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Meeting Notes

October 21, 2010

Yakima Arboretum, Yakima WA

Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project (YRBWEP) 2010 Workgroup

Opening Comments

After introductions and meeting agenda overview, Ben Floyd, Anchor QEA, announced that several web postings are now available online from previous Out of Stream Needs, Habitat, Instream Flow and Modeling Subcommittee meetings. Information from more recent meetings will be posted soon.

Wendy Christensen (Reclamation) informed the Workgroup that Reclamation is finalizing the video, Yakima Basin Solutions – Now and For the Future, prepared through the Yakima River Basin Study. It is scheduled to be released in November and will be posted on the website.

Ben recapped the Workgroup meeting held one year ago today, noting it was one year ago that the “Discussion Draft - Preliminary Integrated Water Resource Management Plan” was shared with the Workgroup. He highlighted the progress made since then on key topics identified by the Workgroup as important for developing a Final Integrated Plan.

Review of Previous Meeting Notes

There were no comments on the September 23 Workgroup meeting notes. Ben had received an email from one Workgroup member with suggested clarifications on comments made. The changes were made and the Workgroup packet contains the updated notes.

Integrated Plan – Hydrologic Modeling Results, Including Climate Change by Steve Thurin, HDR
Steve presented modeling results for the Integrated Plan and Future without Integrated Plan (FWIP), including adjusted scenarios, and potential climate change effects. Results highlighted improvements to water supply and instream flows. A draft Yakima River Reaches: Instream Flow Improvement Matrix was handed out in addition to the presentation. (*For the presentation slides and handout on the hydrologic modeling, and on other topics discussed at the September meeting and described below, see <http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/yrbwep/2010workgroup/meetings/index.html>*).

The following items were discussed:

- Additional refinement may be needed on the flow improvement matrix.
- The potential effects of climate change impacts the Yakima basin more than others because snowpack functions as an additional storage reservoir. In the table addressing potential effects climate change has on Integrated Plan and FWIP, why do the results show a shortfall in meeting



the 70 percent proratable supply in 2005? *The 70 percent prorationing target for this year was not met because the model used all the water storage available in the previous years.*

- What are the habitat impacts if the enlarged Bumping Reservoir would only be three-quarters-full half the time? Would this create fish passage barriers? Would they be persistent over years? The Workgroup should talk about the risk from the proposed Bumping enlargement and Kachess Inactive Storage operations on habitat conditions.
- Climate Change scenarios modeled existing operations. If and when changes occur that require modified operations – operations would be modified to accommodate needs. Steve Thurin will revise model to reflect potential operational modifications that maybe used to respond to climate change and provide results to Workgroup.
- Some Workgroup members expressed a desire to look at additional modeling scenarios to fill some information gaps or answer some open questions. The analytical tools and results may not be adequate to make a decision. *The Workgroup has adequate information to make a decision about the Integrated Plan benefits on water supply and instream flows. The Workgroup could run additional scenarios but time is constrained and results would not change substantively from what is being presented.*
- The results raise questions about how effective Bumping enlargement would be in improving supply if climate change conditions like those described in the scenario are realized. More refinement would be helpful.
- The Workgroup cannot afford to address every question raised. This leads to “paralysis by analysis;” time to make a decision.

Integrated Plan – Updated Draft Cost Estimate Results *by Keith Underwood, HDR*

Keith presented preliminary cost estimates for the Integrated Plan to the Workgroup. The draft costs are still being developed and so will not be made available in written form or on the website due to their preliminary status.

The following items were discussed:

- Explain how power generation would be included in the Integrated Plan. Where would it be reduced and where would it be added, and what would the overall revenues and costs be?
- Thorp pump station costs include conveyance to Wymer.
- The Kachess Inactive storage costs are still being evaluated.
- The operations and maintenance costs are still under development.
- The Workgroup requested that in order to avoid confusion, cost estimates should not be presented until they are more complete, and replacement costs should not be included.

Timing, Triggers and Sequencing *by Andrew Graham, HDR*

Andrew presented a draft document of timing, triggers and sequencing for the Integrated Plan. Plan elements were divided into programmatic actions and small infrastructure projects, high priority infrastructure projects, and projects requiring further study or demonstration of need.

The following items were discussed:

- Passage at Cle Elum is going forward and should not be tied to a storage project. Passage at other reservoirs should not be contingent on storage either.
- A trigger should be identified for Bumping passage, dependent upon Bumping enlargement. If Bumping Enlargement goes forward then passage would be part of new dam. If Bumping Enlargement does not go forward then passage would require modification of existing dam.
- The strategy for seeking funding from Congress will need to be identified.
- The Funding Subcommittee is working on a congressional strategy and they are seeking guidance from congressional representatives on the recommended approach.
- Timing and triggers are important to keep in mind, however, the Integrated Plan needs to be agreed to before timing and triggers can be agreed upon.

Workgroup Discussion – Feedback on Integrated Plan Development

Ben Floyd introduced this agenda item by describing recent communications from the Yakima Basin Storage Alliance (YBSA), Kittitas County, and Kennewick Irrigation District (KID). Representatives from each agency discussed the content and meaning behind each correspondence.

Workgroup members were then asked to provide feedback on the Integrated Plan information they had seen to date. Workgroup comments:

- Dawn Wiedmeier – Focus is getting closer to where we need to be.
- Jeff Tayer – Need to account for better understanding of municipal need.
- Mike Leita – No comment.
- Scott Revell – KID agrees with YBSA on fish needs, in that we need more flow in lower Yakima.
- Steve Malloch – Need more conversation on some plan topics before ready to accept.
- Paul Jewell – More analysis and discussion is needed as far as creating future municipal and domestic water supply allotments and on climate change numbers. Kittitas County also supports an in-basin focus on supply solutions.
- Alex Conley – The fisheries community is pleased with Workgroup efforts. A few questions remain on goals and how these will be achieved. Sooner than later, discussions should begin on O&M and repayment.
- Rick Dieker – Support moving forward, but the Integrated Plan will take more than twenty years to implement. May need to show additional phases.
- Dale Bambrick – Overall good, aside from Bumping enlargement issues.
- Ron VanGundy – Do not support trimming package down further. Modeling results show the plan currently minimally meeting goals, and climate change may lessen that further. We need to move forward with the full package and agree on the package. Also, focus on the political process should be on a separate, but parallel effort.
- Sid Morrison – No additional comment beyond what is specified in the YBSA White Paper.
- Max Benitz – Concerned about the lower Yakima and also projects that need to be built.

- Urban Eberhart – Agree with addressing municipal and domestic water supply allotments on a geographical basis. Cost information was confusing. Need to get on with storage projects and system improvements, and keep moving forward.
- Tom Davis – Supportive of effort. Washington Department of Agriculture is ready to provide support.
- Jeff Thomas – Feeling pretty good about the process. Compliments to the modelers. We have more analysis to do and should not feel rushed. We must do the job well, and we have time to do it well.
- Dave Brown – Pretty satisfied so far, but concerned with need [expressed by others] to allocate municipal and domestic supply geographically. It could affect water access and cost, and complicate matters. May need a better assessment on needs from communities that have not been involved in the planning process.
- Tom Ring – Appreciate Commissioner Jewell comments [regarding geographic allocation of future water supply]. The balance historically has been tilted heavily towards irrigation needs, so Integrated Plan balance among fish passage, habitat and irrigation supply projects to be implemented with the Integrated Plan should account for this.
- Derek Sandison – Several thoughtful comments were made by Workgroup members, and some have expressed the need for additional information. Ecology remains committed to provide the Workgroup with the information needed to reach agreement on the Integrated Plan.

Public Comment

No public comment was made.

Integrated Plan – Fisheries/Habitat Benefits *by Joel Hubble, Reclamation*

Joel presented All-H Analyzer (AHA), Ecosystem Diagnosis & Treatment (EDT), and Decision Support System (DSS) model results on fisheries and habitat benefits with the Integrated Plan. Elements included a quick review of the current species distribution in the basin, integration of natural and hatchery fish, and minimum, maximum, and average run sizes. Joel recognized Alex Conley (YBFWRB), Yuki Reiss (YBFWRB), and Chris Fredricksen (Yakama Nation) for their contributions in producing these results.

The following items were discussed:

- Coho is depicted as present, but not spawning on the current lower Yakima distribution map.
- Improvements depicted in steelhead model numbers have potential to get a de-listing and may also provide recreation benefits.
- Fish passage at Rimrock was not included in this run due to time limitations, but will be included along with other passage projects in the next modeling run.
- Is there an adequate food supply for all these species? *In EDT, macroinvertebrate, carcasses, and alkalinity all work synergistically to contribute to food source output.*
- If you include sockeye with all the other species, combined benefits double for average conditions.

- These model runs do not establish as significant benefits to fish numbers as some expected. *Admittedly, this is not millions of fish, but doubling and tripling present numbers is building resiliency into populations. Additionally, these numbers do not include fish that are harvested outside the Yakima basin, which is significant.*
- Improved smolt survival would provide initial benefits to total out migration of approximately 1,200,000, with approximately 250,000 taken by predators. Predation does have impact on fish survival.
- Can models be modified to add more water and manage it for fish? *For smolt survival, yes, and also in tributaries where flows are low you can add more channel width. In regards to flow for mainstem, there is not a good way to tie flow to survival.*
- At a very crude level, a cost/benefit analysis would look pretty good. The fish numbers look pretty good, but these values will not justify Wymer construction. Wymer cannot pay for itself with fish returns only.
- Need to show benefits from passage at other reservoirs [Keechelus, Kachess and Rimrock] to get full picture.
- We also need to look at climate change and how ambient air temperature will affect surface water temperatures; it is an essential part of this project.

Public comment

- This year, an educational program for elementary and middle school students was filmed and is available at www.ybsa.org.
- Need to somehow account for the anadromous salmonid life cycle happens outside the Yakima system.
- Power subordination at Roza and Chandler can be added to the hydrologic model runs.

Updated Habitat Program *by Ben Floyd*

Ben presented the updated habitat program cost elements summary table. Ben described the process for updating the table and reviewed its contents. The table included the updated mainstem floodplain and tributary restoration costs and actions, and where these actions would occur.

The following items were discussed:

- How will the program improve habitat conditions in the Lower Yakima? *The proposed improvements will improve fish habitat in the lower Yakima, both from improved water quality from actions upstream and from limited habitat improvements identified in the Lower Yakima. Some lower Yakima habitat conditions are difficult to improve, even with increased flows.*
- The \$460 million program cost roughly correlates with the costs for the Steelhead Recovery Plan actions included in the EDT model and results presented earlier today.
- The recent USFWS critical bull trout habitat designation will affect the nature of the ESA Section 7 consultation process for the Integrated Plan.

Public comment

- Regarding the Gold Creek restoration action in the Habitat Program, does this include repairing the forest service bridge? *No, but this will be added.*

Environmental Effects and Mitigation by Ann Root, ESA

Ann presented the environmental, policy, and legal barriers to Integrated Plan implementation (Task 5.2). The approach to analysis included identifying major impacts that could prevent or delay a project, identification of policy, cultural and public perception barriers, and proposed mitigation strategies for these major barriers.

The following items were discussed:

- I do not see any issues mentioned on the potential impacts to cabins and houses for the Cle Elum pool raise project. *Issues are noted in the technical memorandum being prepared on this topic (TM). No structures have been identified to be inundated, but camping structures may be impacted. There would be property acquisition, but it would not include structures.*
- Wymer would inundate sage grouse habitat. Sage grouse is a candidate listed species under the Endangered Species Act.
- The streams around Bumping reservoir provide significant spawning habitat for bull trout, and addressing impacts represents a significant barrier. Bumping enlargement would impact recreation, too.
- Effects to bull trout and the spotted owl could potentially be mitigated as stated before.
- Is the Wymer site public owned? *No, privately owned.*
- In the mitigation strategies for the new or expanded storage element, would it not be more appropriate to say the package will include bull trout mitigation?

Public Comment

- Barb Lisk with Congressman Hastings office communicated that the congressman does not consider Reclamation to have authority to provide fish passage at their existing reservoirs.

Draft Decision Document Outline by Ben Floyd, Anchor QEA

Ben presented the updated Yakima River Basin Study Report Outline to the Workgroup. He reviewed the report elements, including the decision document items and associated descriptions. Ben reminded the group that they have already seen most of this information in models and presentations over the past few months. A completed decision document summarizing the heart of the findings will be presented for deliberation at the November Workgroup meeting.

The following items were discussed:

- By the November meeting, will you have any indication for cost allocation? It seems this would be an important part of the decision. *This information will not be available as it requires specific analysis for participating organizations, based upon a Reclamation “ability to pay” analysis. This will come in the future during plan implementation.*

- We all agreed that we cannot get finite numbers on some plan element, e.g., how the plan performs under potential climate change conditions. I think we are just trying to get the best plan we can.
- This plan has to be approved, although it is not a perfect model. It will need to be shepherded forward, one step at a time.
- The plan will have many open questions to keep in mind as the process moves forward.

Subcommittee Updates

Members representing each of the following Subcommittee groups updated the Workgroup on their current status.

- Instream Flow
 - Met last week to review hydrological modeling results. Now working on providing updated results. The Instream Flow Subcommittee does not plan to meet again.
- Modeling
 - No additional meetings planned. Email communication with the Subcommittee will continue on an ‘as needed’ basis.
- Out-of-Stream
 - Wrapped up basic needs assessment. Spent a lot of time on municipal water needs and worked through those recommendations. Discussed municipal conservation recommendation, Andrew is working to revise with input from subcommittee. The Out-of-Stream Subcommittee was a good venue for beginning discussions of market reallocations. We will present market reallocation findings and results at the November Workgroup meeting. No additional meetings planned. E-mails of revisions will be sent to the subcommittee.
- Habitat
 - No additional meetings planned. Future modeling results will be e-mailed to the subcommittee. Plan to address sockeye in next analysis, along with additional fish passage at reservoirs. We plan further refine modeling assumptions. Difficult to quantify survival rates from hatchery fish, but trying to get those numbers into model results.
- Funding
 - Identified a number of questions at recent meeting. Dan Silver acknowledged we were not the ones to determine answers to many of these questions. We will look to D.C. for guidance. Understand that the process will not be successful unless it brings everybody together including the public and community support.

Meeting Wrap-up

- Next meeting will be November 19. Please note that this is on a Friday, instead of Thursday.

YRBWEP Video by *Wendy Christensen, Reclamation*

Wendy presented the Yakima River Basin Study video to the Workgroup. Feedback and comments on the video are appreciated. Please send comments to Wendy.

Workgroup Members in Attendance

Dale Bambrick, NOAA Fisheries Service
Max Benitz, Benton County Commissioner
Dave Brown, City of Yakima
Alex Conley, Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board
Tom Davis, Washington Department of Agriculture
Rick Dieker, Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District
Urban Eberhart, Kittitas Reclamation District
Paul Jewell, Kittitas County Commissioner
Mike Leita, Yakima County Commissioner
Steven Malloch, National Wildlife Federation
Sid Morrison, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance
Scott Revell, Kennewick Irrigation District
Tom Ring, Yakama Nation
Derek Sandison, Washington Department of Ecology
Jeff Tayer, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
Jeff Thomas, US Fish & Wildlife Service
Ron VanGundy, Roza Irrigation District
Dawn Wiedmeier, Reclamation

Other Attendees

David Bowen, American Forest Land Co.
Tom Carpenter, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance
David Child, Yakima Basin Joint Board
Wendy Christensen, Reclamation
Stuart Crane, Yakama Nation
James Davenport, JH Davenport, LLC
Charlie de La Chapelle, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance
John Easterbrooks, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
Ben Floyd, Anchor QEA
Joel Freudenthal, Yakima County Commissioner
Adam Fyall, Benton County
Chuck Garner, Reclamation
Bill Garrigues, U.S. Forest Service
Don Gatchalian, Yakima County
Kristi Geris, Anchor QEA
Andrew Graham, HDR
Sean Gross, NOAA Fisheries
Bob Hall, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance/Yakima Auto Dealers
Justin Harter, Naches-Selah Irrigation District
Joel Hubble, Reclamation

Eleanor Hungate
John Jaksch, Kennewick Irrigation District
Jerry Kelso, Consultant to Bureau of Reclamation
Chuck Klarich, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance
Paul La Riviere, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
Barb Lisk, Office of Representative Richard Hastings
Chris Lynch, Reclamation
Daniel Martinez
Tina Mayo, US Forest Service
Jim Milton, Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District
Tom Monroe, Roza Irrigation District
Bob Montgomery, Anchor QEA
Tanya Myers
Brian Myre, Yakama Reservation Irrigation District,
Tom Myrum, Washington State Water Resources Association
David Reeploeg, Office of Senator Maria Cantwell
Yuki Reiss, Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board
Ann Root, ESA Adolfson
Mike Schwisow, Schwisow & Associates
Dan Silver, Ecology Consultant
Elaine Smith
Rob Swedo, Bonneville Power Administration
Tom Tebb, Washington Department of Ecology
Steve Thurin, HDR
Keith Underwood, HDR

Where to Find Workgroup Information

Meeting materials, notes, and presentations from the Workgroup meetings will be posted on the project website (<http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/yrbwep/index.html>). A bibliography of information sources, many of which are available online, is also posted on the website. If anyone needs help finding an information source, contact those listed at the top of page 1 or Ben Floyd at Anchor QEA, Richland office, (509) 392-4548, or bfloyd@anchorqea.com.