



**Water / Irrigation Division**

Working Together Toward Excellence in Service and Quality

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September 29, 2006

Mr. Mark Walker  
Director of Public Affairs  
Northwest Power and Conservation Council  
851 S.W. Sixth Avenue, Suite 1100  
Portland, OR 97204

2006010010

Dear Mr. Walker,

I am writing this letter to urging 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). I understanding that the project is facing significant budget cuts, a situation all public agencies are facing today, that would substantially diminish and 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 especially private landowners. On several occasions the City has worked successfully with the YTAHP group on projects to improve habitat and passage on Cowiche Creek in Yakima County.

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. The NMFS recovery plan, contains a number of recommendations that YTAHP addresses directly. In addition, YTAHP is improving passage and habitat conditions in streams that are identified for the Yakima Basin Coho Reintroduction project, including Reecer and Taneum Creeks. YTAHP continues to promote and accomplish the goals of the BPA fish recovery efforts.

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,

David Brown

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