefore, this assessment focused on those portions of the watershed south of the Columbia River.

The Level 1 Technical Assessment was completed under the provisions of the 1998 Watershed Planning Act (RCW 90.82). The assessment was completed for Lincoln County as the lead agency and the members of the WRIA 53 Planning Unit.

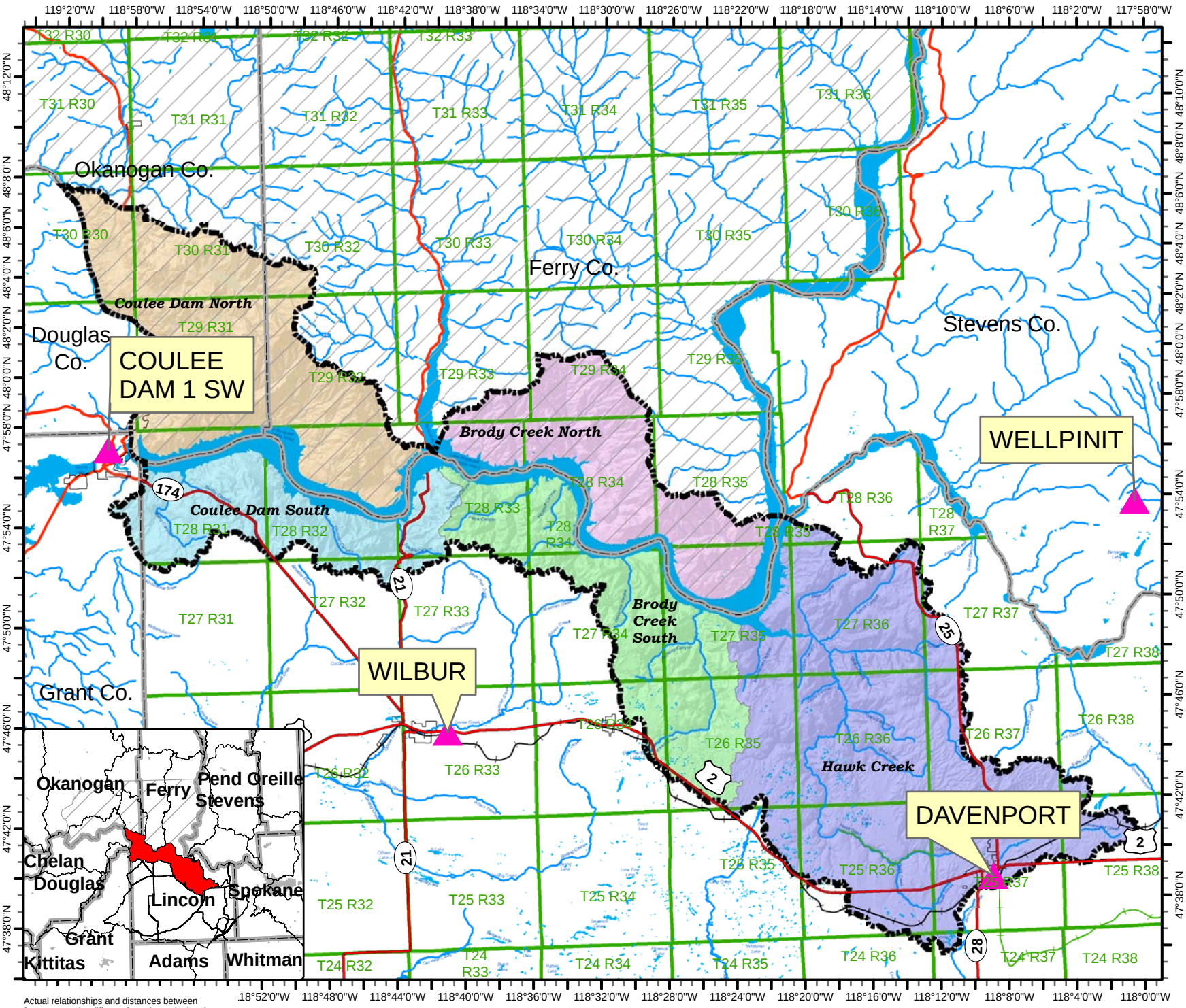
Based on guidance provided for RCW 90.82, a Level 1 Technical Assessment should consist of a comprehensive compilation and review of readily available information relevant to the watershed planning objectives. Readily available information could include watershed scale plans, relevant technical studies and reports, aerial photographs, Geographic Information System (GIS) coverage, and the identification of environmental issues and economic projects important to the watershed (Economic and Engineering Services, 1999).

1.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Members of the WRIA 53 Planning Unit have expressed diversified concerns for water resource planning in the Lower Lake Roosevelt Watershed. Areas of the watershed in which the Planning Unit could review and develop planning alternatives primarily lie within the southern half of the watershed. Those areas north of the Columbia River lie within the Colville Indian Reservation, in which the tribe is not a participant of the Planning Unit. In addition, the watershed is bisected by the Columbia River, which is a federally controlled river. The Grand Coulee Dam lies at the

Figure 1

Lower Lake Roosevelt Watershed (WRIA 53)



Actual relationships and distances between features may be different from those depicted on this map. Data was compiled from multiple sources. The data sources do not guarantee these data are accurate or complete. This map is for informational purposes only.

0 2 4 8 12 16

1:380,160 Miles 1 inch = 6 miles

outfall of the watershed. Numerous federal and state agencies are integrally involved in management of the Columbia River, therefore the Planning Unit did not wish to address Columbia River issues and develop recommendations. This left that portion of the watershed lying south of the Columbia River. This area of the County is undergoing growth along the river, which is the primary reason Lincoln County wanted to undertake watershed planning.
The Planning Unit reviewed the potential issues in the watershed, and evaluated which watershed planning elements to undertake in the Phase 2 Level 1 Technical Assessment. After careful review, the Planning Unit elected to only pursue the water quantity assessment at this time.

Based on a consensus of the Planning Unit members' views and concerns, and the requirements of RCW 90.82, the objectives of this study are:

1. Develop a Level 1 Technical Assessment that is comprehensive in its compilation and review of readily available data of the water quantity element for the WRIA, within relevant budgetary and time constraints;
2. Develop a preliminary water balance for the WRIA;
3. Develop an estimate of papered water versus actual water use in the watershed;
4. Identify data gaps that could be addressed in Phase 2 Level 2 studies, and/or subsequent phases of watershed planning; and
5. Identify preliminary water resource issues in the watershed which may need to be addressed in subsequent Watershed Planning activities.

This report presents a narrative watershed characterization drawn from existing readily available information sources. It does not attempt to critique or reconcile differences among existing sources, or to extend the existing information base with new research or analysis. The purposes of the Phase 2 Level 1 report are to provide an initial watershed characterization that the Planning Unit may build upon and expand in preparing a full Phase 2 watershed assessment, and to identify data gaps and highlight their significance. This report contains the watershed characterization and illustrates the presence of data gaps wherever insufficient information exists to adequately characterize watershed resources.