

Title:

Yakima Dams Fish Passage Assessment

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Summary of Presentation:

There are no fish passage facilities at any of the Bureau of Reclamation storage dams in the Yakima Project. In response to stated concerns of basin interests, and to meet the requirements of the Keechelus Safety of Dams HPA, Reclamation began a preliminary assessment of fish passage at all the storage dams in the spring of 2002. Reclamation is seeking funding for detailed feasibility studies of fish passage at the dams.

A team was organized to assess passage concepts and tributary habitat conditions upstream of the storage reservoirs. During this assessment process, we determined that there are a range of options and opportunities for providing fish passage at the five reservoirs. Some combinations of passage options and associated biological benefits would be more feasible than others.

Costs vary widely among options, especially for downstream passage of juvenile fish. In general, fish passage at each of these dams is complicated by large fluctuations of reservoir water surface elevations. All five reservoirs have some tributary habitat that would be available if passage were provided; however, the amount and quality of the habitat varies considerably. Some options would provide only limited windows of time for passage.

From our initial assessment, it appears to be technically feasible to provide both upstream and downstream passage facilities at all of the dams. Passage at some sites would be much more expensive in relation to available habitat than at other sites. The effectiveness of potential fish movement through these facilities is unknown and remains to be determined.