



Fish and Wildlife Commission Presentation Summary Sheet

Meeting date:

6/23/2023

Agenda item:

Transfer of Klickitat Hatchery Property to Yakama Nation – Update on SEPA and Public Comments

Presenter(s):

Mike Livingston, WDFW Reg 3 Director & Trevor Hutton, WDFW Region 3 Fish Program Manager

Bill Sharp, Yakima-Klickitat Fisheries Project (YKFP) Klickitat River Coordinator

Background summary:

In the early 2000's, the Yakama Nation requested WDFW transfer the hatchery facility and parcel to the Yakama Nation, resulting in a June 2003 transfer MOU. In 2005, WDFW began leasing the facility to the Yakama Nation and entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) relating to the joint operation of the facility. Mitchell Act funding related to Klickitat River production was also transferred to the Yakama Nation. Since that time, approximately \$3.2 million in important upgrades to the facility have been completed by the Yakama Nation. The Yakama Nation is currently seeking to upgrade the facility and has obtained funding commitments from BPA on the order of ~\$25M to develop new infrastructure for the hatchery and water source.

On October 18, 2022, Superintendent of Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources Philip Rigdon wrote a letter to WDFW stating the tribe's desire to complete the transfer as contemplated in the 2003 transfer MOU.

WDFW and YN staff briefed the Commission on March 17, 2023, and subsequently have conducted SEPA review and outreach to Klickitat County related to the proposed transfer. No comments were made during SEPA, which led to a DNS issued May 31, 2023.

Staff recommendation:

Subsequent to this update briefing and public comment opportunity, staff recommend proceeding with preparations to present a motion for approval by the Commission at the August 2023 meeting.

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome: WDFW and Yakama Nation co-manage resources in the Klickitat River through the existing Yakima-Klickitat Fisheries Project agreement. Staff believe the transfer will facilitate more efficient management of the facility by tribal co-managers, including the tribe's ability to better utilize federal funding for improvements to the facility and fishery management in the Klickitat River Basin. The transfer is supported by Klickitat County, see letter of support dated 5/18/23.

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation: WDFW will no longer have an ownership interest in the facility, reducing associated asset management tasks and contracting tasks.

Public involvement process used and what you learned: SEPA review was conducted, including a public comment period running from 5/12/23 to 5/26/23. No comments were received on the project. During the review period, WDFW and YN staff presented the topic to inform local elected officials at a public meeting of the Klickitat County Board of Commissioners. The Board had several questions regarding fishery management and management of the facility, and subsequently sent a letter of support to the Commission dated 5/18/23 (attached).

Action requested and/or proposed next steps: Staff will respond to public comment from the 6/23/23 meeting as appropriate, and subsequently prepare a motion for consideration by the Commission at the August 2023 meeting.

Draft motion language: None proposed at this time.

Post decision communications plan: No decision sought at this time.



KLICKITAT COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



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JACOB ANDERSON, DISTRICT #1

LORI ZOLLER, DISTRICT #2

DAN CHRISTOPHER, DISTRICT #3

May 18, 2023

Commission Chair Barbara Baker
Washington State Fish and Wildlife Commission
600 Capitol Way N
Olympia, WA 98501

RE: Klickitat Hatchery Property Transfer

Dear Commission Chair Baker,

The Klickitat County Commissioners would like to express our support for the Klickitat Hatchery Property Transfer to the Yakama Nation. The Yakima/Klickitat Fisheries Project has been a successful partnership between the Yakama Nation, the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, and the Bonneville Power Administration to address uncertainties regarding adequacy of hatchery supplementation for meeting projection objectives and limiting adverse ecological and genetic impacts.

The collaboration between the Yakama Nation and WDFW staff throughout the Yakima and Klickitat River watersheds on fisheries, habitat restoration, instream flows and production has applied a scientifically rigorous process that fosters application of knowledge gained about hatchery supplementation and habitat restoration. Klickitat County supports Yakama Nation ownership of existing production facilities throughout the Yakima River Basin.

We respectfully encourage consideration for the Klickitat Hatchery Property Transfer. If you have any questions please feel free to contact our office at (509) 773-4612.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Klickitat County, Washington


Dan Christopher, Chairman


Jacob Anderson, Commissioner


Lori Zoller, Commissioner

Cc: Yakama National Tribal Council
Yakama Nation Klickitat Coordinator Bill Sharp
WDFW Region 3 Fish Program Manager Trevor Hutton
Philip Rigdon, DNR Superintendent
WDFW Regional Director Mike Livingston