

ICICLE STRATEGY

Icicle Work Group Meeting

*Confluence Technology Center, 285 Technology Center Way,
Wenatchee*

Thursday, June 11, 2026, 10:00 – 1:30pm

A G E N D A

Start Time	Topic
10:00am	Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review, Decisions Requested Today
10:15am	Washington's Water Future Initiative <i>Jennifer Hennessey, Special Assistant to Ecology Director Sixkiller will join for a discussion about this new initiative and its relationship to the Icicle Strategy.</i>
11:15am	Icicle Strategy Budget Items • Budget Status – 2025-2027 and older funds • Budget Planning for 2027-2029 • Funding Request for Repeater -Decision Item.
11:45pm	Lunch (provided)
12:30pm	Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery Water Supply Pipeline Leak Update <i>Hear an update on the LNFH response and corrective actions for a leak in its main water supply pipeline that began in early May.</i>
12:50pm	Short Updates • SnoTel Site Access Needs • Eightmile Lake Dam Rebuild • Instream Flow Rule Amendment • Outreach – COIC tour request from Microsoft • Icicle Recreation Committee • Icicle Strategy Projects Tracker • Other Updates from IWG Members
1:20pm	Public Comment
1:30pm	Wrap Up and Adjourn • Upcoming meeting dates ○ Steering Committee – August 13, 2026, Confluence Technology Center ○ IWG – September 10, 2026, Confluence Technology Center

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Thursday, June 11, 2026, 10:00am-1:30pm

Confluence Technology Center, 285 Technology Center Way, Wenatchee

Members: Shon Smith, Chelan County; Mike Kaputa, Chelan County; Melissa Downes, ECY-OCR (online); Larry Mattson, ECY-OCR; Jason Breidert, CTCR; Levi Jantzer, IPID; Nate White, WDFW (online); Tessa Reeder, WWT; Theo Burgoon, Trout Unlimited; Nicole Ahlem, USBR (online); Brock Hoenes, WDFW; Erica Taecker, USFS; Daryl Harnden, Ag Rep; Chuck Brushwood, CTCR (online); Ariaahna Jones, ICWC (online); Elizabeth Jackson, CCD; Alex Hartwell, CCD

Guests: Karen Weickert, League of Women Voters (online); David Ortman, Public (online); Danielle Gallatin, ECY (online); Jennifer Hennessey, Ecology; Russ Truman, Cascadia CD; Sara Peck, Chelan PUD (online)

Staff: Mary Jo Sanborn, Chelan County; Dan Haller, GeoSyntec (online); Kelsey Mach, GeoSyntec (online); Cynthia Carlstad, NHC; David Rice, Anchor (online); Ingrid Ekstrom, ECY-OCR; Scott Turner, ECY-OCR

Washington's Water Future Initiative

Jennifer Hennessey, Ecology Special Assistant to Ecology Director Sixkiller

Larry kicked off the topic, framing the effort as one focused on elevating water issues to the Governor's level and emphasizing that this is primarily a listening effort. He invited the group to share perspective on what the Icicle collaborative has accomplished so far and what is planned going forward.

Jennifer Hennessey then provided an overview of Washington's Water Future Initiative and discussed its relationship to water conservation and supply efforts around the state, including the Icicle Strategy. She noted that significant work has already been ongoing on the east side of the Cascade Mountains, and that from an agency perspective, the impacts of climate change are growing, with projections that seven out of ten years will be droughts in the future because of less snowpack. These conditions created a need for broader conversations about solutions, and Ecology Director Sixkiller felt it was time to elevate this issue directly to the Governor.

The initiative aims to build a statewide understanding of water challenges, develop an online tool for improved watershed data access, host regional and sector-based roundtables, and have dialogue with existing collaboratives like the Icicle Work Group. The roundtables are not intended to impact existing collaborative efforts, but rather to observe progress and offer support on elements already being worked on. Regional roundtables will be invite-only; virtual sector roundtables will be broader and open to the public.

The initiative's key questions for collaboratives:

- What has been your experience with changing water trends?
- What solutions are you exploring?
- What are the barriers to success?

- Where do you need more support?

Discussion:

What have been key barriers to success?

- Permitting and bureaucracy are primary barriers. For example, the average fish passage project takes at least 5 years to complete if not much more.
- When OCR was initially established there was substantially more funding and greater attention from the state and governor's office; funding has since shrunk, limiting OCR's capacity to take on new projects and implement already identified and supported projects.
- One of the larger Icicle Strategy projects is a pump exchange project on IPID, which will bring great benefits but also carry significant annual maintenance costs, especially for power (system is currently gravity driven). Funding can often be found to build, but ongoing O&M costs are a persistent funding gap. Past legislative conversations around a water infrastructure fund didn't go anywhere; the added financial burden of power costs cannot be passed on to district users.
- Current projects are more controversial and complicated; reaching agreements to enable implementation is labor-intensive. Running up against permitting delays after compromises are made is demoralizing to those involved.
- A water banking pilot in the Wenatchee/Methow area was short-lived. Water acquisitions took up to five years and the program was swept; it is no longer accessible.
- Significant time and money have been spent on procedural considerations without solutions implemented. For example, the "Foster Case" (a Supreme Court decision) has no current solution and has blocked multiple projects; several projects cannot move forward because of it.

Expand on the permitting issue? Jennifer states that one of the governors' primary efforts is to be more customer service driven.

- Lake Chelan dock permitting requires seven permits from seven separate agencies. Streamlining would require all seven to work together, an enormous barrier. It would almost take a declaration of an emergency to create meaningful change.
- There often isn't enough staff to support these efforts and a lot of agencies note capacity as a limiting factor.
- Getting leases on DNR property is particularly difficult. DNR requires all other permits to already be in hand before they will engage; streamlining log structure placement in rivers was an identified need. For example, a DNR permit was required just to use the airspace above a bridge at Icicle Creek in order to conduct work there.

What have been the keys to success so far?

- The completed projects were the more straightforward ones. The complex ones remain and the group knows how to work together to get projects done; however, time is a major enemy when trying to sync funding cycles with project timelines. Even the "easy" ones have been a challenge, such as Cascades Orchard Irrigation Company, which was identified 15 years ago and supported by all, but only completed two years ago.

- Base funding from OCR has been essential, without it the collaborative would not have gotten this far.
- There is an increasing importance of looking at the whole watershed given changing climate; tributaries are significant for managing temperature and flooding. Efforts like Icicle provide that watershed framework.
- Private funding has come up as a possible option (e.g., Microsoft \$1.2M on COIC); partnerships like Darigold and the City of Lynden could be models going forward.
- Most watersheds in the upper Columbia have well vetted plans with project lists – we know what is needed. These should be used rather than trying to reinvent the wheel. The building blocks are there, just need support through funding, capacity, regulatory efficiency.
- Successful infrastructure modernization will require the support of private water holders; approximately 90% of the work the IWG wants to accomplish is reliant on willing participation from private holders like IPID. In the case of Icicle, we are fortunate that IPID chooses to participate; it's often not easy for them.
 - Incentives for voluntary participation need to be explored
 - The concern for water holders is not only about receiving nothing in return. During water right examinations, there is active risk of losing existing water rights, which makes continued engagement difficult
- A state-level policy priority would likely be needed to override the regulatory red tape that is currently blocking progress. One of the initiative's goals is to make recommendations to the upcoming legislative session. However, the IWG needs to first hear what direction the initiative is taking before determining whether it is reasonable to advance specific recommendations

Icicle Strategy Budget Items

Budget Status – 2025-2027 and older funds

- Current unallocated Icicle Strategy budget stands at approximately \$580K; this is the pool from which the repeater funding would be drawn.

Budget Planning for 2027-2029

- OCR is currently in the budget-building process for 2027-2029; operating and transportation budgets are in dire straits, meaning OCR may be tighter than usual even though it is funded through the capital budget.
- The theme for the 2027-2029 ask is "finishing what we started"- the original \$6M from 2025-2027 request was cut to \$3M; the OCR is proposing \$6M again in the next biennium.

Discussion:

- What pressure exists that would affect the capital budget?
 - Capital is fundamentally different money, but Melissa emphasized the importance of only asking for what can realistically be spent within the biennium.

- Mike expressed appreciation for the \$6M ask and noted that the upper end for the 8-Mile project is upward of \$8M.
- Would be beneficial for the IWG to supply budget backup for the projects they are requesting financial assistance for?
 - Yes, this is standard and will be needed in the fall

Funding Request for Radio Repeater

- Mary Jo and Kelsey Mach described the funding request for the radio repeater. This communications infrastructure has been anticipated as part of the alpine lake automation effort. We are at a point now where it can be installed.
- Q&A
 - No lake is ready to utilize it yet
 - 8-Mile would be the first lake to use the repeater
 - Can the federal system be integrated into the repeater? Bill believes they may be able to use it for data transmittal, but unlikely for remotely controlling lake release due to security considerations.

Decision: Funding request for the repeater station **Approved**

Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery Water Supply Pipeline Leak Update

The group received an update on the LNFH response and corrective actions following a leak discovered in the main water supply pipeline in early May.

Updates:

- Contractor (Pipkin) was quickly mobilized and excavation began- the failure is located in the middle of the Icicle River RV Park, pipe was found 9 feet down.
- ROV inspection confirmed eroded concrete on the interior and holes in the steel piping.
- As-builts indicate the break location is at a highly turbulent bend in the pipeline, which likely contributed to the failure.
- The repair has been escalated as a formal project and must go up to the department level for approval and action.
- Juveniles have been moved to Entiat and will go to Little White Salmon until after repair is complete.
- For adults: pumps have been placed in the spillway pool to provide surface water; fish ladder was opened May 30.

Discussion:

- Is Pipkin installing a new pipe?
 - The plan is to line the existing pipe rather than install a new one; two existing access points will be used to minimize disturbance to the RV park; this section (~1,000 ft) represents ~20% of the full pipeline and will be addressed under Phase 2.
- If the bend is moved further up, does that put pressure on the line below?
 - The pipe is believed to be in good condition further down the line; however, concern was raised that this type of work can cause pressure below and warrants monitoring.

- The emergency designation allowed the process to be expedited but limits the ability to extend resources toward Phase 2 simultaneously.
- 90% design is complete for Phase 2; landowner conversations this late summer would allow designs to be finalized over winter and construction to begin next year.

Short Updates:

SnoTel Site Access Needs:

- On track for completion this year despite government shutdown delays; helicopter funding secured
- Long-term access for annual maintenance is needed; options include helicopter or improving the road to the site so that it can be used.
- CCNRD assessing road condition; road use permit being explored as the best path forward
- Mary Jo will likely come to the IWG with a funding request for road improvements next year. NRCS is fully funding installation, so access for maintenance will not be needed until next year.

Eightmile Lake Dam Rebuild:

- JARPA submitted; WDFW site visit forthcoming. 90% design complete this week, then to dam safety review
- Automation components for the rebuild process are being worked on.
- Larry coordinating with Forest Service and IPID on Forest Service permitting; alternative permitting pathway being explored.

Instream Flow Rule Amendment:

- Internal discussions underway within Ecology's rule making group; no dates set
- Unclear whether this work is tied to the upcoming legislative budget discussion; Ecology is still prioritizing it.

COIC Tour Request from Microsoft

- Microsoft requested a site visit for the COIC project; Cynthia will coordinate
- Proposed participants: OCR, CCNRD, WWT, Hatchery, Tribes, COIC

Icicle Recreation Committee

- Elle coordinating; future funding conversations to occur this year

Icicle Strategy Projects Tracker:

- Updated quarterly; available as a reference

Other member updates:

- USFS assessing winter road damage; 8-Mile Creek blowout has a temporary fix with permanent fix going to bid; down to one road crew member

Public Comment

David Ortman commented that the public comment period should be earlier in the meeting. He asked if irrigators are providing funding for the repeater. He also asked if the IWG plans to request any public participation or public comment on any Special Use Permit requested from the USFS for Eightmile Dam.

Wrap Up and Adjourn:

Upcoming meeting dates:

- Steering Committee – August 13, 2026, Confluence Technology Center
- IWG – September 10, 2026, Confluence Technology Center