

WATER TRANSFER WORKING GROUP PROJECT DESCRIPTION

APPLICATION NO./COURT CLAIM NO.		
APPLICANT NAME	CONTACT NAME Jenny Hendricks & Stan Isley	TELEPHONE NO. 454-5736 ext. 123 575-5848 ext. 281
WATER RIGHT HOLDER'S NAME (if different)		EMAIL

DATE OF APPLICATION September 2007	PRIORITY DATE
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WATER SOURCE: Yakima River/Blue Slough	CROP:
INSTANTANEOUS QUANTITY:	ANNUAL QUANTITY:
PERIOD OF USE:	
PLACE OF USE:	PURPOSE OF USE:
IRRIGATION METHOD:	

CONSUMPTIVE USE CALCULATION:

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: <p>Short Description</p> <p>We would like your thoughts and comments on proceeding with projects on Blue Slough, a natural side channel of the Yakima River. The objective of projects on Blue Slough would be to restore natural side channel characteristics and viable side channel habitat for salmonids. This includes increasing channel flow, restoring vegetation and channel beds in certain reaches. Projects include USBR installing a measuring device or meter and possibly an automated headworks at the headgate (FG #30) in Sportsman State Park to manage water flow through the Slough. North Yakima Conservation District's Water Metering Program and Yakima Tributary Access Habitat Program (YTAHP) will work with landowners to provide water metering and fish screening needs. An assessment of the natural flow capabilities and current flow capabilities of the Slough needs to be done to evaluate flow restrictions within the Slough. The next step will be to address fish passage barriers and flow restricting culverts and crossings focusing on a goal of returning the flow regime in the slough to a natural hydrograph. A comprehensive plan for the optimum side channel habitat (where wide channels are desired vs. narrower channels, and so on) must be done so that projects within the Slough will be part of an overall plan.</p>
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Blue Slough, Yakima, WA



Legend

- Blue Slough Headgate
- Blue Slough
- Blue Slough Water Rights
- Sportsman State Park
- USBR ownership



0 750 1,500 3,000 4,500 6,000 Feet

Map Prepared by North Yakima Conservation District

Detailed Description

Blue Slough is a side channel of the mid-Yakima River. Blue Slough has known historical distribution of fall Chinook, summer steelhead, coho, spring Chinook, and the presumed migration for bull trout in the mainstem Yakima River. The inlet of Blue Slough is located at river mile 112.5 on the Yakima River and the outlet is at river mile 107.5. The measured length of Blue Slough is 5.6 miles. The Slough's first 2.7 miles upstream from its outlet or discharge into the Yakima River flow through lands owned almost entirely by the US Bureau of Reclamation (USBR). The next approximately 1.6

miles of the Slough flows through a series of privately owned properties until the last 1.3 miles enters Sportsman State Park and continues to its source on the Yakima River.

Regular flow through the channel is the main limiting factor affecting healthy salmonid habitat, as well as large sections barren of riparian growth. These limiting factors cause warm summer water temperatures and high volumes of milfoil, algae and duckweed. Natural side channels are key to a healthy functioning watershed, and, as identified in the Yakima River Basin Watershed Plan, are lacking in much of the mainstem Yakima River. The objective is to restore Blue Slough as a natural side channel of the Yakima River. This will create off channel habitat for juvenile salmonids in the middle Yakima River, including rearing habitat for fall Chinook, and good fish and wildlife habitat in general. This will also aid in restoring natural floodplain habitat and function. Proposed projects would address fish passage barriers, flow restrictions and the lack of riparian growth and canopy cover within reaches of the Slough.

Currently the Slough is being managed as an irrigation ditch with a headgate controlling the amount of flow through the Slough based on water rights from the slough. A Yakima Tributary Access and Habitat Program (YTAHP) waterway inventory of Blue Slough identified a total of 26 features encountered in a survey of the entire slough. Of the 26 features, 6 were pumps, 19 were culverts, and 1 was a dam with a gravity diversion. The culverts generally get increasingly smaller downstream from the inlet, a design feature of irrigation ditches. Three culverts are located on USBR lands. On private lands there are 5 road culverts, 1 highway culvert, 3 private drive culverts, 4 field crossing culverts, and 1 abandoned road culvert. One road culvert and the headgate culvert are located in Sportsman State Park. Some features have changed since the inventor was done, for instance one private drive culvert near highway 24 has been removed.

Projects will include an assessment of the natural flow capabilities and current flow capabilities of the Slough. A measuring device or meter will be installed near the headworks in the Yakima Sportsman State Park to manage the flow in the Slough. Through the North Yakima Conservation District's (NYCD) Water Metering Program and YTAHP, diversions from Blue Slough by water right holders will be equipped with meters and fish screens. The NYCD will work with landowners in the Slough reach from mile 2.7 to mile 3.4, on restoration options such as limiting crossings within fields, removal of culverts on abandoned roads, drives, and crossings within fields, and replacement of flow limiting culverts depending on recommendations and designs from YTAHP, WDFW, Yakima Nation and Reclamation (not inclusive). NYCD is working with landowners to abandon the one gravity diversion with dam on the Slough.