



BUILDING A FUTURE FOR WATER, WILDLIFE AND WORKING LANDS

YAKIMA RIVER BASIN INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Legislative Action on the Yakima Basin Plan

The Yakima Basin Integrated Plan

The Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan (Integrated Plan) was developed by the United States Bureau of Reclamation in collaboration with the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) and other interested entities in the Yakima River Basin. The Integrated Plan offers a proposed approach to improving water management in the Yakima River Basin. The stated goals of the Integrated Plan are to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat; provide increased operational flexibility to manage instream flows to meet ecological objectives; and improve the reliability of the water supply for irrigation, municipal supply, and domestic uses.

The Integrated Plan approach includes seven elements: fish passage, structural and operational changes, surface water storage, groundwater storage, habitat protection and enhancement, enhanced water conservation, and market-based water reallocation. The Plan also includes a list of proposed actions estimated to cost approximately \$4 billion to complete over a period of up to 30 years.



The Capital Budget (ESSB 5035)

The 2013 Capital Budget (ESSB 5035) provides about \$137 million for Integrated Plan implementation for the 2013-2015 period:

- Ecology was appropriated \$32M in capital funds to move several Integrated Plan projects and activities forward during this period.
- Authorizes Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to spend \$99.344 million for the purchase of 50,000 acres of private forest land in the Teanaway watershed in Kittitas County. Of this amount, \$10 million was provided by DNR as a loan from its real property replacement account and must eventually be repaid.¹
- An additional \$5 million in capital funds is provided to Kittitas County for infrastructure and facilities that help offset impacts to the county from transfer of these lands from private to public ownership.²
- An additional \$1 million in the Operating Budget (3ESSB 5034) goes to DNR for Teanaway management costs.³

The Yakima Policy “Water, Jobs, and Fish” Bill (2SSB 5367)

The “Yakima Policy Bill” (2SSB 5367) passed in 2013 establishes mechanisms for implementing work on the Integrated Plan and also sets the tone for the Teanaway land acquisition. Ecology is authorized to implement the Integrated Plan and directed to develop solutions that provide concurrent benefits to both instream and out-of-stream uses. The bill lists the goals of this effort to protect and enhance fish and wildlife resources, improve water availability and reliability, establish more efficient water markets, manage the variability of water supplies, and prepare for the uncertainties of climate change through operational and structural changes.

The Bill...

- Establishes the fiscal accounts needed to manage funds for the Integrated Plan.
- Contains provisions directing the Board of Natural Resources to accept the Teanaway land into the Community Forest Trust Program as the Teanaway Community Forest (TCF) under statute 79.155 RCW. Some provisions of the Community Forest Trust statute were exempted for the Teanaway, other provisions of the statute were revised in total.

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1. ESSB 5035 (Capital Budget) Section 3245
 2. ESSB 5035 (Capital Budget) Section 1077
 3. ESSB 5034 (2013-15 operating budget) Section 999



- Establishes a “Water Supply Facility Permit and Funding Milestone,” which is achieved once permitting and funding are completed for one or more water supply facilities designed to provide at least 214,000 acre-feet of additional water supply. Teanaway watershed lands will continue to be held in Community Forest Trust if the milestone is met by June 30, 2025. If the milestone is not met, the land, or the value of the land, can be transferred to the Common School Trust.
- Directs DNR to manage the land in consultation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), and develop a TCF management plan in consultation with DFW.
- States the values to be protected in the Teanaway, taken directly from the Forest Land Acquisition Principles of the Integrated Plan Lands Conservation Subcommittee’s watershed protection proposal⁴, as follows:
 - (i) To protect and enhance the water supply and protect the watershed;
 - (ii) To maintain working lands for forestry and grazing while protecting key watershed functions and aquatic habitat;
 - (iii) To maintain and where possible expand recreational opportunities consistent with watershed protection, for activities such as hiking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, camping, birding, and 3 snowmobiling;
 - (iv) To conserve and restore vital habitat for fish, including steelhead, spring chinook, and bull trout, and wildlife, including deer, elk, large predators, and spotted owls; and
 - (v) To support a strong community partnership, in which the Yakama Nation, residents, business owners, local governments, conservation groups, and others provide advice about ongoing land management.
- Specifies constituencies to be consulted for Teanaway Community Forest Advisory Committee:

*The department of natural resources, in consultation with the department of fish and wildlife, must establish the Teanaway community forest advisory committee that includes representatives from the department of ecology, the local community, land conservation organizations, the Yakama Nation, the Kittitas county commission, and local agricultural interests.*⁵
- Specifies constituencies to be consulted for the public process to develop a post-acquisition management plan:

*“... residents from Kittitas county, friends of the Teanaway, back country horsemen, off-road vehicle and snowmobile users, a representative from Kittitas field and stream, hikers and wildlife watchers, and ranchers who graze cattle.”*⁶

The text of the bill and its history, along with legislative staff summaries of bill provisions, can be found on the legislative bill information site for 2SSB 5367.⁷

4. Presented at the January 4, 2012 meeting of the Integrated Plan Working Group <http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/yrbwep/2011integratedplan/2012meetings/index.html>

5. 2SSB 5367 (“Yakima Policy Bill”) Section 12 Paragraph 2(b)

6. 2SSB 5367 (“Yakima Policy Bill”) Section 12, paragraph 2(c)

7. <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=5367&year=2013>



Questions?

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