



May 21, 2004

Judi Danielson, Chair
Northwest Power and Conservation Council
851 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 1100
Portland, OR 97204-1348

Subject: Support for submission of the Walla Walla Subbasin Plan

Dear Judi Danielson:

The Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council (WWBWC) has been working for over a year with others involved in our subbasin to develop the Walla Walla Subbasin Plan. Council staff and board members provided significant guidance throughout the process, from policy-level decisions to discussion of specific language. A public review draft of the Walla Walla Subbasin Plan was distributed on April 12, 2004, with the public comment period closing on April 23, 2004. Public comments were made, however the Council Board has not had an opportunity to review all changes.

During our meeting on May 17, 2004, the WWBWC approved submittal of the Walla Walla Subbasin Plan to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council. This plan represents a joint effort on behalf of local stakeholders to identify priorities for aquatic and terrestrial species habitat restoration and protection. These priorities are scientifically-based, take into account local opportunities, and attempt to balance issues of concern for various stakeholders.

The WWBWC is forwarding the Draft Walla Walla Subbasin Plan to the NWPCC to continue the public and ISRP review process through the summer, as coordinated by the NWPCC, with the expectation that the WWBWC will approve a final plan later this year. The WWBWC is not approving the plan at this time until a complete draft of the plan is available and there is sufficient time for public review and comment (at least 60 days). The approved plan will guide the submittal and evaluation of projects to be considered for Bonneville Power Administration project funding from the Northwest Power and Conservation Council for the next several years for enhancement in aquatic and terrestrial species and their habitats. It should be recognized that additional refinements and scientific understanding are needed. New information and plan implementation over time may result in updated priorities and strategies. Also, the WWBWC does not view this plan as the basin's Endangered Species Act (ESA) recovery plan for listed species

