

TESTIMONY ON DAM REMOVAL ON SNAKE RIVER
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BOB BAILEY, VICE PRESIDENT

For the record, my name is Bob Bailey Vice President of Ravalli County Electric Cooperative. I am an elected official of an 8400 member-owned system. We are deeply concerned about all the rhetoric to remove dams in the name of salmon restoration. For the past two decades, the region has proven they can and will spend money on the salmon-\$3 billion to date. It is unfortunate that the region has never established goals or designed procedures around the complexities of the salmon and the Columbia River system. Success was measured by dollars spent rather than analytical measures from a comprehensive plan.

We remain committed to a sound comprehensive recovery plan. We cannot take a step backwards to the days of Lewis & Clark even if we wanted to. It is a different era. The economy of Northwest is tied to the Columbia River system. Plans developed on emotion will not restore the salmon and will, in fact, have a huge negative impact on the economic stability of the Northwest. A single plan centered on the H's appears to be the most feasible.

Habitat improvement for salmon should not be to the detriment of habitat for humans. Harvest for the oceans to the upper reaches of the river system has to be a key element. Hydro dams supply us with many of the things that have made living in the Northwest a desirable place, such as: clean renewable hydro power, flood control, recreation, navigation and irrigation, to just name a few. Without adequate irrigation water we will continue to lose more family farms, and

become more dependant on imports. Is the family farmer, also an indangered species less important than fish?

We must remember that the Northwest, for the most part is a high plains desert.

Surely with the immense knowledge we have available we can design a cost effective plan to pass a fish up stream and down.

We remain opposed to the removal of dams on the Lower Snake River, and any other Columbia Basin river dams. It is a step backward to the dark ages.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

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