

YBSA Monthly Report August, 2007

Media Campaign: The YBSA Board of Directors has authorized a media campaign to inform the general population on the value of the Black Rock Project. The information will be distributed through the media this fall.

Legislative Package: The Black Rock Project is part of a Yakima River Basin Environmental and Salmon Restoration Program. YBSA is developing a comprehensive legislative package that will meet the fisheries and fish passage, habitat, irrigation, and municipal and industrial water needs of the Yakima River Basin. The comprehensive proposal, along with the additional water that will be available from Black Rock, will address the environmental concerns in the Yakima Basin.

Meeting with Legislators: Members of YBSA met with our 15th District Legislators, Senator Honeyford, and Representatives Newhouse and Chandler and provided them with a progress report on the Black Rock Project. The discussion included water for fish passage and habitat and the cost of the project. The total benefits exceed the cost of the project when you include power production, recreation, and the large number of salmon that will return to the Yakima Basin.

Update on Storage Study: YBSA met with Gerry Kelso and members of the Yakima River Basin Storage Study Team at BOR headquarters for an update on the Storage Study. Many of the parts have been completed. The Storage Study will be available for comment during the EIS process. Fish models are still being reviewed. The climate change study report, in conjunction with the University of Washington, will be completed shortly. The report on seepage and the methods to mitigate the seepage will be available by the first week of September. The Bureau again emphasized the leakage is not a fatal flaw, just a problem on how we need to deal with it.

Roundtable: The Bureau is planning to hold a roundtable meeting around the middle of September to update the interested parties on what is happening with the Storage Study.

Presentation to NWPCC: Chair Sid Morrison gave a report on the progress and benefits of the Black Rock Project to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NWPCC) at their meeting in Spokane. The council is increasingly interested in what is happening in the Yakima Basin.

Report on Climate Change: The NWPCC released a report on possible effects of climate change on the Columbia River which helps to make the case for pump storage (Black Rock). The report reflected concerns about winter and spring flooding, surplus water with a lesser need for power during that time. This is the time when Black Rock will need to be filled for future use and the surplus power can be used to fill the reservoir. Black Rock is a water exchange program; it will borrow the surplus water from the Columbia River for out of stream use and return the water that will not be removed for out of stream use in the Yakima River Basin to the Columbia River full of fish.

Fair: Visit the Black Rock booth at the Central Washington State Fair Sept 28-Oct 7.