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MAR 10 2000

3-7-00

Dept. of the Army
Walla Walla District
Corps of Engineers
Atten; Lower Snake River Study
201 North Third Ave.
Walla Walla, Wash. 99362-1876

Dear Sir,

I found the enclosed response for in our local newspaper. Rather than fill in the blanks I chose to write you a letter.

I have lived in Boardman, Oregon since 1952. My business and my home were displaced by the John Day Dam pool and relocated in the 'new' Boardman in 1968. I have spent many years enjoying the Columbia River; ie swimming, skiing, fishing, and just enjoying the beauty.

My home town has grown over the years with the agriculture, the shipping on the waterway, and the new industries. I consider the Columbia River the 'life blood' of my town.

I chose to believe in articles I have enclosed in this letter, because a Breach of the dams would be devastating to my small community and my business

Last summer I had the privileged of meeting a gentlemen, now retired, who spent his life dealing with fish and their problems across the United States. In his career he has worked extensively with the Columbia River. He told me there is a study done by the Corp of Engineers that shows the pools behind the Columbia River Dams actually enhance areas for the salmon by covering the islands in the River. He also told me this study would be available only by court action. I also chose to believe this.

At a recent Chamber meeting I heard discussion of a major flood that occurred in Portland. I was told this area (Jantzen Beach) is still floodable, and these waters are controlled by the Dams. If the dams were breached this would be a major concern for the metropolitan area. I chose to believe this.

I am in favor of protecting the salmon, if they need protection, but not at the loss of the Dams on the Columbia River. There Must be a better way. If Alternatives 1 and 2 are better than I chose 1 and 2.

Thank you for your time.

Ronda J. Smith



The 'salmon' connection

The big push by the Oregon Dept. of Agriculture (ODA) to adopt land use regulations that govern farming and ranching (see article on front page), is driving more people to raise questions (1) about the listing of salmon by the federal government under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and (2) about the Oregon Salmon Plan (which was intended to head off the "listing" by providing funds to state agencies to impose more regulatory controls on private land).

There is growing evidence that the listing of salmon species as threatened or endangered was not justified, and that measures to protect the salmon are misdirected.

As discussed in the November/December issue of *Looking Forward* (page 4), the salmon listing agency (National Marine Fisheries Service) did not count hatchery salmon, which are indistinguishable from the so-called wild salmon the agency wants to protect, and the listing was based on a flawed application of the ESA.

Moreover, nothing is being done to protect salmon from the growing population of predators such as seals and sea lions who are decimating salmon populations in coastal river areas. At the

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same time, hatcheries are in disfavor, and government employees are killing hatchery fish by the thousands for catfish and destroying millions of salmon eggs — while little attention is being given to ocean factors which have much to do with salmon populations.

Nevertheless, the Oregon Salmon Plan is providing millions of dollars to state agencies like ODA and LCDC to impose more and more land use regulations to restrict the rights of landowners to use their land for farming, ranching, forestry, and develop-

ments of all kinds — to protect salmon that may not be endangered at all or, if they are, will not be endangered if sensible policies were put in place. Worse yet, the state agencies don't even have the proof that such regulations are needed or appropriate.

At the least, all such regulatory action should be put on hold until these serious questions about salmon listing are resolved either politically or through judicial action. Major litigation is now in progress in Oregon and Washington D.C. Pacific Legal Foundation has cases pending in state court and federal court in Oregon, and a broad Coalition based in Washington state called "Common Sense Salmon Recovery" has a case pending in federal court in Washington D.C. These cases are based on extensive scientific and legal research that indicates that state and federal agencies are "manufacturing a crisis" over the salmon to try to justify imposing massive regulations on private land.

More and more organizations are questioning the justification for salmon listing, and having second thoughts about caving in to regulatory controls being proposed and imposed to protect salmon. ■



More threats to landowners based on questionable salmon concerns

In the last issue of *Looking Forward*, we discussed pending litigation that raises major questions about the justification for listing salmon species as threatened or endangered, based upon the fact that hatchery fish were not counted in the listing determination even though they are indistinguishable from so-called wild salmon. In the legal proceedings, Pacific Legal Foundation and the Asea Valley Alliance are charging that the National Marine Fisheries Service and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife are "manufacturing a salmon crisis."

Nevertheless, based on the "manufactured crisis," more and more regulatory restrictions are being imposed on private land.

For example, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) are proposing two sets of new rules that put landowners at risk of major penalties if they do anything on their land that would, directly or indirectly, impair habitat for salmon. They apply in urban as well as

urban areas. The rules also put the pressure on state and local governments to impose all sorts of regulations that will impose restrictions on logging, farming, ranching as well as development in urban areas.

NMFS appears to be demanding 200 foot buffers in urban areas and extensive protective areas in forest and farm land areas, with land uses within the buffers and areas to be severely restricted.

Farmers, foresters, urban landowners and developers are blasting the federal regulatory agency, saying that the agency is acting with hypocritical and political motives, and total disregard for people and their livelihoods.

Glen Stonebrink, executive director of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association, testifying in opposition to the proposed rules, encouraged NMFS to go ahead and "lay them on us, because maybe more rules will outrage our people" and motivate them to fight such federal intervention.

Copies of the proposed rules can be obtained on the internet at www.nwr.noaa.gov or from Branch Chief, Protected Resources Division, NMFS, Northwest Region, 525 NE Oregon Street, Portland OR 97232-2737 (or call Garth Griffin at 503-321-2005). Comments on the rules must be received no later than February 22 (even though the deadline on one set of rules is March 3rd). Comments should be sent to the NMFS address above.

Another set of rules, triggered in part by questionable salmon concerns, are very restrictive "farm practice" rules being pushed by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (see the article beginning on the front page of this issue of *Looking Forward*.) In addition, LCDC is pressuring cities and counties to impose all sorts of "riparian area" land use restrictions, and METRO, the regional government in the Portland area, is mandating wider and wider setbacks along 900 miles of streams in urban areas. ■

Do you oppose dam breaching?

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wants to hear your views

In 1995, the National Marine Fisheries Service directed the Corps of Engineers to begin a massive feasibility report examining salmon recovery options that could ultimately lead to the destruction of the four Lower Snake River Dams. On January 5, 2000, the Corps released the Lower Snake River Juvenile Salmon Migration Feasibility Report and Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Corps wants your opinion. So do we!

Please write your own letter or complete the following & send to the Corps of Engineers
Comments are due by
March 31, 2000

Lower Snake River Dam Alternatives

Alternative 1. Existing Conditions

Continue the operation of fish passage facilities and project operations in place or under development. New facilities include improved dam turbine efficiency, 2 new fish barges, new spillway flow detectors, enhanced adult fish attraction modifications, and improved juvenile fish facilities.

Alternative 2. Maximize Juvenile

Salmon Barging

Includes new facilities described in Alternative 1, plus maximizing juvenile salmon and steelhead barging and minimizing voluntary dam spill.

Alternative 3. Major System Improvements

Generally includes all measures described in Alternative 2, and installation of new facilities that divert additional salmon away from tubine passage.

Alternative 4. Dam Breaching

Remove the earthen embankment section and abutment at Lower Granite, Little Goose, Lower Monumental, and Ice Harbor Dam.

Re: Lower Snake River Juvenile Salmon Migration Feasibility Report (Date) _____

Dear Army Corps of Engineers:

I am a citizen of the Pacific Northwest and believe the best way to aid our salmon is to adopt Alternatives 1 or 2. I oppose dam breaching (Alternative 4) because it is economically harmful and will not help recover salmon.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

(Signature) _____ (Name) _____
(Address) _____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip) _____

Mail comments to: Department of the Army, Walla Walla District, Corps of Engineers, Attn: Lower Snake River Study, 201 North Third Avenue, Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876 or fax at (509) 527-7832