

Title: Yakima Subbasin Planning

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The Yakima Subbasin Fish and Wildlife Planning Board (YSPB) consists of representatives from the Yakama Nation and local governments in the Yakima River basin. The Mission of the Board is to:

“Restore sustainable and harvestable populations of salmon, steelhead, and other at-risk species through collaborative, economically sensitive efforts, combined resources, and wise resource management of the Yakima Basin.”

To implement this mission, the Board contracted with the Northwest Power and Conservation Council to draft a Yakima Subbasin Plan. The Subbasin Plan is intended to describe the most effective ways the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) can mitigate the impacts on fish and wildlife resources from the construction and operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Yakama Nation provided technical guidance to the Board and supported the technical subcommittees that were created to analyze fish and wildlife habitats and populations, and to develop strategies to protect, restore or enhance them. These strategies include ways to restore and reconnect fragmented habitat areas; protect existing critical habitat areas that are currently functioning at a high level; increase instream flows and return seasonal flows to a more natural flow regime; augment natural and artificial water storage; restore water temperatures in different parts of the basin to more natural levels; and restore sediment transport and sources of large woody debris. The plan also identifies the need to fund personnel to improve management of natural resources, to monitor and research the relationships between management actions and the health of the resource, and other actions that protect or restore natural resources functions that have been negatively impacted by the federal dams.

The strategies identified within the plan do not involve land use regulation, but instead rely on willing parties to voluntarily apply for grant funds, participate in BPA funded programs, or use BPA funding to supplement existing programs that benefit fish and wildlife resources

The Yakima Subbasin Plan was submitted to the Council on May 28, 2004. The Council will then undertake both scientific and public review of the almost 60 Subbasin Plans that will be submitted from across the entire Columbia Basin. Following this review process, the Council will adopt these plans as amendments to the 2000 Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Program in late 2004.