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Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project (YRBWEP) 2009 Workgroup

Meeting Notes

November 9, 2009, Yakima Arboretum in Yakima, Washington

Review of October 22, 2009 Meeting Notes

The Workgroup had the following comments on the October 22, 2009 meeting notes:

- Cost estimates for the integrated package should be added. HDR will add these noting they are very preliminary estimates.
- The last bullet on page 5 should read “spillway for downstream passage.”
- On page 6, change the word “will” to “may” in the statement “Elected officials will think that the Workgroup missed the mark...”
- Add to the comment on page 4 regarding Wymer dam, that it should be located and designed with the ability for future expansion.

Workgroup Schedule

Ben Floyd reviewed the Workgroup’s remaining meeting schedule for 2009. There will be meetings on November 23, December 7, and if necessary, December 17. The workgroup will not meet on December 23 as previously scheduled. In 2010, the consultant team will begin to validate the numbers in the integrated package and will meet at key milestones with the Workgroup. The Workgroup discussed their thoughts on the meeting plan.

- Michael Garrity commented that he would like further clarity about how different projects in the integrated package work together and their benefits, and how projects meet demonstrated/validated needs. He would like additional information about the costs and benefits of storage projects, and have conservation opportunities/benefits realized early in implementation. In addition, Michael stated that the Workgroup will be in a better position to reach consensus after the Basin Study is done because how the projects hold up under further analysis will inform what package will ultimately be proposed to legislators.
- The consultant team will work to further quantify flow benefits with the help of Workgroup members.
- The Workgroup discussed the need to make decisions in the face of uncertainty. The Workgroup will be able to further evaluate and refine the package in 2010. Some workgroup members are concerned that the group will not be able to reach consensus without more information.
- The consultant team will request a briefing session with the Congressional delegates to discuss the Workgroup’s progress to date, and receive guidance.



- The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and Ecology convened this Workgroup in order to include stakeholder input from the beginning of the planning process.
- The decision of whether storage is needed is a threshold issue.
- It was noted many studies have shown that conservation will not supply adequate out of stream water supply and storage is necessary to meet existing needs.
- A Workgroup member suggested a scorecard so Workgroup members could rate the integrated package. It was noted that the integrated package tables summarize benefits that could be considered scorecard elements.
- Workgroup members are encouraged to send their comments to Ben Floyd.

Conservation Package Updates by Jerry Jacoby (Reclamation) and Bob Montgomery (Anchor QEA)

Jerry and Bob reviewed the draft worksheet of water conservation projects in the integrated water resource management alternative worksheet. The worksheet lists only YRBWEP projects approved for implementation at this point; there may be other projects implemented through YRBWEP in the future. Conservation projects could also be funded by other mechanisms. Water conservation benefits are typically reach-specific with some cumulative benefits accruing downstream, but not additive to the amount of water saved by individual conservation projects. YRBWEP project conservation estimates are based on nonconsumptive use. The program requires 2/3 of the conserved water to be used for instream flows. The workgroup discussed the following points related to the presentation:

- Legislation requirements provide disincentives for some irrigation districts to participate. Consider revising requirements to provide more incentive to conserve. Conservation incentives are the key to success. Incentives should be for both instream and out of stream benefits.
- The KID pump exchange project is included in the integrated package as an operational change. The KID project in the handout is not the pump exchange; it is the piping of the lower end of district. Reclamation may move the KID pump exchange project under conservation.
- A Workgroup member suggested that the consultant team standardize benefit by cfs per mile so the Workgroup can better understand and compare benefits.
- The consultant team will update the table with the Kennewick Pump Exchange project, which is currently accounted for elsewhere. The team will develop an updated program cost estimate for the workgroup.

Inactive Storage/Keechelus-to-Kachess (K-K) pipeline Information Updates by Chris Lynch (Reclamation) and Integrated Package and Bumping Lake Updates by Bob Montgomery (Anchor QEA)

Chris Lynch presented information about inactive storage at Cle Elum and Kachess and the Keechelus-to-Kachess pipeline. He reviewed the potential tunnel configurations for inactive storage and estimated reservoir refill time based on past hydrologic conditions. The presentation is provided on the project website.

Bob Montgomery presented the integrated package benefits for 1992 to 1994 hydrologic conditions (Tables of benefits from Phases I, II, and III). These tables are provided on the project website. These numbers are approximations based upon preliminary spreadsheet modeling, and will need further model validation to provide more precise results using Riverware Modeling in 2010. It was noted that the Cle Elum Dam 3' raise proposal had this additional storage earmarked for instream flow benefits.

Bob reviewed the small Bumping enlargement scenario exhibit, showing the enlargement occurring at the existing location. The previous approach shared with the Workgroup showed the location of a new dam downstream of the existing dam, as proposed in previous Reclamation studies. He presented a graph showing the storage elevation curves and volumes for dam placement at the two locations. Enlargement at the existing location would be 160 KAF and 190 KAF at the downstream location (this second value was revised down from 200 KAF due to updated topographic information). The consultant team does not yet have cost estimates for the two locations. Appraisal level costs would be developed in 2010.

Public Comment

The Workgroup meeting was opened for public comment. The following comments were received:

- Chris Lynch's presentation is not taking into account the flexibility in operating reservoirs, so the presentation may be underselling Reclamation's capabilities for optimization.
- The Workgroup has not proven that Bumping Lake can be built or that the Keechelus-to-Kachess pipeline will provide the benefits stated. The Workgroup has to choose achievable projects. Concerned that the Workgroup is spinning its wheels.
- The Sierra Club is opposed to the Small Bumping project due to the impacts it would have on endangered bull trout and spotted owl. The Sierra Club supports conservation efforts. Concerned that the Workgroup is developing a process to reach consensus when it has not yet determined the water supply need. Conservation should be considered over storage projects. American Rivers does not represent the entire environmental community. The Sierra Club provided a written statement to Reclamation and Ecology (to be provided on the project website).
- The consultant team should construct the package to show all the projects starting from the first implementation year and the timeline for each to be completed.

Jim Davenport Presentation on Columbia River Direct Pumping

Jim Davenport presented information about a direct pumping project from the Columbia River. Jim discussed the possibility of using Selah Creek Canyon as a reservoir and piping water from the Columbia River to the Yakima River. There is no private property in the potential project area. There is the possibility that this could be funded from the US Senate's Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. This project has been considered at a conceptual level and cost estimates have not yet been developed.

The group discussed the following points related to the presentation:

- Yakima County wants a reliable source of water for the next 100 years and believes that new storage is essential.

- Reclamation has discussed how a project could develop on the Yakima Training Center with the US Corps of Engineers and the Yakima Training Center personnel. (Representatives from both were invited but were unable to attend this Workgroup meeting to share their perspective)
- Columbia River water could be used as replacement for Yakima Basin Total Water Supply Available (TWSA).
- CH2MHill previously completed a study on 3,000 acre-ft re-regulation reservoir on Selah Creek.
- Concerns with pumping water from the Columbia River were expressed.

Habitat Subcommittee Recommendations presented by Alex Conley

Alex Conley presented the Habitat Subcommittee's recommendations to the Workgroup. The Subcommittee focused on unmet needs and new funding to accelerate implementation of existing projects. The recommendations are divided into a mainstem floodplain program and a tributaries program. The recommendations also include Yakama Nation on-reservation work. Lastly, the Subcommittee recommended an emerging opportunities fund for important projects that arise in the future. See the recommendations report on the project website for additional detail.

The group discussed the following points related to the Subcommittee's recommendations:

- The Subcommittee has identified floodplain and flow enhancement projects for Prosser to the mouth of the River.
- If the Workgroup does not address habitat, then water quantity will increase but other habitat limiting factors will still be problems.
- Phasing and pacing should be based on both capacity and funding.
- The Subcommittee has ideas for addressing problems on Wapato Reach but did not define projects. Wapato Reach is included in the Tier II mainstem flood restoration element.
- Reach management plans are a tool that can aid in floodplain management.
- An expressed concern was that the Subcommittee did not address the lower reaches. It was noted that fisheries agencies are pursuing projects to increase flows at Parker and that Prosser is a low priority due to cost-benefit.
- The Workgroup needs to coordinate these projects with floodplain management agencies and city and county growth management mandates.
- Yakima County is addressing floodplain management with a comprehensive flood zone management project.
- A member suggested that habitat improvements at Wilson-Naneum should be included as part of the Wymer project.
- A member suggested that Yakima County and the City of Yakima be involved in solutions to the lower reach problems.

Overview of Comments

Ben Floyd reviewed a letter the consultant team received from Max Benitz requesting additional information about the benefits of Phase I water supply projects in the integrated package. The consultant

team has addressed some of the comments with information shared on the 1992 – 1994 effects, and can address the remaining information requests during the 2010 integrated package validation work. The following other points were discussed:

- A Workgroup member commented that Title XII authorizes the Cle Elum pool raise and water for fish. Another member responded that he believed that this was part of a larger agreement where Cle Elum water supply was to be allocated to fish and the Keechelus-to-Kachess pipeline was to be allocated to irrigation.
- The Workgroup needs to include opportunities for recreation in the integrated package because there is public support for recreation that elected officials will want to see addressed.
- Benton County Board has concerns about bull trout impacts on small Bumping, and whether effects can be adequately mitigated.

Public Comment

The Workgroup meeting was opened for public comment. The following comments were received:

- When will the Workgroup decide what projects will not move forward? Why are we keeping Bumping Lake on the list? Same with other projects? The Workgroup is still considering Bumping Lake as a viable project at this time. The commenter stated that money has been spent studying Bumping Lake for a long time and he cannot believe it is still being carried forward as an option.
- Is the cost of monitoring and evaluation included in the cost analysis completed by the habitat subcommittee? Alex Conley responded that it was not explicitly included.
- A Workgroup member commented that gravel is being removed from Keechelus Lake to ensure that reservoir capacity is not reduced.

Action Items

- The consultant team will request a briefing session with Congressional offices to discuss the Workgroup's progress to date.
- Update the draft integrated package to note the Cle Elum 3-foot raise additional supply is earmarked for fish.
- The consultant team will update the conservation tables with the Kennewick Pump Exchange project, which is currently accounted for elsewhere. The team will develop an updated value for the workgroup.

Workgroup Members in Attendance

Brad Avy, Washington Department of Agriculture

Dale Bambrick, NOAA Fisheries Service

Max Benitz, Benton County Commissioner

Dave Brown, City of Yakima

Wendy Christensen, Bureau of Reclamation

Alex Conley, Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board

Rick Dieker, Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District
John Easterbrooks, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Urban Eberhart, Kittitas Reclamation District
Rand Elliot, Yakima County Commissioner
David Fast, Yakama Nation – Yakima/Klickitat Fisheries Project
Michael Garrity, American Rivers
Bill Lover, City of Yakima
Sid Morrison, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance
Phil Rigdon, Yakama Nation - Natural Resources
Derek Sandison, Washington Department of Ecology
Jeff Thomas, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Ron VanGundy, Roza Irrigation District
Dawn Wiedmeier, Bureau of Reclamation

Other Attendees

Melissa Bates, Aqua Permanente
Brent Bohan, American Rivers
Kevin Bouchey, Yakima County Commissioner
Tom Carpenter, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance
David Child, Yakima Basin Joint Board
Stuart Crane, Yakama Nation
James Davenport
Warren Dickman, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance
Sharon Edgar, HDR Engineering
Ben Floyd, HDR Engineering
Joel Freudenthal, Yakima County
Don Gatchalian, Yakima County
Andrew Graham, HDR Engineering
Bob Hall, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance/Yakima Auto Dealers
Justin Harter, Naches-Selah Irrigation District
Lynn Holt, Bureau of Reclamation
Joel Hubble, Bureau of Reclamation
Chuck Klarich, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance
Barb Lisk, Office of Representative Richard Hastings
Chris Lynch, Bureau of Reclamation
Steven Malloch, National Wildlife Federation
Mike Marvich, Aqua Permanente
Alec Maule, US Geological Survey Colorado River Research Lab
Tina Mayo, US Forest Service
Jason McCormick, Washington Water Trust
Jim Milton, Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District

Tom Monroe, Roza Irrigation District
Bob Montgomery, Anchor QEA
Bryan Myre, Yakama Reservation Irrigation District
David Ortman, Sierra Club
David Reeploeg, Office of Senator Maria Cantwell
Tom Ring, Yakama Nation
Ann Root, ESA Adolfson
Jan Sharar, Aqua Permanente
Randy Shepard, US Forest Service
Dan Silver, Facilitator
Lesa Stark, Bureau of Reclamation
Rob Swedo, Bonneville Power Administration
Jeff Tayer, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Steve Thurin, HDR Engineering
Ric Valicoff, Roza Irrigation District

Next Workgroup Meeting

The next meeting will be held on November 23, 2009 at the Yakima Area Arboretum.

Where to Find Workgroup Information

Meeting materials, notes, and presentations from the Workgroup's 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 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 HDR Engineering's Pasco, Washington office, (509) 546-2053, or ben.floyd@hdrinc.com.