

# DRAFT TALKING POINTS

## Walla Walla 2050 Elevator Pitch to the General Public

- The Walla Walla Basin is home to a thriving agricultural economy; it once also was home to healthy river ecosystems and abundant fisheries.
- Today, however, water demands in the Walla Walla far exceed available water supplies, especially during the late spring, summer, and early fall. As a result, stream flows now are too low to support healthy river ecosystems or their fisheries.
- As a result, salmon were extirpated from the basin in the early 1900s, and steelhead and bull trout are now listed as “threatened” under the Endangered Species Act.
- The degradation of the basin’s streams has had severe impacts on the culture, traditions, and treaty rights of the Umatilla Tribes, which have relied on the Walla Walla’s fisheries since time immemorial.
- To address these challenges, the basin has come together to create a 30-year, integrated water resources plan known as the “Walla Walla Water 2050 Plan.”
- The 2050 Plan is a collaborative roadmap to improve stream flows, restore fisheries, and maintain the long-term viability of agricultural, municipal, commercial, and residential water use.
- The 2050 Plan supports projects both large and small that have positive impacts on water supplies in the basin, including:
  - Small projects that restore habitat, reconnect floodplains, and improve encourage water conservation and efficiency; and
  - Large projects that provide new water supplies to the Basin, such as a pipeline from the Columbia River or an off-channel reservoir.
- Implementing the 2050 Plan relies on strong partnerships between landowners, Tribes, state, local, and federal entities, and community members like you.
- Want to help? Join our meetings, get involved in projects, talk to your elected leaders. Together, we can build a healthy future where we have water for fish, farms and people alike!