Deschutes River
Average Seasonal Flows

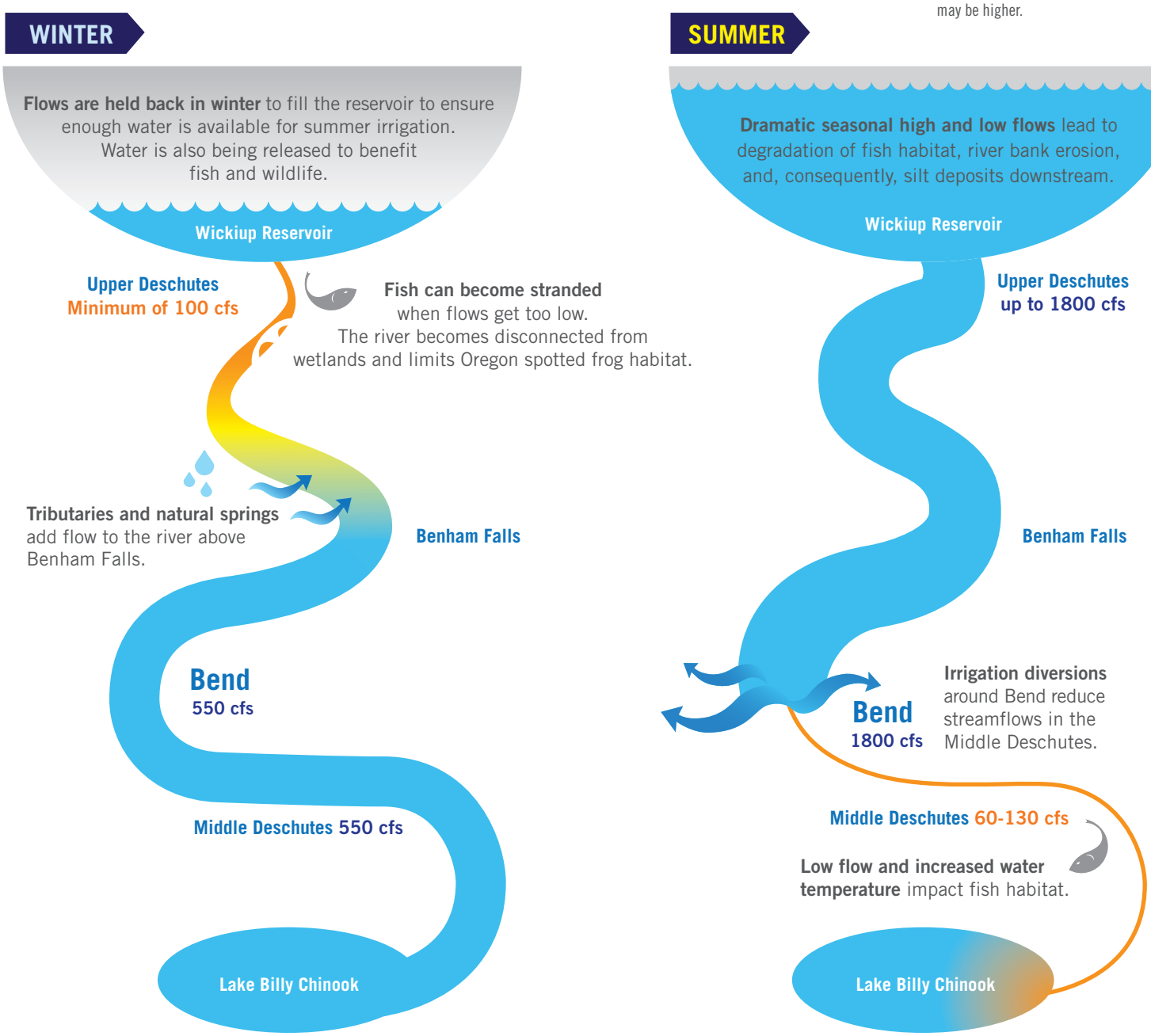
The Deschutes Basin Water Collaborative has an Instream Committee that is assessing existing information on the biological flow needs across the basin, which are discussed below.

Upper Deschutes WINTER FLOWS

State instream water rights based on minimum needs for fish are 300 cfs. Habitat Conservation Plan flow targets include 300 cfs by 2028 and 400-500 cfs by 2033.

Middle Deschutes SUMMER FLOWS

Basin partners are working towards a minimum instream flow goal of 250 cfs to support redband trout habitat, while recognizing that biological flow needs may be higher.



Healthy communities need healthy rivers

Why do we find ourselves in this situation? When large-scale agriculture began in Central Oregon a century ago, the Deschutes River was thought to be a nearly unlimited resource. We now know that isn't the case. But in many ways, the way we manage the river traces back to those early days – and pressure on the river grew as more people moved to the area.

The Deschutes River is the lifeblood of Central Oregon, whether you rely on the river for economic livelihood, recreation, or rejuvenation. There is enough water in the basin to meet most needs in most years, provided we use the tools available to conserve and rebalance water use.

What does cfs mean?

A cubic foot per second is how the flow of a river is measured—as quantity over time. To visualize this, it takes 24.4 cfs to fill an Olympic-sized pool in one hour.

Deschutes Basin
WATER COLLABORATIVE
Water for Rivers, Agriculture and Communities