



August 2, 2018

Scott McKinney
Shorelands and Environmental Assistance Program
Washington State Department of Ecology
PO Box 47600
Olympia, Washington 98504-7600

Dear Mr. McKinney,

I write to express the Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board's support for the Yakima County Floodplains by Design proposal for the **Gap the Gap 1135 Ecosystem Restoration Locally Preferred Alternative Project.**

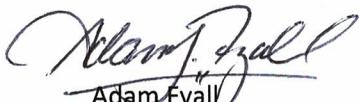
The Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board was created by 21 county and city governments and the Yakama Nation to promote the recovery of at-risk fish and wildlife species in the Yakima Basin. The Board worked with local partners to develop the 2009 Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan, which NOAA Fisheries adopted as part of the federal Endangered Species Act required recovery plan for Mid-Columbia Steelhead. The Board also led development of the Yakima Bull Trout Action Plan, and, as the designated SRFB Lead Entity for the Yakima Basin, runs an annual review of proposals for grants from the State's Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB).

The Gap to Gap 1135 Locally Preferred Alternative Project will complete an ambitious floodplain restoration project that has been in the works for over 15 years. In combination with the Corp of Engineers funded dike setback, this work will restore floodplain habitat functions on 1,400 acres. It is well coordinated with our recovery plan, existing SRFB projects and habitat projects funded by Ecology through the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan. It implements Lower Mainstem Action #6 of the YSRP and directly builds upon five previous SRFB projects within the project area that were reviewed and supported by the Board, as well as major past investments by the Washington Department of Transportation, the federal Bureau of Reclamation and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

This project will significantly improve habitat conditions in a critical floodplain reach of the Yakima River, to the benefit of steelhead, spring chinook, coho and bull trout. It will also significantly reduce flood risks for the Cities of Yakima and Union Gap, Interstate 82 and adjoining areas. This is exactly the kind of large scale win-win project that the Floodplains by Design program was created to support.

If you have any questions or clarifications about our support for this project, please do contact Alex Conley, our Executive Director, at aconley@ybfwr.org or 509 453-4104 x1.

Sincerely,


Adam Fyall
Chairman