



March 13, 2013

Derek Sandison
Washington Department of Ecology
15 West Yakima Avenue, Suite 200
Yakima, WA 98902

Dear Mr. Sandison:

Please include this letter as public comment by Seattle Audubon for the March 13, 2013, Yakima Workgroup meeting.

Seattle Audubon has previously provided comment on the proposed Yakima Basin Integrated Plan, including both to your Workgroup on the discussion draft (November 20, 2009) and to the Bureau of Reclamation on the draft PEIS (January 3, 2012). In those comment letters [see attached], we raised significant questions and concerns regarding this proposal. Unfortunately, those questions and concerns have not been addressed.

Of particular concern to Seattle Audubon is the adverse impacts that would result from an enlarged Bumping Lake reservoir. We are deeply troubled by the proposal to inundate up to 1,000 acres of unique Eastside old growth forests that are critical habitat for the endangered northern spotted owl. Since 1986, Seattle Audubon has been a leader in the ongoing effort to protect remaining forest habitat for this species, and the environmental review process for this project to-date has failed to address the concerns we have raised.

We request that your Workgroup help provide Seattle Audubon and other interested parties with specific information that responds to our numerous questions regarding the impacts the Bumping Lake Reservoir expansion component of the project would have on northern spotted owls. Without such answers, the positive benefits the overall proposal could provide for salmon and water are likely to become entangled in protracted battles regarding spotted owls.

I can be contacted via email at shawnc@seattleaudubon.org or phone at 206/523-8243. I look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shawn Cantrell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Shawn Cantrell
Executive Director