



## **IDAHO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION**

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February 21, 2000

FEB 24 2000

Department of the Army  
Walla Walla District COE  
Attn: Lower Snake River Study  
201 North Third Avenue  
Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

Dear Sirs:

The Idaho Farm Bureau Federation, representing 50,000 member Idaho families has reviewed the ALL H White Paper and submit the following comments regarding the paper.

In general the Idaho Farm Bureau firmly believes that the solution to Salmon recovery lies in continuing what is already working and improving the migration corridor of smolts to better accommodate the natural tendencies of the Salmonid species. We are not supportive of anything as risky, radical and irreversible as dam breaching and feel we can make full recovery without destroying the lower Snake River Dams or any of the other major dams in the Northwest.

Recent studies by NMFS indicate that barged fish are surviving and returning to spawning grounds in ever increasing numbers. Granted this is still not in numbers sufficient to quell the appetite of those who gill net the species, those who commercially fish the species and those who would like to return the Northwest to a time when it was largely uninhabited by the human species. But facts are facts, and ever increasing numbers of smolts are making it to the ocean and ever increasing numbers are beginning to return. To destroy the dams, just as this turn around is occurring makes no sense to us at all.

Hydro Power is the cleanest, environmental friendliest and most cost effective method known at this time for generating electricity. With the Northwest in a rapid growth phase and projecting a 30% increase in electricity generation in the next few years, destroying dams is tantamount to telling our region we will be relegated to 2nd class citizens as we will experience times when the electricity demands cannot be met. Unreliable electricity supply will quickly move those industries that must have reliable energy to an area away from the Northwest. We are concerned that dam destruction will lead to a massive loss of jobs and a stagnation of the economies of the entire region. NO amount of fishing will compensate and those who tell us of billions filling our coffers from Salmon are trading our future on a gamble that cannot and will not work.

The Idaho Farm Bureau Federation is, however, sensitive to the wants and desires of the tribes and sports fisherman and certainly concerned regarding the welfare of the commercial fisherman

and canneries that employ and support the many good and hard working families dependent upon a good catch of Salmon. We are even sensitive to the Alaska fisherman who feel the decline of the Snake River Salmon Run has seriously affected the Alaskan run, although we suggest that this is more a result of overfishing and poor ocean conditions, but according to those who predict weather it appears an el-Nina with colder ocean temperatures is settling in for a 30 year stay, so ocean conditions will become much more nurturing for salmon than in the middle 90's. To help our down river friends and neighbors the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation proposes that we all adopt as a strategy the Ernie Brannon Bypass plan where we channel around the dams, create the natural habitat necessary to act as a rapid corridor for steelhead and rapid transit species but to serve as a browsing and feeding corridor for those species like fall chinook that take over a year to migrate to the ocean. We feel this plus effective predator control and a colder ocean will restore our salmon without having to remove dams. This by-pass can be run on 500 cfs of Idaho water and such a system answers the needs of all segments of society except for those who make their living by selling dissent and memberships to keep the public confused and donating to various manufactured causes.

We must not forget that salmon species are endangered, however, we allow the species to be caught and eaten by the worlds population. If we expect to keep commercial fishing, tribal claims and sports fisheries alive and well, we must be innovative and scientific in our approach. We have submitted a no fail plan that can recover the species and keep the dams in place. Rather than veer off into uncharted waters and nonsensical proposals, lets work together to craft a strategy that saves fish, water and our most important commodity the human family.

Thank you for allowing us to comment on this most important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frank S. Priestley". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Frank Priestley, President  
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation