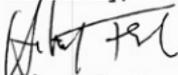


The population of the Northwest is projected to increase by 50 percent during the timeframe of the All-H recovery planning. The pressure for more jobs, more food, more energy and more goods will be unrelenting. The concurrent demand for more fish, and by proxy, more natural environment, more recreation, more pristine outdoor experience, and increased restoration of early tribal heritage presents a daunting challenge. While destroying major operating dams may appear to satisfy these latter demands, it would be hugely detrimental to the economic side of the balance.

The path ahead must start by accepting in place the economic and social structures that have developed within the Columbia River Basin. Enormous improvements have already been made in our environment over the past 20-30 years, not by closing down industries or human activities, but by aggressively focusing ongoing attention to continual improvement. We believe that the best approach to salmon recovery is through aggressive pursuit of the vast number of measures that will make every phase of the salmon lifecycle perform better, followed by continued learning, adaption, and improvement.

The Federal Caucus agencies have recognized the need for strong regional public support in order for any recovery plan to be truly successful. Unfortunately, recent hearings have sharpened the pro-breach/anti-breach rhetoric. We believe the Federal Caucus must find a way to gain public support, especially from those segments of the public that will be called upon to make the significant contributions that will necessarily be required in any successful recovery plan.

Sincerely,



Hubert D. Travaille  
Vice President Public Affairs

HDT/bj

# Potlatch

March 17, 2000

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Federal Caucus Comment Record  
c/o BPA/PL  
707 W. Main Street, Suite 500  
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We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Federal Caucus draft Conservation of Columbia Basin Fish paper ("All-H" paper).

We understand that the Federal Caucus will release a revised All-H paper in mid-May, accompanied by a draft biological opinion from the National Marine Fisheries Service relating to the operation of the Columbia River hydrosystem. Inasmuch as the All-H paper looks at longer-term recovery activities for endangered fish, it would seem that it is tied as closely to the Corps of Engineers' Draft Feasibility Report/Environmental Impact Statement ("FR/EIS") as it is to the ESA consultation and biological opinion relating to current operation of the hydrosystem. We request, therefore, that comments we make to the Corps in response to the Corp's draft FR/EIS be considered by the Federal Caucus as those comments relate to decisions in the All-H paper and biological opinion concerning configuration of the lower Snake River dams.

We support the comprehensive approach taken by the Federal Caucus to recovery of endangered Columbia River Basin salmon. Focusing just on reasonable and prudent alternatives relating to operations of the four lower Snake River dams is vastly too narrow an approach, but unfortunately has received almost exclusive attention since the 1995 biological opinion was released.

We oppose dam breaching and flow increases from the upper Snake River as recovery measures. Much work has been done by NMFS and others in assessing the range of options for each "H" that is listed in the draft All-H paper. We associate ourselves with the comments of the Northwest Food Processors Association, the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association, and the State of Idaho in supporting a combination of measures that do not require breaching and increased flows.