

Contact: Wendy Christensen, Columbia-Cascades Area Office, (509) 575-5848, ext. 203
Derek Sandison, Washington Department of Ecology, (509) 457-7120

Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project (YRBWEP) 2009 Workgroup

Meeting Notes

December 17, 2009, Yakima Arboretum in Yakima, Washington

Review of November 23, 2009 Meeting Notes

The Workgroup did not have any comments on the November 23, 2009 Meeting Notes:

General Discussion

Mike Leita and Mark McClain noted they were not authorized to express support at this meeting for the integrated package on behalf of Yakima County and Kittitas County, respectively. The counties will follow up with letters indicating their level of support.

Comment Response Discussion

Prior to the November 23, 2009 Workgroup meeting, the Department of Ecology (Ecology), Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and the consultant team prepared the draft report for the Preliminary Integrated Water Resource Management Plan for the Yakima River Basin and provided it to the Workgroup for comment. The Workgroup members provided comments to Reclamation, Ecology and HDR. The Workgroup support team prepared a comment response table listing each comment received and comment responses. At the meeting, a few of the more substantive comments were discussed. The Workgroup made the following changes:

Comment #33(#35 in the revised comment/response matrix posted to the project website)

- The Workgroup agreed to remove the term “mandatory” and include for consideration in the 2010 plan where conditions or requirements may be tied to receipt of new funding sources, along with incentives and voluntary measures in the preliminary IWRMP. Michael Garrity encouraged the Workgroup to remain open to all potential tools to achieve desired water management improvements.

Comment #48

- The Workgroup agreed to remove the reference to “bookends” (do nothing and Black Rock) in the report.



Comment #66

- The Workgroup agreed to include Roza Irrigation District alternate supply and dam removal evaluation as an action in the plan, and to update the discussion on Roza and Chandler power plant subordination.

Comment 57

- Michael Garrity would like the Workgroup to consider water quality work as the process moves forward.

Comment 95

- Michael Garrity commented that if the Workgroup is stating that priority is focused on those fish and habitat projects that provide the greatest benefit compared to the project cost, then this principle needs to be applied to the water supply side also.

Other Comments

- Update floodplain restoration projects depicted in the report exhibits. Anchor QEA will make these updates.
- The text on page 6, lines 14-17 overstates the success of sockeye, summer Chinook, and coho reintroduction efforts. HDR will clarify this text.
- The report should include information about the economic value of agriculture in the basin. HDR will add this information.
- The Workgroup discussed the reference of exempt well management actions in the draft report, specifically on page 3, line 22. The Workgroup agreed to remove the reference on Pg. 3 but keep the reference in Section 4, Task 6.

Consensus on the Draft Report

Dan Silver asked each Workgroup member to define their level of consensus and explain their rationale. The numerical value for consensus is based upon a handout previously provided to the Workgroup (See Attachment A), with 1-3 being the higher levels of consensus support and 4 being no opinion 5 and 6 not liking part(s) of the package but willing to support moving forward.

Rick Dieker

- Consensus Level: 3
- Rick Dieker is at a Level 3 because he is unclear on some of the report's specifics, and he would like to re-review the report.

John Easterbrooks

- Consensus Level: 2
- John stated that while he did not have specific information from Jeff Tayer, he believes that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is at a Level 2. He stated that he likes the package will provide for fish and wildlife.

Michael Garrity

- Consensus Level: 6
- Michael stated that he does not like choosing projects before the Workgroup is able to study their benefits.
- He is not ready to support the Bumping Lake enlargement or Wymer Dam and Reservoir projects, and noted that the environmental community is especially concerned about the Bumping Lake enlargement. He believes that the environmental community may object to the Bumping Lake enlargement project even if mitigation measures were planned. With Bumping Lake enlargement removed Michael would be a “3.”

Jim Trull

- Consensus Level: 3
- He is concerned that there are unrealistic funding expectations for the preliminary IWRMP.

David Fast

- Consensus Level: 1
- David believes that the Workgroup has achieved developing a list of projects and actions to consider over the next year.

Sid Morrison

- Consensus Level: 4
- The Yakima Basin Storage Alliance (YBSA) wants storage. Sid stated that jobs and fish projects are tied to water supply and he does not yet see the water supply potential in the preliminary IWRMP.
- Individual members of YBSA may have different opinions.
- The scorecard and climate change are important elements to address.

Alex Conley

- Consensus Level: N/A (Abstain)
- The Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board has decided to not officially define their consensus level because their mission is aligned with how to use water supply, not how to obtain water supply.

Dale Bambrick

- Consensus Level: 2
- Dale is not at a Level 1 because he does not feel that the Workgroup has adequately addressed the conversion of agricultural land uses to residential.
- He also has serious concerns about obtaining funding since it may be hard to garner taxpayer support.

Brad Avey

- Consensus Level: 1

- Support for refinement over next 9 months.
- Recognition of accomplishments to date and optimism for next 9 months.

Scott Revell

- Consensus Level: 2
- Scott would like to understand any unintended consequences. He is unsure of the outcomes of the preliminary IWRMP and how all the pieces will interact.

Ron Van Gundy

- Consensus Level: 1.
- Although Ron is at a Level 1, he noted that there is a long way to determine final package and Roza Irrigation District will be at a lower consensus level if the final IWRMP does not adequately meet out-of-stream needs.
- Elements important to Roza Irrigation District as this process moves forward are adequate storage, power, Roza Dam, and inactive storage.

Max Benitz

- Consensus Level: N/A (Abstain)
- Max stated that while he likes the preliminary IWRMP, he needs to evaluate how this will impact Benton County.
- Before providing their input to the consensus process, Benton County first would like to see how the comments in the comment response table are integrated into the preliminary IWRMP.

Mike Leita

- Consensus Level: N/A (Abstain)
- Mike stated that Yakima County wants this process to move forward, however, he and others at the County would need more time to look at the comments and responses presented.
- He stated that Yakima County's abstention should not stop this process.
- He needs a quorum with the other county commissioners before he can tell the Workgroup what Yakima County consensus level is.

Mark McClain

- Consensus Level: N/A (Abstain)
- Mark still needed to consult further with other board members at Kittitas County.
- He is concerned about exempt wells. The Kittitas County Board of County Commissioners wants to know how the preliminary IWRMP will affect Ecology's moratorium on exempt wells. If exempt wells are vilified, Kittitas County will have a problem moving forward in the process.
- Storage is important to Kittitas County.

Urban Eberhart:

- Consensus Level: 1
- Urban stated that storage is needed in the basin.

Jeff Thomas

- Consensus Level: 1
- Jeff stated that the preliminary IWRMP is workable; however USFWS is not enthusiastic about the expansion of Bumping Lake. He is also concerned about the price of the IWRMP and the time it will take to implement certain projects.

Dave Brown

- Consensus Level: 3
- Dave noted that the City of Yakima has not developed a resolution or had a city council vote.
- He does not feel that the municipal element is clear enough. If it was clearer and the City was in agreement, the City may be at a higher consensus level.

Phil Rigdon

- Consensus Level: 1
- Phil noted that he has concerns for out-of-basin water sources, but still wants the preliminary IWRMP to move forward.
- He stated that the Workgroup will face challenges, but he doesn't think that there will be another opportunity like this to collaborate.

Public Comment

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

- Disappointment was expressed that the Counties did not have enough advance notice to come to the meeting able to define their consensus level.
- Comment expressing concern that some Work Group members were not able to make a formal commitment of support. He observed those who abstained represent folks that are not directly connected to the decision, while those who did make a choice represent those who are directly connected.
- The fact that all members of the Workgroup are still at the table is important to recognize. The Workgroup should not stop this process due to today's meetings consensus discussion.

Discussion with Ecology and Reclamation

Derek Sandison (Ecology) stated that with the Counties unable to grant consensus on the preliminary plan, Ecology will consult with Reclamation to determine whether we can continue the planning process without a commitment from the Counties,. It is important that the Counties make a specific determination on their level of support for the Workgroup recommendation because significant time and money will be spent on planned work in 2010. He would like the Counties to provide a commitment of support. In the absence of that, Ecology will not proceed with the process.

Wendy Christensen with Reclamation stated that Reclamation appreciates the time that the Workgroup members have given to the process. Members of the Workgroup are partners. Reclamation supports

Ecology's statement that we need to receive commitment from the Counties' to go forward with the process. We will wait to hear from them next week.

Action Items

- Reclamation, Ecology, and the consultant team will update the comment response table and finalize the preliminary IWRMP report and provide it to 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
Mike Leita, Yakima County Commissioner
Mark McClain, Kittitas County Commissioner
Sid Morrison, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance
Scott Revell, Kennewick Irrigation District
Phil Rigdon, Yakama Nation – Natural Resources
Derek Sandison, Washington Department of Ecology
Jeff Thomas, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Jim Trull, Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District
Ron VanGundy, Roza Irrigation District

Other Attendees

Melissa Bates, Aqua Permanente
Brent Bohan, American Rivers
David Child, Yakima Basin Joint Board
Stuart Crane, Yakama Nation
James Davenport
Irene Davidson, US Forest Service
Charlie de la Chappelle, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance
Warren Dickman, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance
Sharon Edgar, HDR Engineering

Ben Floyd, HDR Engineering
Chuck Freeman, Kennewick Irrigation District
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
Ken Hasbrouck, Kittitas Reclamation District
Lynn Holt, Bureau of Reclamation
Joel Hubble, Bureau of Reclamation
Jerry Kelso, Consultant to Bureau of Reclamation
Chuck Klarich, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance
David Lester, Yakima Herald
Barb Lisk, Office of Representative Richard Hastings
Steven Malloch, National Wildlife Federation
Tina Mayo, US Forest Service
Jason McCormick, Washington Water Trust
Jim Milton, Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District
Tom Monroe, Roza Irrigation District
Bryan Myre, Yakima Reservation Irrigation District
Tom Ring, Yakama Nation
Ann Root, ESA Adolfson
Mike Schwisow, Schwisow & Associates
Dan Silver, Facilitator
Rob Swedo, Bonneville Power Administration
Ric Valicoff, Roza Irrigation District
Davis Washines, Yakama Nation
Joanne Wellner, Washington Department of Ecology

Next Workgroup Meeting

The next meeting will be held sometime in the spring of 2010. A meeting notice will be sent out by Reclamation or Ecology approximately 30 days in advance of the meeting.

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.