

History

The Wenatchee Reclamation District's formation and water rights began with a series of events beginning around the turn of the century. The District currently has right of 200 cubic feet per second (cfs) of water from the Wenatchee River at a diversion point near the Town of Dryden. The first 11,500 feet of the main canal and right-of-way from the diversion structure is controlled by the Chelan County Public Utility District Number 1 which is responsible for supplying water to the District. The following narrative describes the events and agreements that account for the current situation. ‘

Both the Wenatchee Reclamation District and the Chelan County PUD trace their histories back to actions taken by W.T. Clark and companies he helped to found. During the late 1800's lands in the Wenatchee Valley were being irrigated by a series of small ditches utilizing runoff from nearby canyons. Once cultivated, these lands proved to be so productive that local ranchers and citizens began to see the possibility for greater agricultural growth if a large canal could be located in the area. In the fall of 1901, a meeting attended by local ranchers, merchants and landowners resulted in the decision to proceed with the design of a canal. A local engineer was hired to determine how far up the Wenatchee River the diversion point could be located to assure gravity flow through the canal to the Wenatchee Valley.

After a survey of the canal route was completed, it was determined that the intake would have to be located approximately one-half mile above the community now known as Dryden. In order to finance the project, the landowners who would benefit from the water delivered by the canal had to be convinced of the feasibility of the project. W.T. Clark, a Yakima Valley businessman with experience in irrigation projects, was contacted to help promote the canal project. He and two engineers studied the canal project and declared the proposed project feasible, providing financing could be arranged.

In May 1902, W.T. Clark claimed and appropriated 300 cubic feet per second of the Wenatchee River water. The Notice of Appropriation stated the water was to be used for irrigation, mining, milling, manufacturing, stock, domestic use, fire protection and all other lawful purposes. Later in 1902, the Wenatchee Canal

Company was formed with Clark and three of his engineers, Marvin Chase, P.M. Schebel, and Hubert Ramley the principle officers. In October, 1902, Clark's water rights were conveyed to the Wenatchee Canal Company for shares of capital stock in the company. Clark, with the help of local businessmen, was able to sell sufficient shares of the Canal Company to assure financing and begin construction.

Using a combination of canals, flumes, pipes and bridging the Wenatchee Canal Company constructed a water conveyance system along the foothills from an area below Dryden easterly to the Wenatchee Valley. A siphon, constructed on a bridge, was used for bringing the water across the Wenatchee River at the north end of the Wenatchee Valley. The siphon discharged into a canal, now known as the Highline Canal. This original system served the major portions of the current District in Chelan County, and much of the original canal system is still in operation.

W.T. Clark then began to devise a plan for bringing power to the area for mining, manufacturing, milling and domestic use. Early in 1907, in order to instigate his plans, Clark, Marvin Chase, and P.M. Scheble formed a corporation called the Valley Power Company. In an agreement dated March 1, 1907, the Wenatchee Canal Company conveyed the first 11,500 feet of right-of-way and main canal, commencing at the intake of the Wenatchee River, to the Valley Power Company. A condition of the agreement was that the Valley Power Company, at its own cost and expense, would furnish the Canal Company the water needed for irrigation up to 200 cfs during the irrigation season of each and every year, between the 15th day of April and the 15th day of October. Subsequently, the Valley Power Company constructed a power plant near Dryden on the Wenatchee River and appropriated enough water to power it.

On October 31, 1911, Valley Power Company transferred its property, including the 11,500 feet of canal right-of-way, to the Wenatchee Valley Gas and Electric Company. An agreement between the Wenatchee Canal Company and the Wenatchee Valley Gas and Electric Company, recorded November 21, 1912, modified the original March 1, 1907, agreement between the Canal Company and the Valley Power Company. This modification stated "that said delivery of said water shall be made at the upstream end of Flume Number 2."

In 1920 the Wenatchee Valley Gas and Electric Company was placed in receivership due to its inability to undertake needed capital improvements and meet debt service obligations. In July, 1921, the Federal Court ordered the sale of all Wenatchee Valley Gas and Electric Company's assets and later that year Washington Coast Utilities became the owner of the assets previously owned by Wenatchee Valley Gas and Electric Company. Washington Coast Utilities subsequently deeded to Puget Sound Power and Light Company, all its holdings in several Washington State counties including Chelan and Douglas. In 1948 Puget Sound Power and Light Company transferred its holdings in Chelan and Douglas Counties to Public Utility District No. 1 of Chelan County.

Mr. Clark and his associates not only divested their power company holdings, but also their holding in the Wenatchee Canal Company. In December, 1914, a petition was brought before the Board of County Commissioners of Chelan County requesting the formation of the Wenatchee Reclamation District.

In January, 1915, the Board of County Commissioners of Chelan County entered an order declaring that parts of Chelan and Douglas Counties were duly organized as an irrigation district under the name of Wenatchee Reclamation District. The first Board of Directors, which consisted of fruit growers and business men, were Conrad Rose, President, A.H. Mohler and C.T. Haskell, as directors, with W.T. Knapp as the first secretary. The Wenatchee Reclamation District purchased all the properties of the Wenatchee Canal Company including its irrigation canal, laterals, water rights appurtenances, and rights through certain contracts with Valley Power, and decided to reconstruct, improve and enlarge the system. To accomplish this, District's Board of Directors on November 20, 1915 moved to issue \$350,000 in bonds. An election was held and the majority of the electors of the Wenatchee Reclamation District voted in favor of the bond issue.

Some of the owners in the original Wenatchee Canal Company were also involved with the East Wenatchee Land Company and were instrumental in building a bridge across the Columbia river. The bridge across the Columbia River was constructed in 1908 and carried irrigation pipelines to the east side which opened up land holdings in Douglas County for development. A few years later the bridge was turned over to the Washington State Highway Department and later to the Reclamation District after construction of a new highway bridge.

Legal Status and Governing Board

The Wenatchee Reclamation District was organized under the laws of the State of Washington, and the organization was confirmed by a Washington Supreme Court Decree. Although reclamation districts are covered under Title 89 of the Revised Code of Washington, for practical purposes most of them operate under Title 87 of the Revised Code of Washington. Reclamation districts are political subdivisions of the State.

The affairs of the Wenatchee Reclamation District are administered by a Board of Directors. The members of the Board are elected by the shareholders. Each director serves for a term of three years and the terms of the directors are staggered so that one term expires each year. Day to day operation is handled by a secretary and a superintendent, who are full time employees.

Physical Factors

The Wenatchee Reclamation District serves approximately 12,500 acres in Chelan and Douglas Counties. The original description of the Wenatchee Reclamation District boundaries subdivided the lands within these boundaries into three (3) geographical areas. Division number 1 encompassed all lands in Chelan County north of the Wenatchee River: Division Number 2 encompassed all lands in Chelan County south of the Wenatchee River: and Division Number 3 included all lands in Douglas County. The irrigation system actually starts near Dryden, but as previously discussed the initial 11,500 feet is under the jurisdiction of Public Utility District Number 1 of Chelan County. The Wenatchee Reclamation District's responsibility begins in the vicinity of Williams Canyon, the location of Flume No. 2. From this point the system, consisting of a series of canals, flumes and tunnels, continues along the foothills in a general easterly direction to the area known as Sunnyslope. At Sunnyslope, a canal called the Columbia Lateral continues in a easterly direction, and the main line becomes the Wenatchee River Pipe and turns and heads in a southerly direction crossing the Wenatchee River at the north end of the city.

The Wenatchee River Pipe discharges into the Highline Canal which continues in a general southerly direction through the City of Wenatchee. In the vicinity of Crawford Street and Fuller Street, the Highline Canal ends and the Columbia River

Pipeline begins. Also at this location the Lanham Lateral begins and continues approximately three-quarters of a mile south.

The Columbia River Pipeline runs easterly crossing the Columbia River on the pedestrian bridge to East Wenatchee, and continues up 9th Street N.E. approximately three-quarters of a mile to the Wenatchee Reclamation District Canal. This canal then runs north for approximately four (4) miles, and south and east for approximately seven (7) miles. The Rock Island Lateral, a small diameter pipeline, extends from the eastern end of the canal to the vicinity of Rock Island

MAIN FEATURES

Total System	34 miles
Main Canal	32.90 miles
Total Gunite	27.25 miles
Pipelines	12,200 feet
Flumes	2,081 feet
Laterals	11,229 feet
Total in Gunite	8,453 feet
Natural Canal	2,000 feet