NORTHWEST GRAIN GROWERS

Incorporated

MAIN OFFICE
P. O. Box 310
Walla Walla, WA 99362-0210

(509) 525-6510
Fax (509) 529-6050

BRANCH OFFICE
P. O. Box 215
Waitsburg, WA 99361-0215

(509) 337-6633
Fax (509) 337-6674

MAR 07 2000

March 6, 2000

Federal Caucus Comments Comment Record
c/o BPA-PL
707 West Main St. Suite 500
Spokane, WA 99201

Re: Draft Lower Snake River Juvenile Salmon Migration Feasibility Report and EIS

To Whom It May Concern:

I am an employee of Northwest Grain Growers, Inc. We are a cooperative located in Walla Walla, Washington. Our membership consists of 1,350 individuals, partnerships, corporations, estates and trusts. Of the 1,350 - 500 are actively farming and the remaining are mostly landlords. Our members reside in 32 states and 2 foreign countries.

I personally oppose Alternative 4, the dam breaching alternative, for the following reasons:

Twenty-six west coast runs of salmon and steelhead are listed under the ESA. Another 8 are either candidates or proposed for listing. Of these 34 runs, only 4 pass the Snake River dams. Dam removal is not the answer to saving salmon in the Northwest.

Ten years ago, the best scientific information said that only 10 to 30 percent of salmon smolts survived the trip past the dams. Today, NMFS says that survival is as high now as it was in the 1960's and 1970's -- before the Snake River dams were built. If survival through the reservoirs is as high now as it was before the dams were built, returning to pre-dam conditions is not the answer.

Dam breaching will create significant negative environmental impacts, with loss of habitat for resident fish and wildlife and increased air pollution from trucks and from fossil fuel burning power plants.

I oppose dam breaching. This is not a fish vs. economy issue. Fish are important. The economy is important. If both are important, breaching the dams is not the answer. It is extreme and it is risky. It may not help the fish, but it will certainly hurt the economy.

Sincerely yours,

Northwest Grain Growers, Inc.

Katherine Bierwagen