

Kittitas County, Washington

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December 21, 2009

Derek Sandison
15 W. Yakima Ave., Suite 200
Yakima, WA 98902

RE: YRBWEP

Derek:

Thank you for your telephone call following the December 17, 2009 meeting. Our understanding from that call is that the Department of Ecology and the Bureau of Reclamation have, or are planning to, place the YRBWEP on hold until the various counties provide a numerical value for the general proposal. First let us say that Kittitas County is in favor of a comprehensive plan to address water in the Yakima Basin. Therefore we are generally a "two" on the consensus matrix; however, we have reservations with certain aspects which cause us to share in the numerical value provided by American Rivers.

Kittitas County's principle reservations are:

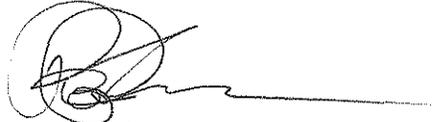
- Conservation should be addressed in the initial phase, specifically upgrades to irrigation conveyance which appear to be relatively less expensive and may provide greater benefit.
- Additional water storage in the initial phase.
- A more formal understanding of the baseline or "do nothing option" which seems to bypass a number ongoing issues, including the Department of Ecology's on-going moratorium and stated enlargement of the same.
- Task 6 remains unclear following the meeting as it pertains to demanding reduction of exempt wells and rural residential uses. Our understanding is that all reference to exempt wells has been removed and that we have refocused on TWS and moved increased water supply into phase one. This is appropriate and it would seem important that Ecology refrain from taking regulatory action in the basin without the consent of the work group.
- Task 8 needs to be better defined. It should be made clear that the IWRMP will need to be flexible as changes in land use and land management occur. County land management may impact proposed projects and this report needs to ensure that the IWRMP does not dictate land management and land use decisions.
- As part of the evaluations conducted under Task 9, an economic impact analysis needs to be included.
- Final recommendations under task 10 must be based upon an economic impact analysis as well as the environmental and socioeconomic concerns.

Kittitas County remains committed to sound water management and we are eager to continue moving forward with this project.

Respectfully,



Alan Crankovich
Chairman



Paul Jewell
Vice-Chairman



Mark McClain
Commissioner