

Miles and Sandra McPhee
450 Clover Springs Road
Naches WA 98937

RE:

Senate Energy and Natural Resources
Hearing on S. 1694 – to amend Public Law 103-434 to authorize Phase III of the
Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project, July 7, 2015.

Senator Murkowski (Chair) and members of the Committee:

Following are our comments on S. 1694 in opposition to this version of the bill.
Please include these comments as part of the hearing record of July 7, 2015 on S.
1694.

The draft legislation includes phrasing that the Integrated Plan (IP) is to be "adopted in its entirety." While there are many aspects of the IP that we support, construction of two new dams (Wymer and Bumping) produce very low benefit/cost ratios. According to an independent economic analysis prepared by the State of Washington Water Resource Center at the direction of the Washington State Legislature, the B/C ratios for Wymer and Bumping are 0.09 and 0.18, respectively. The WWRC report illustrates that much of the purported economic benefit of the project (nonuse value of restoring of a Sockeye salmon run to the Yakima Basin), could be realized without adding new storage elements, which comprise a large proportion of the IP cost. In addition, construction of a new dam at Bumping will destroy a uniquely valuable old-growth ecosystem, to which the IP gives no consideration. Both of these projects should be considered separately and judged on their own merits (or lack thereof).

In its "entirety," the IP represents bad policy, both economic and environmental.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Miles G. McPhee, Ph. D.
Sandra McPhee