



MAR 17 2000

MADISON COUNTY

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March 13, 2000

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

Gentlemen:

The Madison County Commission is opposed to the alternative for breaching the lower Snake River Dams. We have reviewed the information and support alternative 3-major system improvement.

Madison County has a population of approximately 26,000 residents. All of these residents are affect by rate increases from Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). Residents of Madison County have been paying for Salmon Restoration through their rates since the beginning of the process and believe that the Question is not "should we breach the dams" but "how do we save the salmon". We believe that the draft Environmental Impact Statement is too narrowly focused.

Madison County is opposed to flow augmentation. Idaho has supplied more the 10 Million-acre feet of water flow augmentation in the past five years and it has resulted in no measurable benefit to salmon. Taking an additional 1 Million-acre feet of irrigation water for flow augmentation dries up more than 600,000 acres of productive farmland at an annual cost of \$430 Million and thousands of agricultural jobs. Madison County and the State of Idaho are Agriculturally based and this kind of thinking has to stop!

1 Breaching Dams and flow augmentation are environmental disasters waiting to happen. Sediment from breaching the Dams will kill the salmon and the resident fish and turn a scenic river into an environmental wasteland. Flow augmentation will reduce the water in reservoirs down to 10% of capacity, doing essentially the same kind of environmental devastation to our resident fisheries.

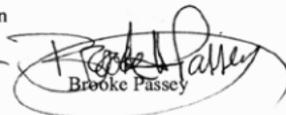
New National Marine Fisheries Service data shows that survival of the fish through each Dam is 95%. Predator control, habitat improvement and harvest improvement can provide greater benefits more quickly the dam breaching. We would encourage you to take these less devastating approaches to salmon recovery!

Respectfully Yours,

Madison County Commission


Reed Sommer, Chairman


Gerald Lee Jeppsen


Brooke Passey