



Confederated Tribes and Bands
of the Yakama Nation

Established by the
Treaty of June 9, 1855

Yakama Nation

EMERGENCY DROUGHT PROCLAMATION

May 10, 2024

Environmental conditions in the Pacific Northwest in the winter and spring of 2023-2024 have resulted in a deficit in snow pack reserves which support reservoir supplies, in-stream flows, and the general availability of surface water to the Yakima River Basin and Klickitat River Basin. Precipitation, snow pack and reservoirs are below normal. This condition results in different situations for (a) irrigators dependent on water supplied from storage reservoirs and (b) irrigators dependent on water supplied by snow melt.

Some irrigators dependent on water supplied from storage reservoirs will experience reductions of their water supply. Allocations for proratable water supplies in the basin are currently at 63% of normal. Because the Wapato Irrigation Project ("WIP") is partially proratable and partially non-proratable, WIP is expected to get approximately 80% of its normal supply for WIP's Wapato-Satus Unit. These amounts are expected to change as the season progresses. The Ahtanum Unit and Toppenish-Simcoe Unit of WIP, as well as Glenwood Valley water deliveries, will likely drop off in summer as well.

Drought conditions and lack of adequate surface water supply may cause people to increase the pumping of groundwater, if available, in the Yakima River Basin. Groundwater from the alluvial aquifer lying beneath the Yakama Reservation may be seasonally available to alleviate some hardships resulting from current drought conditions, but must be prudently managed and regulated so as not to impair instream flows, senior Yakama Nation water rights, and existing domestic and community wells.

Low stream flows present a critical threat to survival and migration for both adult and juvenile fish within the Yakima and Klickitat River basins. This threat includes increased surface water temperatures caused by low flows. Fisheries habitat must be protected to ensure the survival of wild anadromous fish runs, as well as hatchery-bred fish, in which the Yakama Nation has a significant vested interest.

Now, therefore, the Yakama Nation Roads, Irrigation and Land Committee proclaims as follows:

The Yakama Reservation is now in a state of emergency drought condition. Drought poses a significant threat to habitat for fisheries and other natural resources, to the health and welfare of the Reservation public, and to the livelihood of irrigators; and

In order to further the goals of this declaration and alleviate the adverse effects of the drought conditions on the Yakama Reservation, Yakama Nation's Water Code Administration shall observe and apply the following provisions, contingent upon the availability of adequate funding:

- A. The Water Code Administration shall coordinate with Wapato Irrigation Project to authorize use of the below listed drought relief wells as needed until the end of the irrigation season or earlier if deemed necessary:
 - a. 9-22/35E1 - Lat. 680 Spider *
 - b. 9-22/35G1 - Lat. 680-End of Spider *
 - c. 9-22/29L1 - Sub 620 at Booster Pump *
 - d. 9-22/30J1 - Satus 2 above Mosebar
 - e. 9-22/30L1 - Satus 2-Center
 - f. 9-21/25Q1 - Satus 2-Diesel
 - g. 9-21/36C - Satus 2-Diesel
 - h. 9-21/36E1 - Satus 2-W/Power
 - i. 9-21/36R1 - P 198-Newland & Colwash Road *
 - j. 9-22/31R1 - P 340-Colwash Road-Fenced *
 - k. 8-22/3M1 - P 680-East side of Tomo Pike Road *
 - l. 11-19/24D2 - Phillip John/Track Road *
 - m. 10-21/30A1 - Lat. 4 Ext. Connie Road *
 - n. 10-20/26H1 - Lat. 4 Ext. Stevens/Chambers Road *

*Indicates readily functional well. All others need portable power source.

The Water Code Administration may issue permits for the use of these wells for 2024.

- B. The Water Code Administration shall coordinate with Wapato Irrigation Project to plan for and implement the deactivation of the drought relief wells at the end of the irrigation season in 2024 or earlier if necessary.
- C. The Water Code Administration shall coordinate with Wapato Irrigation Project to look for opportunities to pump drain water into delivery canals in select locations. Use of temporary drain pumps is contingent upon obtaining a "Special Use Permit" from the Wapato Irrigation Project.

- D. Rental Water is not authorized in any manner for the 2024 season.
- E. The Water Code Administration shall coordinate with other Yakama Nation Staff to seek out and apply for funding opportunities from other agencies for current and future drought resilience, including but not limited to:
 - a. Stream patrols to monitor and enforce water allocations and instream flows.
 - b. Alternatives to water for dust abatement during forest management activities in order to preserve limited instream flows for fish and wildlife habitat.
 - c. Other needs relating to drought resilience, measurements, and irrigation infrastructure upgrades.
- F. The Water Code Administration shall enforce minimum instream flows to protect Treaty Reserved Fish and Wildlife and Water Rights Holders consistent with Revised Yakama Code §§ 60.11.01 and 60.04.03 as adopted by Roads, Irrigation and Land Committee Action 034-2024-5.
- G. The Water Code Administration will not permit, under any circumstances, the installation of any new irrigation wells to supplement canal delivery losses.
- H. The Water Code Administration is authorized to take other necessary and proper steps pursuant to Yakama Nation Law to address the drought.

This emergency proclamation shall terminate following the 2024 irrigation season, unless earlier terminated by the Roads, Irrigation and Land Committee. If any of the above provisions should be declared invalid, the remaining provisions shall not be affected thereby.

Approved via Yakama Tribal Council Resolution No. T-67-24