

YBSA Monthly Report August, 2010

Integrated Water Resource Management Plan: The proposed Integrated Plan is moving forward with water supply projects (storage) being included which may not be completed. The current plan with all the proposed storage projects still is inadequate to supply the water to meet the identified needs during drought years. The amount of water available and costs, including operational costs, of the five structural projects proposed (Keechelus-to-Kachess Pipeline, Kachess Inactive Storage, Wymer Reservoir, Enlarged Bumping Reservoir, & Enlarged Cle Elum Reservoir) has not been identified and the probability of any of those five being completed in time to (or maybe not at all) improve anadromous fish runs, ensure our agricultural economy, a constant water supply, and provide water for municipal growth.

Climate Change Inclusion: Climate change scenario has not been incorporated in each of the proposed parts of the plan including habitat and fish passage. A detailed review of climate change should be part of the plan because it affects the storage and water supply available.

Effects of Climate Change: As published in the Environmental New Service Michael J. Scott, staff scientist at the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland, Washington, said, "Our behavior where we live must change with the climate if we are to stave off economic and natural catastrophe and meet the challenge Mother Nature may hand us in the next few years."

The Yakima River Valley is a vast fruit basket, with 370,000 irrigated acres of orchards, vineyards and other crops covering 6,150 square miles from the river's headwaters in the Cascade Range east of Seattle to the Yakima's terminus at the Columbia River in Richland. In a typical year, five reservoirs and stream runoff provide agriculture with 2.7 million acre-feet of water. *In a typical year at mid-21st century, the amount is forecast to fall an average of 20 to 40 percent.*

"The expected losses to agriculture along in the Yakima Valley over the next several decades will be between \$92 million at two degrees Centigrade warming and \$163 million a year at four degrees," or up to nearly a quarter of total current crop value, Scott said.

Those losses will result from a projection based on shortage of water for irrigation. That water comes from reservoirs and runoff that are, in turn, tied directly to the amount of snow that accumulates in the Cascades over the winter, the snow pack.

Salmon River Walk: Bob Tuck provided a Salmon walk on the American River August 9th & 10th. The groups had an opportunity to view a female preparing a place in the riffle to deposit her eggs. The male stayed nearby to fertilize those eggs. The fertilized eggs were then covered with fine gravel until they hatch. Another Salmon walk will take place in the Cle Elum River during two weeks in the middle of September. Bob explained the hazards the smolts and returning Salmon face in their lifetime. Additional water made available in the Yakima River basin by using Columbia River water for irrigation purposes would provide the flows needed to enhance the existing salmon runs and provide an opportunity for those historical runs that are almost extinct to be restored.

See updated information at www.ybsa.org