

MAR 13 2000

My name is Charles Swanson, board president of Ravalli Electric Co-op. Elected to the board in 1980, I have seen many changes in the Pacific Northwest as far as Salmon and power issues. The issue of restoring Salmon to the pre-dam era on the lower Snake River has much more to do with ocean fishing, weather and tribal issues than any one would like to admit.

We all have a love of nature and would like to see Salmon numbers return to the days of Lewis and Clark, but this is besides the point. Hydro power on the Snake and Columbia makes the Northwest what it is today. To remove 4 dams for an untested ~~reason~~<sup>theory</sup> would not be in the interest of electric users, agriculture, <sup>recreation</sup> and river commerce. We have the ability to act on good scientific measures to help solve this problem without turning back the clock. ~~But~~ aside differences in theories - act of common sense for the betterment of all here in the Northwest. Lets act with good judgment and not with short sightedness. The Northwest including Montana has much to loose. The cost of power would increase dramatically because Hydro power is established and does not have to be changed out for more expensive measures.

Lets all unite and feel good about letting our fore-fathers vision for the Northwest continue. The recovery of the Salmon ~~is~~<sup>should</sup> be done, but not at the cost proposed by a few for so many. Our rate payers would insist that we ~~do~~<sup>be prudent,</sup> not be foolish in our quest for better Salmon numbers.

Thank you for letting me comment.

Charles Swanson  
PRESIDENT  
RAVALLI ELECTRIC CO-OP  
1775 MT. VIEW ORCHARDS RD  
CORVALLIS, MONTANA  
51828