

YBSA Monthly Report June, 2010

Work Group Committees: YBSA attended all the instream and out-of-stream committee meetings. The meetings identified the possible needs for instream flow in each reach of the river. The committee ruled out the need for water in the lower reaches of the river for spawning purposes. The out-of-stream committee reviewed water needs for types of agriculture practices and the amount of water needed to provide 70% to proratable districts during drought years.

Work Group Meeting: The Work Group meeting on July 28th will focus on conceptual engineering results for Yakima water supply projects. The two main storage projects identified are Wymer Reservoir off the Yakima River in the Yakima River Canyon and enlargement of Bumping Lake. Wymer would store approximately 162,000 A/F of water withdrawn from the Yakima River and Bumping would increase to 190,000 A/F. Bumping Lake enlargement which has been considered and rejected many times in the past 50 years due in large part to environmental concerns is opposed by the Seattle Audubon Society.

Karl Wirkus, Reclamation Pacific NW Regional Director, and Ted Sturdevant, Director of the Washington Department of Ecology, spoke to the Work Group at the June 23rd meeting. Karl said working toward a soluble tool box of solutions was necessary. Energy, power savings and production are important. Ted emphasized the process needed to meet the needs broadly. Not everyone will get everything they want. Climate change creates urgency in the Yakima Basin. Both gentlemen spoke highly of the process being used here in the basin to try to solve the water problems.

Water Needs: All the water in the Yakima Basin is already spoken for and our current supply system does not meet all of the needs for instream flow for fish and out-of-stream use. A letter sent to the Work Group of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Program from the Boards of Commissioners of Benton, Kittitas, and Yakima Counties requested that the program provides an adequate water supply. We in the basin don't want to get a second best solution. The counties encouraged the Work Group to make sure we get the water needed *immediately* to continue to build a stronger economy and to provide environmental benefits. The commissioners requested that the availability, costs, and benefits of delivering main stem Columbia River water into the Yakima Basin needs to be considered along with the other projects. There is a need to provide enough water in the basin for future use particularly due to climate change.

Water Needed: The economy of the Yakima Basin is primarily agricultural. In other basins in the Northwest, where fish need more water, the water has come from out-of-stream use. With climate change in our future, not enough water will be available in the basin to meet everyone's needs every year. A proposal to increase salmon recovery in the Yakima Basin could lead to a reduction of water for agriculture, as has happened in other basins in the Northwest, without a large supply of new water in the YRBWEP being developed.

See updated information at www.ybsa.org