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Yakima River Basin Study– Out of Stream Needs (Task 2) Subcommittee

Meeting Notes, June 10, 2010, City of Yakima Public Works Offices

Approve Notes from Prior Meeting

Notes were approved with no changes.

Current Status of Water Needs Assessment

Andrew Graham, HDR, provided a status overview of the out of stream needs water assessment. The framework is to assess current needs/conditions for agriculture, municipal and other uses; and future needs based on population growth, conversion of agricultural lands to urban uses, conservation opportunities, crop mix and climate change. The consulting team is part way through the assessment. We are presenting preliminary results to get Subcommittee review and input. Many of the numbers presented today will change as we refine the assessment.

Wendy Christensen emphasized that the subcommittee should keep in mind the purpose of the water needs assessment. It is intended to help inform Workgroup recommendations on projects/programs for the Basin, leading to a legislative funding request.

Draft Results – Agricultural Needs

Bob Montgomery, Anchor QEA, presented information on agricultural needs. See the meeting presentation for additional detail. The subcommittee members had the following comments:

- Summary of Annual Entitlements slide doesn't reflect adjudication results. Should identify the adjudicated water right in addition to the full entitlement or at least include qualifying footnote(s). For example, Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District has a 458 KAF entitlement but a 435 KAF adjudicated water right.
- Diversions Below Parker slide. It's important to recognize that if conservation reduces return flows, Kennewick Irrigation District could be affected. If they require a portion of pro-rationed supply, it will reduce pro-rationed supply available to the other users with proratable rights.
- Kittitas Reclamation Diversion graph – Shows April deficit but that doesn't make sense, because prorationing started in May. Modify chart or change label. Consider natural runoff proportioning, NRP.
- Coordinate with US Bureau of Indian Affairs staff on Wapato Irrigation Project. Potentially meet with Edwin Lewis and Virgil Lallachute as well as Stuart Crane (Stuart was at this Subcommittee meeting).



- Discussed the basis for the 70% proration level serving as a basis for planning. Is the most accurate value to apply to all the proratable districts, or is it more appropriate to apply a varying scale to districts? Bob has requested more detailed information from the irrigation districts and this will be used to update the needs characterization.
- Need to have a well-documented basis for 70% proration as being the target we are trying to meet to use in communications with others outside the basin. Also consider showing a range above and below 70%. When you blend the nonproratables with the proratables, the overall reliability % for the entire basin is 85%. This is important in considering how Yakima competes with needs in other basins in the West.
- Economic impacts differ at different proration percentages. If the proration % gets too low, it can affect canal and on-farm operations, and row crop planting strategies. A lot went into developing the 70% goal, dating back to the 1990's.
- Crop distribution pie charts for KRD, Roza and WIP should depict the same color for each crop.
- Focusing on crop irrigation requirements doesn't provide a complete picture because it doesn't account for conveyance or operating requirements. There is a risk that people reading our materials will misinterpret the crop need as the total diversion need. On the other hand, this information is useful, for example in looking at water conservation.
- Decision: we will carry out this analysis, review, and then decide whether and how it can be used in the Yakima Basin Study.

Draft Results - Municipal and Domestic Needs

Andrew Graham, HDR, presented the municipal needs forecast. See the meeting presentation for additional detail. The subcommittee members had the following comments:

- Andrew noted that the 2031 to 2060 population forecast is actually projected at .3% annual growth instead of .5% as characterized in the slide. The group discussed the pros and cons of using county forecasts or a lower value, based upon historical performance beyond the 20-year planning horizon. Using .3% may be too low. A range may be more helpful in determining need.
- Was the per capita usage of 275 gpcd compared to other areas in the western US? Some thought this value might be high. Consider values from Colorado, California and Utah. Utah uses 250 gpcd. Las Vegas or other areas where water usage is low should be compared to identify what could be possible.
- Include aggressive conservation package and adjust demand accordingly. Analysis should also identify unaccounted for municipal water and some associated investments to reduce system leakage. Water rates charged to public water system customers can also reduce usage.
- Account for municipal return flows and their location within the basin, noting where returns occur both above and below Parker.
- The team will also break out the quantity of municipal/domestic use by irrigation season and non-irrigation season.

- For agricultural land conversion to urban uses, the City UGAs are only designed to accommodate 20-year growth. Should expand land conversion and associated changes in water demands to the 50-year horizon.

Draft Results – Non-Federally Served Agricultural Land Needs

Andrew Graham, HDR, presented information on assessing water needs for lands not served by federal water supply. This information is still under development, and HDR is working with Washington Department of Agriculture to address some data issues. The subcommittee members had the following comments:

- The team received a comment from a Basin resident that surface water and ground water usage reported to Department of Ecology is a potential information source for determining agricultural water usage on lands not served by Reclamation. However, members of the subcommittee indicated that these data are sketchy, and not worth investing time to sort out.
- Consider what incentives could be put in place for rural residential lots to reduce water use.
- How will supplemental irrigation wells be addressed? Water need stays the same and is accounted for in drought shortfalls. If surface water is adequate, wells don't run. USGS has information that can be used to estimate amount of supplemental ground water relied on during drought conditions.
- Hydropower is diverted and returned, so the use is non-consumptive.
- How are instream flow needs characterized? That's being covered by another subcommittee. Characterized on a reach by reach basis.

Attendance

Wendy Christensen, Bureau of Reclamation
 Urban Eberhart, Kittitas Reclamation District
 Michael Garrity, American Rivers
 Chris Lynch, Bureau of Reclamation
 Charlie De la Chappelle, Yak. Basin Storage Alliance
 Tom Ring, Yakama Nation – Natural Resources
 Ron Van Gundy, Roza Irrigation District
 Don Gatchalian, Yakima County
 Gerald Kelso, Consultant to Bureau of Reclamation

Jim Milton, Yakima Basin Water Resources Agency
 Jim Davenport, Basin resident
 Stuart Crane, Yakama Nation Water Resources
 Steve Malloch, Nat'l Wildlife Federation (phone)
 Andrew Graham, HDR
 Steve Thurin, HDR
 Bob Montgomery, Anchor QEA
 Ben Floyd, Anchor QEA