

Project Activity Update

November 2020

Purpose: To provide updates on technical aspects of ongoing planning studies and project implementation for the Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan (Integrated Plan)

Fish Passage Element

Cle Elum Dam Fish Passage Facilities and Reintroduction Project

The juvenile fish passage facility will use an innovative helix design to transport juvenile fish downstream. It will allow fish to leave the reservoir as the water surface fluctuates over the top 63 feet in elevation. This will provide downstream passage from April 1 through the beginning of June in most years. The upstream adult fish passage facility will be a trap-and-haul facility where fish are trapped at the base of the spillway, loaded into a truck, and then hauled for release into Cle Elum Reservoir or to upstream tributaries.

Construction Update: The access road and spillway bridge construction contract is complete. The secant vault construction is complete. Construction for the downstream passage tunnel is in progress. Excavation and installation of the outer tunnel liner is complete. Installation of the inner liner began in March 2020. This liner will be formed with cast in-place concrete and will have a very smooth finish to protect fish as they travel through the tunnel. Approximately 60% of the tunnel's inside liner has been placed to date, 870' of invert and 700' of crown. The tunnel contractor completed their work in the secant vault in July placing half of the secant vault foundation and installing the anchor system for the helix structure and the training wall that will connect the helix system to the tunnel. Construction under the tunnel contract is anticipated to be complete in Spring 2021.

The Intake, Gate, and Helix contractor mobilized in late April 2019. Construction of Intake #6, the lowest elevation intake within the reservoir, was completed in December 2019 and Intake #5, #4, and 3 are currently being constructed and sealed in concrete. Trenching and shoring work, needed for the placement of precast concrete boxes that will run between the intake gates (reservoir) and the secant vault, was installed in 2019. The contractor re-mobilized on-site in July and prepared the trench for precast concrete box placement. The first box, one of 194 boxes, was placed in September. These boxes will form the conduit or tunnel that will connect the reservoir intakes to the secant vault. Conduit levels 6, 5, and 4, the bottom 3 levels, have been placed and sealed in concrete.

The contractor has also been working in the secant shaft and has installed the drain system and has placed the second half of the secant vault foundation. Subcontractors continue fabricating and constructing steelwork, gates, and helical flume sections for installation beginning next spring.

Sockeye Study Update: In 2018, Reclamation and the Yakama Nation worked with the U.S. Geological Survey to conduct an adult sockeye tracking test to understand their migration between Roza and Cle Elum dams. The study found that 20 of the 20 tagged fish migrated successfully to the base of Cle Elum Dam. In 2019, these same partners, along with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), began a sockeye tracking study in the lower Yakima River. The study reach runs from the mouth of the Yakima River up to the Roza Dam and is evaluating potential passage issues at



diversion dams, possible false attraction, microclimate use, and Columbia River Stranding. We expect to conduct this study over three years depending on the study findings.

Results from the first year of the study (2019) found very low migration success rates for tagged Sockeye primarily due to high river temperatures. The 2020 Summer sockeye study began at the end of June by tagging fish captured at Prosser Dam and in the Columbia River near Bateman Island. Reclamation completed gathering tracking data in September 2020. Preliminary findings for 2020 are anticipated in December with a final report due in March 2021.

Box Canyon Creek Fish Passage

WDFW, with input from Reclamation, Ecology and other passage restoration experts, has completed a conceptual design for the Box Canyon Creek Fish Passage Enhancement Project. Reclamation has contracted with HDR to complete a 60% project design, anticipated to be completed in spring 2021. The project partners have met to establish performance goals for the 60% design. A site-visit with project partners and stakeholders was held in early October.

Clear Creek Dam Fish Passage

Reclamation completed an appraisal level design for fish passage in September 2018. The design consists of a traditional pool-and-weir-style fishway with a steel bulkhead at the upstream end that will draw cool water from deeper in the reservoir. Situated along the left abutment of the dam, fish would enter the fishway in the stilling basin and exit in the reservoir pool. The bulkhead will be deep enough to maintain suitable water temperature in the fishway for Bull Trout.

Reclamation is coordinating with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Yakama Nation, WDFW, USFS and others to complete the final ladder design. The partners met with basin biologists to define the range of species targeted for passage and provide input for designers regarding ladder geometry. Reclamation conducted geotechnical investigations in October 2020 and completed 30% designs on November 2, 2020, which have been sent to a technical workgroup for review and comment.

Until passage improvements are accomplished, USFWS, Reclamation, USFS, and WDFW will continue capturing Bull Trout from below Clear Creek Dam and transporting genetically identified North Fork Tieton River fish around the dam so they can reach spawning habitat in the North Fork Tieton River. Fish capture and transport was conducted in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020. To-date, 75 adult Bull Trout have been transported above the dam.

Structural and Operational Changes Element

Cle Elum Pool Raise

The purpose of the Cle Elum Pool Raise Project is to increase the Cle Elum reservoir's capacity for improved aquatic resources for fish habitat, rearing, and migration in the Cle Elum and upper Yakima River, thereby fulfilling the intent of the congressional authorization, Title XII of Public Law 103-434.

Completed: Radial Gate construction was completed in April 2017. Reclamation completed modifications to three saddle dikes as of 2018. The USFS Cle Elum River Campground recreation area was completed in November 2017. The USFS Speelyi Day Use Area recreation area was completed in May 2019.

Construction Update: Reclamation and Ecology are currently implementing shoreline protection actions for private and public lands and facilities. Construction of shoreline protection at Wish Poosh

Campground is anticipated to begin in April 2021 and be complete by the end of May 2022. The Sandelin Lane shoreline protection area is expected to award a contract in early 2022. Remaining shoreline protection will be implemented as funding is available. Landowners and the public will be updated periodically on the project via mail and website postings during project implementation. Reclamation continues working with landowners along the shoreline to acquire easements as appropriate for the project.

Chandler Pumping Plant Electrification

Kennewick Irrigation District (KID) continues to evaluate an electrical pumping plant at Chandler. As of November 2020, Reclamation continues to work with KID. KID is preparing updated design drawings and operational diversion plans for review of Chandler Electrical Pumping Plant by Reclamation. Reclamation has extended an existing Memorandum of Agreement through 2022 with KID for this work. Reclamation and KID have regular meetings to address KID water supply issues. Reclamation is part of the Lower River Leadership team along with Ecology, Yakama Nation, and KID to discuss a multitude of options to meet lower river flow needs for KID. An electrical pumping plant may still be considered by KID, however, recently KID has been reviewing other options which may include an onsite storage reservoir.

Lower Yakima River Smolt Survival Study

The survival of juvenile salmon (smolts) migrating to the ocean can influence the abundance of returning adults and the availability of fish for harvest years later. Smolt survival is affected by passage at dams, predators, and other factors such as river flows and water temperatures. Factors affecting smolt survival are being identified by the Lower Yakima River Smolt Survival Study with the goal of developing recommendations for improvement projects. The study area includes the mainstem Yakima River from the City of Yakima to the Columbia River confluence. Project funding comes from Yakama Nation (YN), Reclamation, irrigation districts, Ecology, and the US Geological Survey (USGS), with YN and USGS leading the field work and data analysis. During each year of the study (2018–2020) over 1,100 juvenile salmon and steelhead were collected, tagged, and released in the Yakima River to monitor their behavior and survival as they migrated downstream. Additional data on predator populations, river flows, and water temperatures are being related to fish survival. Preliminary results indicate smolt survival was highest in early spring and lowest in June when the Yakima River warmed, and flows declined. Survival was lower than expected for fish that were inadvertently diverted into canals. In 2020 research was paused in late March due to statewide travel restrictions. However, by early May, USGS and YN developed safe work practices, resumed tagging, and released 348 Spring Chinook, 495 subyearling Chinook, and 376 steelhead. In 2020 the study focused on evaluating survival at Wapato, Sunnyside, and Prosser dams. The study is also assisting in the research and development of a tag for Pacific Lamprey, a unique species of migratory fish that have been declining in numbers in recent decades. Lamprey monitoring is a partnership with Reclamation’s Technical Services Center, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, USGS, BPA, and YN Pacific Lamprey Program.

Sunnyside Division Board of Control Fish Boom

The first project being developed to improve lower river smolt survival is a partnership with the Sunnyside Division Board of Control to install a fish guidance boom and improved juvenile salmon passage at the headgate of Sunnyside Canal. The fish boom is expected to guide fish passing downstream away from the canal and so that they stay in the mainstem Yakima River, where survival

is higher. Fish guidance booms and dam gate modifications will be designed and constructed during 2020-2021, with the goal of reducing smolt entrainment into Sunnyside Canal, thereby decreasing mortality and migration delays. In 2021 the smolt survival study will evaluate the effectiveness of the structural modifications to the dam.

Surface Water Storage Element

Kachess Drought Relief Pumping Plant (KDRPP)

The KDRPP is proposed to access 200,000 (out of 585,000) acre-feet of inactive storage in the Kachess Reservoir that is below the current outlet works for use in severe drought.

On April 26, 2019, Reclamation signed the *Record of Decision (ROD)*, which does not approve implementation of any alternatives but carries forward Alternative 4 - KDRPP Floating Pumping Plant (FPP) for further analysis. Consistent with this decision, the remaining alternatives in the FEIS, including the Kachess to Keechelus Conveyance, are unlikely to be carried forward. Reclamation and Ecology will use a phased approach for further site-specific analysis in a Tier 2 NEPA process to narrow the range of feasible alternatives for KDRPP.

The Project Proponent, the Roza Irrigation District, in coordination with Reclamation and Ecology, is currently developing a new Proposed Action and clarifying the FPP alternative for the KDRPP Tier 2 NEPA process. This final and complete Proposed Action and Reclamation's subsequent Notice of Intent (NOI) for the Tier 2 EIS are currently projected for early 2021. Roza and possibly other pro-ratable waters users (KRD, Wapato Irrigation Project [WIP], KID) would fund, design, construct, and operate the KDRPP.

Wymer Reservoir

Consideration of site requirements is ongoing.

Bumping Reservoir Enlargement Project

Consideration of site requirements is ongoing.

Groundwater Storage Element

Groundwater Storage – Basinwide Analysis

The Groundwater Storage Subcommittee finished selecting projects for the 2019-2021 biennium. Seven funding requests totaling approximately \$1 million were received and reviewed by the Subcommittee. Four projects have been selected for funding:

- 1) Field Assessment of High-Priority Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) Sites in the Upper Yakima Basin, Kittitas Reclamation District;
- 2) Strategies for Groundwater Storage in Diverse Settings of the Yakima Basin: Headwater Tributaries and Lower Basin Irrigation Districts, Central Washington University,
- 3) Low Head Check Structures, Yakima Nation, and;
- 4) KRD Taneum Creek MAR Site Infrastructure, Current Uses, and Preliminary Project Analysis.

Additionally, KRD has worked to finalize the Yakima Basin Managed Aquifer Recharge Assessment Final Report which has identified and ranked several potential MAR sites throughout the Yakima Basin. Top sites include Taneum Creek, Big Creek, Tieton River, Little Creek, and Naneum Creek.

Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR)

The City of Yakima’s ASR program is fully permitted. The City recharged at the Gardner Well for 45 days in February and March. The City is planning full build-out for the program. They intend to drill two ASR devoted wells: the first well is estimated for 2022-2023, and the second is estimated for 2025-2026.

Habitat Protection and Enhancement Element

Targeted Watershed Protection and Enhancement

The Watershed Lands Conservation Subcommittee continues to develop a new 10-year lands plan (the Phase 2 Plan). The plan will describe the Subcommittee’s goals and objectives for continued implementation of the Targeted Watershed Protection and Enhancement component of the Habitat Element of the Integrated. The Subcommittee is working to finish drafting the plan by the end of 2020.

The Nature Conservancy requested a letter of support from the Watershed Lands Subcommittee regarding a proposal for a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant in 2022. The grant would allow the U.S. Forest Service to purchase a portion of the Central Cascade Forest Lands in the Taneum Watershed. This is part of a larger effort to create a unified habitat corridor and provide water protection/enhancement in a region that extends from the Goat Rocks Wilderness to the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. The Subcommittee agreed to provide a letter of support for the grant proposal and has forwarded the letter to the Executive and Implementation Committees for their review and approval.

Mainstem Floodplain and Tributaries Fish Habitat Enhancement Program

The Habitat Subcommittee has developed its 2021-2023 biennial budget proposal to Ecology for the Habitat Element. The Subcommittee spent much of spring strategizing about shifting its emphasis to address significant lower river mortality of juvenile salmon and steelhead during outmigration. The Yakama Nation will hire a Lower River Project Lead who will focus on Wapato reach, groundwater and wetlands, stargrass control and management, and lower river action plans. The person in this position will work with agency partners on lower river thermal projects and provide quarterly reports to the Habitat Subcommittee. This is a critical resource for ensuring the lower river emphasis is successful. The Subcommittee also proposed funding for the South Fork Tieton Bridge Replacement Project, which includes cost share with Reclamation.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has completed a federal determination of interest in conducting the Yakima River Delta Enhancement Project (Baseman Island Causeway Removal). WDFW has been identified as the non-federal cost share partner, and the two agencies have entered into a cost share agreement. Mid-Columbia Fisheries is also a significant cost share partner.

Integrated Plan partners, led by the Yakama Nation and WDFW, are working together on the rescue of young of year Bull Trout in the dewatering reaches of upper Kachess River and Gold Creek. Each year a percentage of Bull Trout are moved upstream of the dewatering reaches in each system. The remainder are transported to La Salle fish hatchery to be reared by Yakama Nation staff. In 2020, 72 Gold Creek and 604 Kachess River Bull Trout were transported to La Salle. Reared Bull Trout will be returned to their natal streams in 2021. The goal of the project is to reduce instream young of year Bull Trout mortality.

Enhanced Water Conservation Element

Upon passage of the Dingell Act in March 2019, the Integrated Plan has a goal to conserve 85,000 acre-feet of water by 2029. The overall conservation savings goal upon full Integrated Plan implementation is 170,000 acre-feet. Reclamation and Ecology are conducting an inventory of water conservation accomplishments associated with the Integrated Plan. Projects that count towards this goal must adhere to three parameters:

- Begin in 2013 or later
- Be an agricultural or municipal improvement project resulting in conserved water
- Not be part of the Title XII, Section 1203 Basin Conservation Plan

To date, there have been 104 conservation projects implemented. Approximately \$89 million invested has resulted in approximately 50,000 acre-feet conserved (\$1,800 per acre-foot). Reclamation and Ecology have developed a draft project prioritization proposal for achieving the remaining portion of the initial development phase goal, which is under review by the Water Use Subcommittee.

In the Municipal Subgroup, Benton Conservation District (BCD) has been conducting the Heritage Gardens Low Water Use Program in Yakima County. In 2020, BCD conducted 36 site visits. BCD has noted an overwhelmingly positive response from program participants. Due to the Statewide “Stay at Home” order, BCD was unable to conduct in-person workshops and presentations. The workshops were successfully converted to an online format, and BCD has reallocated funding planned for presentations to develop short information videos.

BCD is requesting funding in the 2021-2023 State biennium to further develop the program, which includes program expansion into Kittitas County. The Municipal Subgroup will support and advocate for the program moving forward.

Market Reallocation Element

The Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD) and Trout Unlimited (TU) continued work on the Market Reallocation element of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan. The project is designed to evaluate market-based transactions under a Yakima basin-specific Smart Market framework and involves significant research and analysis. Over the last quarter, work continued in areas of GIS and policy/legal analysis to advance the ongoing model development and refinement. KRD and TU provided information at the September YRBWEP Workgroup meeting about the literature and policy research, basic transfer framework, and next steps for refining the model.

More information about the project can be found at <https://www.yakimabasinwatermarketing.org/>

Proposed Projects for Consideration

During implementation of the Integrated Plan, an adaptive approach will be used periodically to assess progress towards meeting the identified instream flow objectives, the 70 percent proratable supply goal for irrigation, and goals for other out-of-stream needs. The need for additional water supply enhancements would depend on the effectiveness of projects that are implemented as part of the Integrated Plan, how the Yakima basin economy develops over time, and the timing of and manner in which climate changes affect water supply availability. From time-to-time, new projects may be identified (and proposed) for consideration under the Integrated Plan. Reclamation, Ecology, Yakama

Nation and the Executive Committee have developed a formalized process to consider new projects. Projects proposed for evaluation and those currently being evaluated are listed here.

Tieton River Restoration, including proposed North Fork Cowiche Creek Reservoir.

Upper Yakima System Storage

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Project website: <http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/yrbwep/index.html>