

YBSA Monthly Report February 2021

Storage: Reservoirs are at 59% of capacity. Storage capacity is at the same amount at this time last year. Snow water equivalent has increased to 120% of average. Future forecast is for warming temperatures and the first taste of Spring.

Cle Elum Dam Fish Passage Project: The juvenile fish passage, using the helix, to transport the fish from the lake through the dam to the Cle Elum River. The upstream passage will be to catch the fish at the base of the dam, load them in trucks, and haul them to the Cle Elum River above the dam. Work continues on the project to secure the Helix and complete the passage tunnels during 2021.

Increasing the elevation of Lake Cle Elum to improve the fish passage for better use of the Helix is continuing. Campgrounds must be moved or removed and shoreline protection has to be increased.

Sockeye Study: The rate of migration up the Yakima River in 2019 was low due to high water temperature in the lower river. The 2020 study has been completed and will be published in March 2021.

Surface Water Storage: Lake Kachess Drought Pumping Plan continues to be evaluated. Total cost for the project has not been estimated. The Roza Irrigation District will be responsible for most of the costs.

Other storage projects in the basin are still being studied with no end in sight.

A project that can solve the water needs in the Yakima River for instream flow and out of stream use is the mighty Columbia River.

Coho: 82,000 Coho are trucked from the Marian Drain Hatchery southwest of Wapato. The Marian Drain Hatchery raises Trout and two types of Salmon: Summer Chinook and Coho.

In the middle of March, when the fish reach 4.5 inches in length, they are trucked to the Holmes Acclimation site and released in a bypass channel which flows into the Yakima River.

Trout Unlimited: Instream flow in the Yakima River is crucial for continuing salmon recovery. The organization is seeking the opportunity to lease water rights to increase flow in the Yakima River to protect and increase the salmonoid population.

Saving Salmon: A conceptual plan to increase salmon recovery in the Snake and Columbia Rivers was introduced in Congress. The cost could be \$34 billion to provide passage around the dams on the Snake River. Millions of salmonoids would have the opportunity to increase their number supplementing the fish number in the Columbia River.

Pump Storage: The pump storage project for the Yakima Basin would provide an opportunity to increase instream flow and out of stream use. Benefits include millions of salmonoids, additional surface water for agriculture, increase in ground water storage and less pumping, electrical generation, and recreation. The estimated cost of the project is \$5.5 billion.

Yakima Basin Integrated Plan: YBIP is March 10th at 9:30 am.

Go to www.ybsa.org for additional information.