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## Meeting Notes

**October 12, 2011**

**Yakima Arboretum, Yakima WA**

## **Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project (YRBWEP) Workgroup**

**Welcome/Introductions and Agenda Overview, Recent Communications** by *Ben Floyd, Anchor QEA, Wendy Christensen, Reclamation and Derek Sandison, Ecology*

Ben Floyd welcomed the Workgroup members and public, led introductions, and provided an overview of the agenda.

Wendy Christensen provided a brief update on progress with the programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS). Reclamation is working closely with the Yakama Nation, and state and federal agencies in preparing the draft PEIS and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report.

There were no comments on the July 13, 2011 Workgroup meetings notes.

**Report on Briefing with Secretary Salazar, Governor Gregoire, Representative Hastings and Senator Cantwell, Yakama Nation Tribal Chair Smiskin and other dignitaries** by *Wendy Christensen, Reclamation and Derek Sandison, Ecology*

Wendy Christensen and Derek Sandison shared a recap of the September 18, 2011 briefing regarding the Integrated Plan held in Yakima, WA. The briefing was an opportunity to share with the attending dignitaries the objectives and proposed actions of the Integrated Plan, and also to highlight the collaboration among the Workgroup in addressing the Yakima Basin ecosystem and water management needs.

Those attending felt the briefing was extremely positive, with excellent participation and feedback. Secretary Salazar requested the basin interests provide him and Reclamation Commissioner Connor with an early action request. The Yakima Herald Republic also printed a positive report of the event in their September 19, 2011 issue. (*For the presentation slides on the briefing with Secretary Salazar, Governor Gregoire, Representative Hastings and Senator Cantwell, Yakama Nation Tribal Chair Smiskin and other dignitaries, and on all other topics discussed at the October meeting, please see <http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/yrbwep/2011integratedplan/meetings/index.html>*).

## **Workgroup Comments**

- Urban Eberhart – He understood that Secretary Salazar was interested in projects that could be implemented immediately.
- Jeff Tayer – Before we start developing an implementation game plan, we need to make sure our planning assumptions and expectations are on the same page.



- Alex Conley – Would like to understand the process of finalizing the early action request by November 1.
- Mike Leita – Process for finalizing the request would be addressed by the Implementation Subcommittee.

**Implementation Subcommittee Recommendations** by *Derek Sandison, Ecology and Dan Silver, Ecology Consultant*

Dan Silver reviewed the Implementation Subcommittee membership. These members include Ron VanGundy (Roza Irrigation District), Phil Rigdon (Yakama Nation), Mike Leita (Yakima County), Michael Garrity (American Rivers) (note: Steve Malloch participates as an alternate for Michael Garrity), and Derek Sandison (Ecology). Dan commended the subcommittee and the Workgroup on their collaboration to date in advancing the Integrated Plan. With the recent meeting described above and other communications (e.g., Governor Gregoire’s commitment to advance the Integrated Plan), there is considerable momentum building for both state and federal funding for early actions. Derek Sandison felt the request needs to reflect the comprehensive nature of the plan, recognizing some projects can move forward simultaneously while others cannot.

The Implementation Subcommittee has met several times to discuss how funding requests might be made, and how plan elements might be implemented. The subcommittee has discussed various scenarios. More recently the subcommittee members have discussed the early action request. It was decided the early action request could not address all elements and stay at a level felt to be realistic for a funding request. The request needed to be balanced among several elements however.

Before the recommendations were reviewed, Dan reviewed some expectations for the discussion. There should be no expectation that a full request will be obtained. Much work remains to persuade legislators on why the Basin needs this money. With that said, Dan reviewed with the Workgroup the Implementation Subcommittee’s recommended early implementation request. Dan confirmed with each subcommittee member that he had adequately characterized the recommendations approved by the subcommittee before opening the floor for Workgroup discussion.

**Workgroup Comment**

The Workgroup discussed the recommendation extensively and several ideas were shared related to:

- Staying together as a group.
- Getting projects on the ground quickly.
- Seeking a higher federal funding amount for the request.
- Recognizing this initial request is only a first step of a much larger follow on funding request.
- Commitment remaining for the Integrated Plan even if all items are not funded initially.
- Starting several projects simultaneously without follow on funding commitments.
- Federal budget being cut 15 percent.
- More controversial nature of some projects.
- Moving forward with Cle Elum pool raise.
- Importance of developing momentum by some early successes.
- Moving multiple projects forward.

- Ecosystem-related projects and benefits of the plan, and ability to leverage other funding sources.
- Increasing budget for land acquisition.
- Storage has substantial environmental benefits by providing instream flows and flexibility in system, etc.
- Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD) Improvement Project that could provide immediate benefits.
- We need to better show tangible environmental benefits to keep the forward momentum.

Based on the discussion, Dan Silver summarized some possible options for Workgroup action and the Workgroup agree to change the land acquisition and Cle Elum pool raise actions to \$2 million each, resulting in a \$20.9 million early action funding request. Suggestions were offered on how to package the request. As follow up, Dale Bambrick agreed to provide Ben Floyd within 7 to 10 days the list of tributary projects where the \$2.6 million would be allocated.

**Programmatic EIS Update** by Andrew Graham, HDR, Inc.

Andrew Graham of HDR, Inc. provided a brief status report on the Integrated Plan PEIS including a brief summary of the schedule, a review of what a PEIS is, how it differs from a Project EIS, and recent updates to the Integrated Plan.

Notable updates include:

- Thorp feed from Wymer will not be carried forward for further analysis in the draft PEIS due to the fact that expected costs and O&M savings were not realized. By using the pump station off the Yakima River instead the total cost of the Wymer storage project and the Integrated Plan decreased by \$0.5 billion.
- In the Wymer downstream conveyance, both the discharge at Lmuma Creek and the pipeline to Roza Dam were still included as feasible. Further analysis will be needed to choose the preferred approach.
- Evaluation regarding new hydropower opportunities by Reclamation or the private sector is being deferred into the future. Additionally, projects would not be constructed in a manner that would preclude adding power generation in the future.
- Sockeye numbers have been revised by Reclamation and will be provided in the draft PEIS.

**Workgroup Comment**

- Jeff Tayer – Regarding downstream conveyance for Wymer Dam, does the pipeline to Roza Dam include a dam removal? *It is not included at this time but this is not precluded in the future if an alternate supply such as the Columbia River emerges.*
- Sid Morrison – Where are we with the study of the Columbia River Pump Exchange with Yakima storage? *We're not in a position to undertake that study at this time. The Integrated Plan identifies this study occurring in two-step process. The first step is to determine the legal and physical availability of water in the Columbia River. If water determined to be available then the second step is to determine pump and conveyance alternatives, costs and funding.*

- Steve Malloch – Will there be a planning report? *A companion document to the programmatic EIS will be A Framework for Implementation document, which is not the same as a planning report. In the programmatic EIS we are evaluating the effects from implementing the entire plan instead of individual site-specific projects; which is different from what typically occurs. A planning report would come in the future and so would any federal principles and guidelines analyses.*

### **Workgroup Comments on Watershed Land Conservation Subcommittee Recommendations**

Paul Jewell and Jeff Tayer could not be present for the presentation and discussion on the Watershed Land Conservation Subcommittee Recommendations presented during the second half of the Workgroup meeting. The following comments were provided:

- Paul Jewell – We’ve made quite a bit of progress in terms of the land conservation and ecosystem component. Much of the information is solid with good progress in specificity. It is a proposal from the subcommittee at this time, and some items are still being evaluated. Finalizing the subcommittee work needs to occur relatively quickly so a separate Kittitas County advisory committee can complete its review and provide input back to the County.
- Jeff Tayer – The subcommittee has made good progress. We focused on protecting the headwaters, and building off existing efforts. Ahtanum and the Yakima Tree Farm are important headwater protection areas that have not yet been in the acquisition mix. Land protection is very important to the environmental community. The most controversial piece was the wilderness proposals, where there was a lot of back and forth discussions, although in a positive direction.

### **Public Comment**

- Melissa Bates, Aqua-Permanente – Dale Bambrick’s comments adequately summarized commonly shared thoughts and feelings on the current Implementation Subcommittee recommendations.

### **Watershed Land Conservation Subcommittee Recommendations** *by Andrew Graham, HDR*

Andrew presented the Targeted Watershed Protections and Enhancements Draft Subcommittee Proposal. Items reviewed included the purpose of this watershed land conservation piece in the Integrated Plan proposal, subcommittee activities, proposed land acquisitions, and proposed protective designations.

### **Workgroup Comment**

- Ron VanGundy – What other economic uses other than cattle grazing is available on these lands? *Forestry industry.*
- Scott Revell – Regarding the two large tracts of shrub-steppe land, how large are these areas? *Unsure of exact numbers, but an enlarged map is provided in your packets.*
- Mike Leita – How informed are the land owners? *I can’t positively answer that, and will need to defer to Jeff Tayer. We are meeting with land owners as they are available. Different parcels are in different stages. (In follow up to the meeting, Jeff indicated that all landowners have been contacted)*

- Ron VanGundy – How restrictive is the wilderness designation? *No logging and no motorized use.* Does that also include grazing? *If grazing occurred prior to designation, generally the activity is grandfathered in.*
- Alex Conley – What would happen to the roads above Bumping? Two new bridges have just been completed and the raising of the reservoir would inundate the current access road, correct? *The road that is currently there would be inundated if Bumping is raised; however, there is a proposal to relocate the road outside the proposed new reservoir boundary to maintain access to the area. The bridges would not be inundated.*
- Steve Malloch – All designations have been proposed by USFS in their 1990 Forest Plan and Revisions, except the Teanaway. In the context of this project, the Teanaway presents key habitat.
- Mike Leita – This strikes me as being far-reaching, but there must be adequate consideration on all sides to make this plan happen.
- Alex Conley – I'm amazed at the progress and creative compromise. However, what about the less developed, shrub-steppe piece? *More detail on that is in the report. The shrub-steppe lands are more fragile and the management needs to keep that in consideration. Uses are restricted, and must be compatible with protecting the habitat. There is also a discussion on ownership.*
- Sid Morrison – There are other designations; if pieces of land don't fit these designations, there are others that can be considered.

### **Public Comment**

- Beneitta Eaton, land owner – In addition to potential grazing and logging economic impacts, some have also expressed concerns about loss of recreation use (related to the watershed protection lands under discussion). *The subcommittee has been made aware of these concerns.*
- Irene Davidson, USFS – To clarify, the NRA (National Recreational Area) legislation does not “provide clear direction to Forest Service land managers;” rather it requires a management plan be developed for the NRA developed with public involvement.
- Irene Davidson, USFS – Her understanding is that the National Parks manages 20 NRAs, Forest Service manages 18, and BLM (Bureau of Land Management) manages five.
- Chuck Klarich, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance – Historically, not much has changed in the rivers proposed for Wild and Scenic Rivers so why we are interested now? Why the designation?
- Steve Malloch – The rivers that have been chosen for Wild and Scenic designation have significant salmonid populations. This leads to the question, what are the management tools to manage those rivers as best as we can to maintain those populations? The function of wild and scenic designations direct management's focus to that river's resources, and draws attention (both public and agency) to the resources. If attention is drawn, people will respect these resources.
- Chuck Klarich, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance – Why aren't Cooper, Waptus and Hyas lakes included in the designation?
- Steve Malloch - These designations do not include lakes, just free-flowing rivers.

- Julie Conley – What other primary economic uses besides grazing are for shrub steppe lands? *I believe the primary economic use is grazing only; however there is also oil leasing, but we haven't considered this for these lands.*
- Julie Conley – Have you looked at other options such as easement programs? *Yes, we looked at other potential options and protection easements were considered, but were taken off the table.*

The Draft Targeted Watershed Protections and Enhancements Report on findings and recommendations will be distributed to the Workgroup along with a due date for providing comments.

## **Adjourn**

### **Workgroup Members in Attendance**

Dale Bambrick, NOAA Fisheries Service  
 Alex Conley, Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board  
 Kirk Cook, Washington State Department of Agriculture  
 Rick Dieker, Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District  
 John Easterbrooks, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 Urban Eberhart, Kittitas Reclamation District  
 David Fast, Yakama Nation – Yakima/Klickitat Fisheries Project  
 Paul Jewell, Kittitas County  
 Mike Leita, Yakima County  
 Bill Lover, City of Yakima  
 Steve Malloch, National Wildlife Federation  
 Sid Morrison, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance  
 Scott Revell, Kennewick Irrigation District  
 Phil Rigdon, Yakama Nation – Natural Resources  
 Derek Sandison, Washington State Department of Ecology  
 Jeff Tayer, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 Jeff Thomas, US Fish and Wildlife Service  
 Jim Trull, Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District  
 Ron VanGundy, Roza Irrigation District  
 Dawn Wiedmeier, Bureau of Reclamation

### **Other Attendees**

Melissa Bates, Aqua Permanente  
 David Bowen, American Forest Land Co.  
 Dave Brown, City of Yakima  
 David Child, Yakima Basin Joint Board  
 Wendy Christensen, Bureau of Reclamation  
 Stuart Crane, Yakama Nation  
 James Davenport, JH Davenport, LLC  
 Charity Davidson, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 Irene Davidson, US Forest Service, Naches Ranger District

Charlie de la Chapelle, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance  
Warren Dickman, Yakima Basin Storage Alliance  
Beneitta Eaton  
Bill Eller, Washington State Conservation Commission  
Ben Floyd, Anchor QEA  
Joel Freudenthal, Yakima County  
Kristi Geris, Anchor QEA  
Andrew Graham, HDR Engineering, Inc.  
Bill Gray, Bureau of Reclamation  
Ken Hasbrouck, Kittitas Reclamation District  
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  
Chris Lynch, Bureau of Reclamation  
Tina Mayo  
Jim Milton, Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District  
Pat Monk, US Fish and Wildlife Service  
Tom Monroe, Roza Irrigation District  
Bob Montgomery, Anchor QEA  
Brian Myre, Yakama Reservation Irrigation District  
David Reeploeg, Office of Senator Maria Cantwell  
Mike Schwisow, Schwisow & Associates  
Teresa Scott, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Jan Sharar, Aqua Permanente  
Dan Silver, Independent Consultant  
Rob Swedo, Bonneville Power Administration  
Brett Swift, American Rivers  
Tom Tebb, Washington State Department of Ecology  
William P. Woods, Jr.

### **Next Workgroup Meeting**

The next meeting will be held December 14, 2011. A meeting notice and agenda will be distributed in advance of the meeting.

### **Where to Find Workgroup Information**

Meeting materials, notes, and presentations from the Workgroup 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 also 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 Anchor QEA, Richland office, (509) 392-4548, or [bfloyd@anchorqea.com](mailto:bfloyd@anchorqea.com).