

YBSA Monthly Report March 2024

Storage: Current capacity of all reservoirs is at 45%. Lake Cle Elum, the largest reservoir, is at 39%. The amount of water that can be stored in Lake Cle Elum is more than that of Rimrock and Bumping Lakes together. Storage capacity continues to fall behind the average of last year and the historical average. NRCS snow water equivalent in the upper Yakima Basin is at 78% and 76% in the Naches Basin.

Irrigation Water Availability: The senior water right holders should get 100% of their water and junior water right holders should get approximately 72%.

March Water Supply: The flow in the lower Yakima River has improved but still cannot meet the normal spring runoff. See article in the Northern Kittitas Tribune from March 21, 2024 entitled “Reclamation reports Yakima basin March water supply forecast”.

Lake Cle Elum Fish Passage Continues: The new facility (Helix) will be able to create passage from Lake Cle Elum to the Cle Elum River for juvenile fish from April 1 to June. On return to the area, adult salmon have to be trapped at the foot of Lake Cle Elum Spillway, put in trucks, and hauled to the lake. With the multi-million dollar fish passage facility being built at the dam there needs to be more water flowing below the dam to help the instream flow for fish to access the passage. The Cle Elum River from the Cle Elum Dam to the Yakima River has never been measured to determine the flow in the river.

Go to www.ybsa.org for additional information.