

METHOW WATERSHED COUNCIL - WATER BANKING COMMITTEE

DRAFT WRIA 48 Public Water Banking Priorities for review 3.10.22

Governance and Oversight: Recommendations

- 1) The Conservation District (CD) will develop an organizational structure for the water bank, including forming an advisory board with representation from WRIA 48 and/or the MWC.
- 2) The MWC/Representatives from WRIA 48 will participate in developing the water bank and any associated mitigation programs.
- 3) A public process is needed that includes engagement and representation from the Methow – ample time to review the draft framework for the water bank organization and associated mitigation program(s) should be provided including local advertising (2) and a 60-day comment period.
- 4) The value of water will be established following a vetted methodology developed and applied by the CD. The CD will present this information to the MWC and other interested parties.

WRIA 48 Water right acquisitions and distribution will be prioritized in the following manner:

WRIA 48 Water Right Acquisitions Prioritized:

1. Water rights that are likely to be sold out of basin
2. Water rights that have year-round use
3. Water rights near headwaters
4. Water rights that have been previously reviewed by Ecology
5. Other water rights

WRIA 48 Water Right Distribution Prioritized:

*Note*Some ranking items are not currently legal per water and case law. If an option is not currently allowable, use will proceed to next in hierarchy. All options remain on this list to allow for future changes.*

Water will be sold or leased on a first come first served basis according to hierarchy. Policy should be developed to eliminate “highest bidder scenarios.”

WRIA 48 Use Priorities for purchasing:

1. Permanent municipal use in WRIA 48, including residential, commercial and industrial uses.
2. Permanent agricultural use in the WRIA 48 sub-basin of origin
3. Permanent agricultural use in WRIA 48.
4. Temporary agricultural leasing in the WRIA 48 sub basin of origin.
5. Temporary agricultural leasing in WRIA 48.
6. Permanent single family domestic use in the WRIA 48 sub-basin of origin, where mitigation water is required due to restrictions on parcels prohibiting permit exempt wells for SFD use.
7. Permanent single family domestic use in WRIA 48, where mitigation water is required due to restrictions on parcels prohibiting permit exempt wells for SFD use.
8. Temporary or permanent leases or sales to improve instream flow in WRIA 48 (for water not subject to the automatic 33% contribution to streamflow grant program).
9. Other permanent rural commercial and industrial uses in the watershed of origin, where mitigation water is required due to restrictions on parcels prohibiting use of permit exempt wells.
10. Temporary lease for agricultural use out of WRIA 48 boundaries: not to exceed 15 years; subject to review regarding re-prioritization at end of lease. Initial lease eligible to begin after a five-year waiting period.
11. Temporary lease for other uses out of WRIA 48; not to exceed 15 years; subject to review regarding re-prioritization at end of lease. Initial lease eligible to begin after a five-year waiting period.