

## **YBSA Monthly Report June, 2009**

YRBWEP Work Group: YBSA was invited to participate in the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project (YRBWEP) 2009 work group. The Bureau of Reclamation and Washington State Department of Ecology convened the work group at 10:00 am, June 30. That group will use 30 years of information to develop a comprehensive water resources plan for the basin. Chairman Sid Morrison will occupy YBSA's seat at the table.

Congress Criteria: YBSA's goal is to make sure we have an adequate supply of water for the future. The 3 criteria adopted by Congress and evaluated in the Yakima River Basin Storage Study demonstrated that a large amount of storage would be necessary to: improve resident anadromous fish habitat with a more normal flow in the Yakima River, provide a minimum of 70% water supply for proratable irrigation districts even in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a drought, and make additional water available for municipal growth for the next 50 years. We believe if the work group can adopt a plan that meets the criteria in a timely manner the Yakima Basin's fish and the economy will prosper.

YRBWEP Phase III: We are now in the process of developing Phase III of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project, Title XII Public Law 103-434 adopted October 31, 1994. Phase I approved in 1984 provided funding for fish screens and fish passage (small projects) and fish ladders. Phase II approved in 1994 included money to develop and implement a program: to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife through water management; improved instream flows; improved water quality; protection, creation and enhancement of wetlands; and by other appropriate means of habitat improvement; to improve the reliability of water supply for irrigation; to authorize a Yakima River Basin water conservation program; to provide for implementation by the Yakama Nation of an irrigation demonstration project, Wapato Irrigation Project improvements, and a Toppenish Creek Corridor enhancement project; authorization to evaluate Lake Cle Elum and Kachess Lake for additional storage was also included. The Chandler Pumping plant was to be electrified so as to provide more instream flow in the lower Yakima River

Additional Storage Concern: YBSA's concern is, with more frequent droughts along with climate change, continuing with a plan that envisions more small projects without additional storage will destroy both the economy and our attempt to restore fish runs in the Yakima River Basin.

Title XII Enhancement: The 1994 Title XII Enhancement Legislation was a program, which over the last 15 years, was to improve water supply, fish passage, and habitat which would lead us to Phase III storage. Funding for Phase II continues today and the package of projects proposed by DOE could be implemented. The next two meetings of the YRBWEP Work Group will be July 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. They will convene at 9:30 am at the Yakima Arboretum.

See [www.ybsa.org](http://www.ybsa.org) for more information.