

YBSA Monthly Report
May, 2010

IWRMP Work Group: The May Work Group meeting was canceled. The consultants, staff (DOE & BOR) and the instream and out of stream committees will meet to continue developing information for the June 23rd Work Group meeting

Washington Water Research Center at WSU: A request for a peer review of methods for a water needs assessment for out of stream use. The analysis of water needs will distinguish between non-proratable who have 100% water rights and proratable who in past droughts received less than 50% of their needs. The highest priority of the IWRMP plan is to address existing supply deficiencies. Climate change will be incorporated using simple percentage adjustments.

Instream Flow Needs Assessment: The staff and the instream flow committee will validate stream flow needs and prioritize by river reach. For dry years the focus will be on improving winter and spring flow habitat conditions, and meet out of stream demands in a way that maximizes benefits for fish. Instream flow needs at critical reaches of the Yakima River system should be identified.

Fish Habitat: The objective will be to quantify fish habitats and population effects of the IWRMP plan on Steelhead, spring/summer Chinook, fall Chinook, Coho, Bull Trout, and Sockeye. The habitat committee will describe the addition and subtraction of habitat available and population abundance of the six local fish species from fish passage, reservoir improvements, and projects that alter flow in the basin.

Fish, Agriculture, and Municipal Needs: After 6+ years and \$18 million, the Yakima River Basin Storage Feasibility Study, completed by the Bureau of Reclamation, identified freed water for the Yakima Basin. With Pumped Storage providing for the out of stream needs for the Roza and Sunnyside Irrigation Districts between 400,000 and 600,000 acre/feet would be available for fish passage, habitat improvements, and flood plain expansion.

With the additional freed water managed to maximize benefits for fish an additional 500,000 to 1,000,000 anadromous salmonids could return annually. It appears that the evaluation by the out of stream, instream, and habitat committees could prioritize the available freed water that would be available during consecutive drought years and climate change.

Water Available May 31, 2010: USBR and NRCS Reports:

Basin Snowpack Summary		Reservoir Capacity	
Upper Yakima Basin	71% average	Cle Elum	78% full
Lower Yakima Basin	97% average	Kachess	86% full
		Rimrock	87% full
		Bumping	88% full

Total Available Capacity of the 5 Reservoirs
1,065,400
873,194 content May 31, 2010
192,206 acre/feet = 82%

The 1,000,000 acre/feet available when all 5 reservoirs are filled to capacity only provides 1/3 of the water needs of the Yakima Basin; 2/3 is provided by snowpack when available.

See updated information at www.ybsa.org