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*A Partnership of Public Entities Promoting
the Multiple Uses of the Yakima Valley's
Water Supply*

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CITY OF YAKIMA

**P.O. Box 239
Sunnyside, WA 98944**

October 6, 2006

Mr. Mark Walker
Director of Public Affairs
Northwest Power and Conservation Council
851 S.W. Sixth Avenue, Suite 1100
Portland, OR 97204
via email: comments@nwcouncil.org

Subject line: FY07-09

Dear Mr. Walker,

We are writing this letter to urge the Northwest Power and Conservation Council to recommend that Bonneville Power Administration **fully fund** the FY07-09 request from the Yakima Tributary Access and Habitat Program (YTAHP Project # 200202501). It is our understanding that the project is facing significant budget cuts that would diminish or even eliminate the ability of the project sponsors to complete important fish passage and habitat improvements in the Yakima Basin.

The YTAHP project is one of the few (if not the only) BPA-funded projects in the Yakima Basin that brings together the federal, state and tribal fisheries management agencies to work with entities that actually own or manage fish and riparian habitat, including counties, cities, conservation districts, irrigation districts and private landowners. YTAHP has a proven record of successfully improving fish habitat and passage conditions with the cooperation of local landowners.

YTAHP is also one of the few projects that specifically addresses steelhead recovery actions recommended by National Marine Fisheries Service. A key component to steelhead recovery in the Yakima Basin includes improving fish access and habitat conditions to tributary streams (Cowiche, Naneum, Manastash creeks), where most steelhead production-potential occurs. YTAHP is improving passage and habitat conditions in streams that are identified for the Yakima Basin Coho Reintroduction project, including Reecer and Taneum Creeks. Thus, YTAHP fits in well with other BPA funded projects.

YTAHP is an important component in the salmon and steelhead recovery and enhancement efforts ongoing in the Yakima Basin, but it needs to be fully funded to be effective.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Jim Trull, President
Yakima Basin Joint Board