

YBSA Monthly Report November 2021

Storage: The Yakima Basin Reservoirs are at 52% capacity which is 145% of average. The weather pattern has moved the anticipated rainfall from the Yakima Basin to northwestern Washington and into British Columbia. Snow accumulation in the Cascade Mountains has decreased.

Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Work Group: Planning for the next 10 years:

- Number of projects were discussed.
- No definite plan for additional water to provide more water during drought years.
- Projects to improve passage and survival for fish in the Yakima River, but no additional water.
- Continuing to look at projects for conservation and delivery systems both of which need additional water.
- Lack of planning to attempt to secure water for the Columbia River to insure flow in the Yakima Basin.

Update on Integrated Plan Activities: Fish passage activities continue with installation of the Helix to move smolt from Lake Cle Elum over Lake Cle Elum Dam into the Cle Elum River and a catch and haul of fish from the Cle Elum River over the dam into the lake.

Continuing to track fish passage in the lower Yakima River shows less migration. Migration only improves when more instream flow is available.

Fish passage continues to be improved in the upper Yakima River which will only be increased when more fish and water are available in the Yakima Basin.

Kachess Drought Relief Pumping Plan: The Bureaus of Reclamation and Ecology are still reviewing plans on how to make the project viable. The Roza Irrigation District, who would be the biggest benefactor of additional water, has yet to indicate they want to proceed with the project.

Wymer and Bumping Lake projects are still being reviewed.

Acquavella: 42 years ago, the State Department of Ecology began an adjudication of water called “Acquavella” to determine who and how much water would be available to each user. In 2019 the case was closed. Since then, water users who wanted some changes in the adjudication filed a lawsuit. The Yakama Nation and other water users filed an appeal charging insufficient water was available to irrigate their land. The final decision by the State Supreme Court ruled the State of Washington could not limit the amount of water on the Yakama Reservation. The Integrated Plan Work Group will have to develop a plan for an increase in the water supply on the Reservation.

Go to www.ybsa.org for additional information.