

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 20, 2023

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary
Department of the Interior
1849 C St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Camille Calimlim Touton
Commissioner
Bureau of Reclamation, Department of the Interior
1849 C St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland and Commissioner Touton,

We are writing in support of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan's (the Integrated Plan) application for drought mitigation funding (via Sec. 50233 of the Inflation Reduction Act, P.L. 117-16) for the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project Phase III projects. The Integrated Plan coalition, including the Yakama Nation, Kittitas Reclamation District, and Roza and Sunnyside Valley Irrigation Districts, have proposed drought mitigation and resiliency projects that are critical to the Yakama River Basin's natural resources, water supply, and economy.

The Integrated Plan is a diverse coalition of tribal, federal, state, and local governments, businesses, and community organizations that have developed a 30-year plan to meet the Yakima River Basin's water supply needs and challenges now and into the future. The Yakima River Basin is a major contributor to the state's agricultural output. Producers in the Yakima River Basin grow \$4.5 billion annually in agricultural products, including apples, cherries, and hops, and support roughly 44,000 jobs. The Basin is also home to critical fisheries resources, including the Yakama Nation's treaty fishing rights and commercial and recreational harvests. The Integrated Plan is vital to preserving and restoring these fisheries now and for years to come.

On July 24, 2023, the Washington State Department of Ecology declared a drought emergency in several watersheds throughout the state of Washington, including the Yakima River Basin. Unfortunately, drought events are becoming common in the state of Washington, increasing the urgency of implementing the Integrated Plan projects. Currently, over 90 projects and more than \$1 billion are needed, including critical Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project Phase

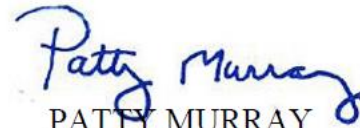
III projects that are designed to mitigate against drought impacts and make the Yakima River Basin water supply more resilient.

We thank you for your full and fair consideration of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Partners' application for drought mitigation funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Maria Cantwell".

MARIA CANTWELL
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patty Murray".

PATTY MURRAY
United States Senator