



BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Michael D. Leita
District 1

Ron Anderson
District 2

J. Rand Elliott
District 3

September 24, 2018

Washington State Department of Ecology
ATTN: Tom Tebb
1250 West Alder Street
Union Gap, WA 98903

Bureau of Reclamation Columbia-Cascades Area Office
ATTN: Dawn Wiedermeier
1917 Marsh Road
Yakima, WA 98901

Dear Mr. Tebb & Ms. Wiedermeier:

This is to advise you that Yakima County can no longer advocate for the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan (YBIP) as a whole. Since YBIP was formed by the YRBWEP Workgroup in 2011, Yakima County has worked diligently to advocate for YBIP's success, and for all elements of the Plan.

The major funding element of YBIP is stable and adequate water supply. This element is critical for all the YBIP elements to achieve their highest investment benefits. Over the ensuing years, Yakima County has witnessed a growing imbalance of State and Federal funding allocations being designated to non-water supply YBIP elements. Specifically, within the current State funding request for the 2019-21 biennium of \$44.3 million, only \$8.8 million is being allocated to water supply. With this funding request's inclusion, the State's total YBIP funding is \$250.2 million with only \$33.3 million (13.3%) being allocated to water supply. Federal funding allocations to YBIP during this same period are in greater imbalance.

This growing funding imbalance is contrary to the YBIP pledge given to the YRBWEP Workgroup in 2011. As a YRBWEP Workgroup member and a YBIP committee member, my constituents need and demand stable and adequate water supply so that our Yakima Basin economy remains vibrant, our citizens remain employed and their families healthy. Absent strong advocacy on Yakima County's part for water supply would violate my charge as a county official.

As a result, Yakima County can only advocate for Water Supply and Fish Passage elements in the upcoming State and Federal YBIP funding packages. This should not be construed as criticism to the other elements of the plan, but strictly as an effort to restore balance insuring all interests can be satisfied through the full implementation of YBIP.

Specifically, Yakima County will be advocating for a State 2019-21 biennium funding request of \$9.4 million for water supply elements and \$21.9 million for valuable Fish Passage projects that are in

progress. Yakima County can no longer advocate for beginning projects in non-water supply elements within State, Federal and community-wide YBIP efforts. Until YBIP water storage balance is regained, Yakima County will convey our concern to local, state, and federal elected officials, as well as our constituencies.

We hope you, the YRBWEP and Implementation Committee members, will restore balance between the plan elements so that our YBIP model continues to be successful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mike Leita', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mike Leita
Yakima County Commissioner
District 1

cc: Ron Anderson, Commissioner
J. Rand Elliott, Commissioner