necessary years in the ocean and then return back to the estuary below Bonneville Dam. The interesting thing is that less then 100,000 adult fish are returning to swim upstream to their spawning grounds. That is less then 1% return - what happened to the rest of the 99%?

1 There are a few areas that have not been significantly addressed. They are: silt deposits, gillnet dropout and barging adult salmon upstream. There is estimated 150,000,000 cubic yards of silt deposited behind the four lower Snake River dams. How many years will it take for this silt to wash downstream? How many years will ALL fish below these dams die because of the water quality - salmon can't swim through miles of mud and survive either. Monofilament gillnets that commercial fishermen use have a much higher dropout rate of dead fish then the multi-strand gillnets. Dropout is a situation that occurs when fish are caught in the net and when dead, fall out of the net. This "dropout" represents a true waste of the resource and in most cases, this rate is very high. And just food for thought - barges are already successfully moving the smolt downstream, why not barge the adult salmon upstream. There is already a mechanism is place at Bonneville Dam in which the returning adult salmon could be collected and placed in a barge and taken upstream past the dams to the spawning beds. This alternative also eliminates any "in river" nets.

2

The Corps of Engineers has four alternatives for increasing the returning salmon populations and the Federal Caucus has the "4 H's". Of the eight choices, three of them entail dam breaching. 38% of these options are to remove the dams - dam breaching shouldn't even be an option!

This letter joins many others showing a very strong opposition to dam breaching. Every elected official in the State of Washington opposes dam breaching! Please allow me to state what this means to me. I am only one small part of a very large representation opposing breaching of the four dams.

Petitions to NOT breach the dams, were signed by:
26,000 people locally
85,000 people regionally

the Clarkston Chamber of Commerce representing more than 300 businesses oppose breaching

City of Clarkston - Mark Kammers, mayor
letter to Federal Caucus (copy attached)

Asotin County Commissioners - Gordon Reed, chairman
letter to Governor Gary Locke (copy attached)
Resolution No. 98-26 opposing breaching (copy attached)

9th Legislative District
Representative Mark Schoesler (Republican Whip)
letter opposing breaching (copy attached)
joint article with Representative Don Cox
"We can save our salmon without hurting people"
(see attached)
Representative Don Cox
letter opposing breaching (copy attached)
joint article with Representative Mark Schoesler
"We can same our salmon without hurting people"
(copy attached)
Senator Larry Sheahan - opposes breaching
16th Legislative District
Senator Valoria Loveland
letter opposing breaching (copy attached)
Representative Bill Grant
letter opposing breaching (copy attached)
Representative Dave Mastin
letter opposing breaching (copy attached)
5th District, State of Washington
Representative George Nethercutt, Jr.
letter opposing breaching (copy attached)
testimony of Rep. Nethercutt to the House Committee on Resources, Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans and Subcommittee on Water and Power
(copy attached)
Senator Slade Gorton
News Release "Gorton Presses NMFS to Hold More Public Hearings, Extend Public Comment Period on 4(d) Rules"
(copy attached)
"Gorton: Life Without Eastern Washington Dams"
(copy attached)
"Columbia-Snake River Hydro System Update From United States Senator Slade Gorton" (copy attached)
"Army Corps of Engineers Economic Studies"
(copy attached)
"Senator Slade Gorton: Water Supply, Irrigation, and Power Production Without the Snake River Dams"
(copy attached)
Senator Patty Murray - opposes dam breaching
Governor, State of Washington
Gary Locke opposes dam breaching
"Governor proposes water-law changes to save salmon"
(copy attached)
news release, March, 2000-Governor Gary Locke opposes the breaching of the four lower Snake River dams
Substitute House Joint Memorial 4010 - opposes dam breaching
State of Washington 56th Legislature
1999 Regular Session - passed unanimously (copy attached)

The Clarkston Chamber of Commerce stands very strongly opposed to the breaching of the four lower Snake River dams! And as clearly listed above, every elected official, be it the Governor, Senators, House of Representatives, State of Washington district officials and the people elected to represent us in Washington, D.C. oppose the breaching of the dams. The magnitude of the ripple effects are beyond all imagination. Please, leave the dams in place.

Doug Renggli

Doug Renggli, President
Clarkston Chamber of Commerce

cc - of this letter will be mailed to the Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District; all members of the Federal Caucus, not only the Northwest Region, but in Washington, D.C. (all addressess are attached)

City of Clarkston
City Hall: (509) 758-5541 • Police: (509) 758-1684 • Fire: (509) 758-8681 • Fax: (509) 758-1670
830 Fifth Street • Clarkston, WA 99403

February 14, 2000

Federal Caucus Comment Record
c/o BPA-PL
707 W. Main Street, Suite 500
Spokane, WA 99201

RE: Federal Caucus "All-H Paper"

To whom it may concern;

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the proposed "all-H paper" regarding the conservation of Columbia Basin fish. Option 1 and 2 of the hydropower options seem to be appropriate, cost effective and make sense. However, Option 3, breaching or the removal of the lower Snake River dams is not appropriate, is not cost effective and does not make good sense. The risk of dam removal does not begin to compare to the perceived reward of saving fish.

Starting several decades ago, both the public and private sector invested heavily in our region's river and navigational system. The regional community also invested their careers, lives and families, using the river system as a basis of their culture. Breaching or removal of the dams would dramatically change their way of life and literally devastate our community and the Inland Northwest, as we know it.

As I view it, Option 3 can be narrowed to one question. Are fish more important than the millions of lives that will be significantly altered by removal of the dams?

By narrowing the question, the answer is very clear. Anadromous fish are important, but people are more important. The dams are in place; the decision was made several years ago. It's extremely difficult to "undo" a portion of civilization. It would be devastatingly disruptive to change a human culture. The choice seems disproportionate to the issue. It's my opinion that we (as a society) should do everything we possibly can (to protect the fish) without destroying a generation and a way of life. In my twenty-five years of public service, I'm proud of my record in protecting the environment and I am usually supportive, however, option 3 under the proposed hydropower options (removal of the dams) is radical for the perceived benefit.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to respond.

Very truly yours,

Mark A. Kammers
Mayor

TREE CITY USA.

May 10, 1999

The Honorable Gary Locke
Legislative Building
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Locke;

As you know on August 21, 1998, a delegation of county commissioners from counties that border the Snake and Columbia Rivers, met with you to share their concerns about the possible breaching of the four lower Snake River dams. At that time, you weren't quite sure of your position on this issue. Then, on February 11, 1999, during one of your visits to eastern Washington, you declared you couldn't imagine supporting the breaching of these dams in an effort to revive salmon and steelhead runs. We are hopeful your position on this has not changed.

Since that time, the Office of the Governor's Statewide Recovery Plan has been released in draft form, which addresses the "Four H's" : Habitat, Harvest, Hatcheries and Hydropower. The undersigned commissioners have reviewed this draft and are willing to do whatever is practical to protect the salmon in the State of Washington short of breaching these dams.

It is our opinion the issue of possible dam breaching is a Federal Government issue and should not be linked to the State of Washington's Salmon Recovery Plan. We would like to concentrate our efforts on the actual fish recovery options and not have the breaching issue take such a high priority. As we have stated previously, we believe we should be able to save our salmon runs and leave our dams and waterway systems intact, so as not to destroy the rural economical development of Eastern Washington.

As elected representatives of the Counties of Asotin, Garfield, Whitman, Columbia and Walla Walla, we periodically meet to discuss a variety of issues. These meetings are held in Pomeroy, Washington, and we would sincerely like to offer you an invitation to attend one of these meetings to further discuss this issue. This, of course, would be at your convenience.

We appreciate your support and thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

Asotin County Commissioners

Don Scheibe | James Fuller | Gordon U. Reed

Columbia County Commissioners

James Nelson | Richard "Dick" Jones | Charles G. Reeves

Garfield County Commissioners

Dean D. Burton | Virgil H. Klaveano | Steven R. Ledgerwood

Walla Walla County Commissioners

Pam Ray | David G. Carey | Charles "Chuck" Maiden

Whitman County Commissioners

Hollis Jamison | Nora Mae Keifer | Les Wigen

RESOLUTION NO. 98-26

A RESOLUTION ADDRESSING THE EFFECT ON THE SOUTHEAST WASHINGTON STATE ECONOMY IF THE BREACHING OF THE DAMS ON THE SNAKE RIVER AND/OR THE LOWERING OF THE POOLS BEHIND SAID DAMS IS ALLOWED TO OCCUR

WHEREAS, the Southeast Washington State economy is almost entirely dependent on agriculture and, therefore, getting agricultural products to market in an expeditious and economical manner is essential; and

WHEREAS, breaching the dams would have a devastating effect on the economies of river-dependent cities and ports; and

WHEREAS, breaching the dams on the Snake River would cause the destruction of the highway infrastructure in much of Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, and Whitman Counties and elsewhere because of the added semi-trailers to transport products to market; and

WHEREAS, the proposal to breach the dams in order to restore wild salmon runs is based on incomplete and inconclusive data; and

WHEREAS, the loss of reasonably-priced electrical power that is generated by the dams will hamper efforts to diversify the economy of the area; and

WHEREAS, restoring wild salmon runs will require long-term, comprehensive planning so that the environment, wildlife and commerce can exist compatibly.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the below-signed Asotin County Commissioners are against breaching of said dams and ask that the President of the United States and Congress reject any proposals that seek to breach said dams and/or significantly lower the pools behind said dams; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such decisions concerning our area, our livelihood, and our constituency should be our decision.

APPROVED this 3rd day of June, 1998

ATTEST:

Sandy Cunningham
Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Ray D. Lutes
Prosecuting Attorney

ASOTIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Don Scheibe, Chairman

Jim Fuller, Member

Gordon D. Reed, Member

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
9th DISTRICT
MARK G. SCHOESLER
REPUBLICAN WHIP

State of
Washington
House of
Representatives

RULES
AGRICULTURE & ECOLOGY
CAPITAL BUDGET
JOINT ADMINISTRATIVE
RULES REVIEW
VICE CHAIRMAN
FACILITIES

February 21, 2000

To Whom It May Concern:

As a state representative from Eastern Washington, it is important that I share my thoughts with you on removing the four lower dams on the Snake River. Breaching dams has many negative results including increased transportation costs, loss of a clean energy source, and devastation to farming communities.

I have spent much time looking at the science and studies regarding dam breaching. I agree that protecting salmon is very important, but is also extremely complex. I do not and will not support removing any dams. Many different causes have been linked with the decline of salmon populations, including over-fishing, temperature and habitat changes, and current high populations of salmon predators. We must look closely at these other factors that are influencing salmon populations and make changes in these areas.

Removing dams would mean increased transportation costs. There is no way our state can fulfill billions in backlogged transportation needs, in a post Initiative 695 era, and replace this service of clean and economical transportation with the rails and roads necessary.

The farmers of Washington would be devastated by dam removal. Farming land will be turned barren. Salmon recovery should not be a struggle against the livelihood of hard working men and women. Removing dams would only hurt rural communities and further tighten an already restricted state budget. Many believe that an energy shortage is not too distant in the future. Without the dams to provide electricity at that time, it could result in dramatically higher energy costs. Moreover, energy related jobs in the aluminum industry and workers at Potlatch would be severely impacted by dam removal.

Removing the dams in Eastern Washington would have the same effect as taking I-5 out in Seattle. One can only imagine the chaos, loss of revenue, and heavy burden placed on unfit transportation systems?

Sincerely,

Mark G. Schoesler

Mark G. Schoesler
Washington State Representative
9th District

MGS/jk

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RESIDENCE: 1588 E. ROSENOFF RD., RITZVILLE, WA 99169 • (509) 659-1774 • FAX: (509) 659-4545

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Sunday, February 14, 1999

Reprinted from the Lewiston Morning Tribune

We can save our salmon without hurting people

Reps. Mark Schoesler, R-Ritzville and Don Cox, R-Colfax

There is no doubt that protecting salmon in the Pacific Northwest is a critical need we face and one that will have a tremendous effect on the future of our region. Strong action is needed to restore dwindling salmon runs and native stocks in our rivers, streams and lakes. But the key is making sure that we take the most responsible, effective steps that will truly solve the problem. And heavy-handed interference by the federal government -- particularly the disastrous idea of breaching dams along the lower Snake River -- is the wrong way to go. It is absolutely imperative that the people of Washington, especially those in the river-dependent cities and farm communities of Eastern Washington, speak out with a strong voice so that the best interests of people will be protected, too.

That's why legislators, local elected officials and community leaders, along with what we hope will be a huge crowd of citizens from throughout this area will be part of a "Save the Dams" rally in the Tri-Cities on Feb. 18. At the urging of area legislators, the co-speakers of the state House of Representatives have agreed to suspend committee meetings that afternoon to allow us to take part in the rally. This unusual action helps demonstrate that the issue of keeping our dams intact is a matter of statewide importance that affects the lives of people and families everywhere in Washington.

The simple fact is, proposals to breach the dams in hopes of increasing the number of salmon rely on incomplete, inconclusive information and unproven theories. While there is no proof that breaching dams will help salmon, we know for sure that such an ill-considered decision would have a devastating effect upon the people, communities and economy of Washington.

It is important to remember that the dams were built to serve many essential purposes, including serving as a critical part of the transportation system that supports our economy. Barges use locks at the dams to move up and down the river. These barges are responsible for 4 million tons of commerce a year, including carrying 3 million tons of wheat. If the dams were lost it would take 700,000 more semi-trucks or 120,000 more railroad cars to move the freight now carried by barge. Without this ability to move agricultural and other products along the river, the state's economy would be dramatically weakened.

In addition, the dams provide needed flood control that protects agricultural lands, port facilities and the residents of cities and communities along the river. They also provide a reliable and affordable supply of electricity and vital sources of water for irrigation.

And yet, there is a very real danger that federal bureaucrats will ignore the concerns of the people and families who live here in a rush to tear down the dams -- even though there is no assurance that this approach will even help solve the salmon problem.

We must speak out loud and clear to protect the security and well-being of our communities. We intend to be a part of that critical effort

That's why the Legislature in 1998 adopted the first coordinated, comprehensive salmon enhancement plan. This plan put an emphasis on cooperation between state and local governments, with as much responsibility as possible left in the hands of elected officials and community leaders in the affected areas around the state.

We're already seeing results that tell us this approach should be continued and supported. Last year, the Legislature committed more than $105 million to restore and protect critical salmon habitat. Salmon recovery efforts include 22 projects in 16 counties. And just those projects already completed in 1998 opened up salmon spawning and rearing habitat along 180 miles of streams and rivers around the state.

These are efforts we know will help solve the problem -- unlike their responsible notion of breaching dams. Meanwhile, there are elements of the problem that must be addressed by the federal government. It is clear that overharvesting of salmon in the ocean and at the mouths of Northwest rivers is at the heart of dwindling salmon runs.

Rather than breaching our dams, the federal focus ought to be on solving the salmon fishing conflicts between the United States and Canada, as well as other countries. Failure to reach agreements to reduce the number of salmon that are caught before they ever make it to Washington waters will guarantee that nothing else we do will work.

These are all things the federal government must hear from the people of Washington. We must demand that federal officials not only listen to us, but that they pay attention, that they act responsibly.

This is the purpose of the Save Our Dams rally. It may be one of our best opportunities to fight for the future of our region by demanding that we protect salmon without hurting people.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
9th DISTRICT
DON COX

State of
Washington
House of
Representatives

EDUCATION
FINANCE
JUDICIARY

February 15, 2000

To Whom It May Concern:

The topic of breaching the Snake River is sure to garner more and more attention as we progress toward a final decision by Congress. I do not take lightly the need for salmon recovery efforts in our great state of Washington. Nor do I underestimate the impact the loss of this species will have on our economy. Strong action is needed to ensure protection of dwindling salmon runs and native stocks in our rivers, streams and lakes.

However, I do take issue with the federal government's plan to breach four dams on the Snake River as a way to revive salmon and steelhead runs. As a native eastern Washingtonian, I believe this is a shortsighted attempt to placate special interest groups and their concerns over the salmon. As a state legislator, I know this invasive federal government action will devastate our economy, wreak havoc on freight mobility, and have far-reaching consequences beyond Washington state's borders. Breaching the Snake will not solve our salmon problems. I have yet to see evidence indicating that it will.

The simple fact is, proposals to breach the dams in hopes of increasing the number of salmon rely on incomplete, inconclusive information and unproven theories. While there is no proof that breaching dams will help salmon, we know for sure that such an ill-considered decision would have a devastating effect upon the people, communities and economy of Washington.

It is important to remember that the dams were built to serve many essential purposes, including serving as a critical part of the transportation system that supports our economy. Breaching these four dams would stifle economic development, decrease the region's power supply, halt barge transportation of agricultural commodities and threaten 36,000 acres of irrigated farmland.

Barges use locks at the dams to move up and down the river. These barges are responsible for 4 million tons of commerce a year, including carrying 3 million tons of wheat. If the dams were lost it would take 700,000 more semi-trucks or 120,000 more railroad cars to move the freight now carried by barge. Without this ability to move agricultural and other products along the river, the state's economy would be dramatically weakened.

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Dams also provide much-needed flood control for agricultural lands, port facilities and the residents of cities and communities along the Snake River. They provide a reliable and affordable source of power.

Finally, we must not overlook the impact the loss of these dams would have on other states. Washington is not the only state that would be impacted by dam breaching: There are 42 other states — nearly every state in the contiguous U.S. — that rely on the Snake River dams for their agricultural and economic well-being. The ripple effects of this proposal could potentially undermine the economies of many, many other communities besides those in eastern Washington. This could have national implications of substantial magnitude.

In short, I believe we must urge Congress to find other means of solving our salmon problems, beginning with the fishing conflicts between the U.S., Canada and other countries. Saving our state's salmon is a multi-faceted issue that merits a multi-dimensional response. The current proposal is a stab in the dark at the existing problem.

Federal officials must come to understand that more is at stake than just fish runs with the breaching of the Snake. Our future depends on it.

Sincerely,

Don Cox

DON COX
State Representative
9th Legislative District

WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE

February 24, 2000

Department of the Army
Walla Walla District Corps of Engineers
Attn: Lower Snake River Study
201 Third Avenue
Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

To Corps of Engineers:

We are vehemently opposed to the proposal of breaching the four dams on the Snake River. The potential detrimental effects that breaching would have encompass many aspects of life in our region.

We are not convinced that science shows breaching would help recover salmon.

In addition to the adverse effects the removal of the dams would have upon hydro electric power and recreational opportunities, the devastation that it would cause in the barge industry on the Snake and Columbia Rivers would negatively impact all transportation facilities. The agricultural producers in our region are dependent on the barge system to get our products to market, which is fundamental to our livelihood. Most importantly, it is a safe, reliable, and cost effective transportation system.

Please register our vehement opposition to the dam removal proposal.

Sincerely,

Valoria Loveland
State Senator
16th Legislative District

Bill Grant
State Representative
16th Legislative District

Dave Mastin
State Representative
16th Legislative District

GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.
5TH DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE
INTERIOR
NATIONAL SECURITY

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE
SUBCOMMITTEE:
SPACE AND AERONAUTICS

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george.nethercutt@mail.house.gov

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Statement of Representative George R. Nethercutt, Jr.
Washington - 5th District

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns about the reports issued by the Federal Caucus and by the Corps of Engineers and the future of the four lower Snake River dams. I commend the Federal agencies for taking public input in this process and would encourage you to make any accommodations necessary to make sure every voice is heard on this important issue to the region, especially the voices of those who reside here. I am pleased to see the number of hearings scheduled around the Pacific Northwest for comment.

No one, including me, wants to see wild salmon go extinct - - we all are concerned about recovery of these runs. Nevertheless, I believe that protecting these runs must not only be based on the best available science, but must take into consideration *all* impacts on salmon and the multiple uses of this river system. We cannot destroy our river transportation, agriculture and recreational industries that have been created over the last 40 years as we address solutions to fish problems. **I do not believe that dam removal is the solution, and I will not support a proposal that restores salmon on the backs of those who depend on the system.** We need to find a balanced approach, and while this process is not perfect, the All H paper is a step in the right direction.

As we move toward a recommendation by the Army Corps of Engineers sometime this year, I would implore the Corps to thoroughly explore the impacts that its recommendation will have on the people who depend on this system and to work with the members who represent this area and the constituents served to come up with a viable solution to restoring salmon.

Dam removal is not the answer. I look forward to working with my colleagues in Congress to make sure that a balanced solution to restoring salmon occurs.

THIS STATIONERY PRINTED ON PAPER MADE OF RECYCLED FIBERS

Testimony of Representative George R. Nethercutt, Jr.

The House Committee on Resources Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans and Subcommittee on Water and Power

May 27, 1999
Hearing on
H.Con Res. 63
1334 Rayburn House Office Building

Thank you Chairman Saxton and Chairman Doolittle for this opportunity to testify today in support of Congressman Doc Hastings's resolution, H. Con Res. 63, opposing dam removal on the Columbia and Snake Rivers. I appreciate your holding a hearing on this issue of great importance to the Pacific Northwest region and to the country as a whole.

We are here today to discuss the future of four hydroelectric facilities on the lower Snake River in the 5th Congressional district of Washington State. Since the first of the four dams, the Ice Harbor facility, was finished in 1962, these dams have become a part of the Pacific Northwest's larger hydroelectric system. This system was established to ensure that the lights were turned on at the homes, farms and factories around the Pacific Northwest at a reasonable cost. As part of the larger Federal Columbia River Power System, these four facilities have provided 5% of the total electricity to the region and 12% of the total power sold by the Bonneville Power Administration. Breaching or removing these facilities could cost the region anywhere from $150 - $360 million a year in power costs alone.

Besides the regional power costs, the Army Corps of Engineers, in a recent internal memo between four federal agencies discussing the costs of fish and wildlife mitigation efforts, estimated that the costs incurred to breach the earthen portion of these four facilities will cost the federal taxpayer $900 million - that is an increase of an earlier estimate of between $500 million and $800 million. Mr. Chairman, this means that every federal taxpayer, not just the taxpayers of the Pacific Northwest, will be contributing to this effort. This is not withstanding the fact that there is also a remaining debt owed to the U.S. Treasury for dam construction of more than $850 million and replacing the river-transportation with land-based systems could cost more than $400 million. This does not include the loss of jobs in the private sector and decreased competitiveness of commodities due to higher freight costs. These costs cannot be ignored.

Mr. Chairman - no one wants to see wild salmon go extinct - - we all are concerned about recovery of these runs. Nevertheless, I believe that protecting these runs must not only be based on the best available science, but take into consideration all impacts on salmon and the multiple uses of this river system. The Army Corps of Engineers is scheduled to release its recommendation on the fate of these four facilities this fall. As you may know, the National Marine Fisheries Service recently released its addendum to the Army Corps of Engineers recommendation. The National Marine Fisheries Service analysis states that the chance of recovery of these endangered runs has a success rate of 64 percent if the lower four Snake River dams are removed compared with a 53 percent survival rate if efforts such as transporting smolts around the dams continue. I believe that the region, working with the Army Corps of Engineers, can continue to make improvements to the current system and continue to

improve the survival success rate. Now, let me address a criticism that we have heard about the amount of federal taxpayer funds the U.S. Treasury provides to maintain these four facilities and the salmon mitigation efforts of the Army Corps of Engineers.

I agree that a large amount of funds have been spent on salmon restoration efforts, and I share the concerns of many who state that we must spend these funds wisely. But Mr. Chairman, on the four lower Snake River facilities, the Northwest Ratepayers are paying 80% of the fish and wildlife mitigation efforts. By facility, on the lower dam - Ice Harbor, the ratepayers contribute 78.6% ; Lower Monumental -- the ratepayers contribute 94.0%; Little Goose -- the ratepayers contribute 93.3% and Lower Granite -- the ratepayers contribute 98.4% of the fish and wildlife mitigation costs. These are numbers provided by the Army Corps of Engineers. Do not be confused by the rhetoric of some who muddle the issue by stating that these four facilities are subsidized by the federal government. Let me repeat what I said earlier, the region is paying 80% of the fish and wildlife mitigation efforts on these four facilities.

Mr. Chairman, there is no "silver bullet" that will solve the problem and restore wild salmon runs in the Columbia and Snake Rivers. However, there are steps that can be taken to achieve restoration. For example, the National Marine Fisheries Service is just beginning to see the returns of its "PIT" or Passive Integrated Transponder tag studies. In 1994 the National Marine Fisheries Service began researching salmon survival though the use of PIT tags. These tags are implanted in juvenile salmon and are capable of monitoring the fish as they move through the hydroelectric system. The detectors at the dams tell National Marine Fisheries Service as a juvenile moves through the dam and will also detect the adult salmon when they return to spawn. However, NMFS only has two years of data on PIT tag survival and believes that additional years of research will help them quantify the survival rate. Based on this knowledge, it is hard to justify that the current science is conclusive enough to warrant breaching of these four facilities.

Finally Mr. Chairman, I'd like to discuss the impact of dam removal on the agricultural community not only in the region, but nationwide. Forty-three percent of the United States wheat exports are transported through the Snake and Columbia Rivers. In 1997 thirteen million tons of wheat moved through the system. This is the largest wheat handling system in the country and the costs that will be incurred to change the system will be felt not only by the region's wheat farmer, but certainly by those that purchase wheat products. It's estimated that it would take an additional 120,000 rail cars annually or more than 700,000 semi trucks to carry wheat and other cargo that would otherwise be moved through the river system. We must look at the environmental consequences of additional trucks on the road and the cost of maintaining the railroads and highways.

The water that is used from the pools behind these facilities irrigates some of the most productive farmland in the country. There are 7.3 million acres of irrigated farmlands in the region and these facilities provide water for about one-half of this land. These impacts will be felt across the country, not just in the Pacific Northwest.

Chairman Saxton and Chairman Doolittle, I thank you again for the opportunity to testify on the impacts breaching these facilities would have on the Pacific Northwest and the U.S. Treasury. The United States Congress will have a role in making any decision on breaching of federal hydroelectric facilities on this river system or any other, and I appreciate the time you are taking to learn about this issue. All impacts must be studied before Congress authorizes dam removal on any river system. I urge the Subcommittees to encourage the National Marine Fisheries Service to thoroughly evaluate the impacts of not only hydro, but habitat, harvest and hatcheries. Again, thank you Chairman Saxton and Chairman Doolittle. I look forward to working with you on

this issue of great importance and hope that H. Con. Res. 63 will be reported favorably.

Slade Gorton
UNITED STATES SENATOR FOR WASHINGTON

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 2, 2000

CONTACT: Cynthia Bergman
202/224-3441

Gorton Presses NMFS to Hold More Public Hearings, Extend Public Comment Period on 4(d) Rules

Washington, D.C. – In light of a recent protest and concerns raised at a public hearing in Yakima, **Senator Slade Gorton (R-WA)** today asked the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), to allow citizens, especially those in eastern Washington, to have more time to share concerns and have their questions on 4(d) rules answered.

Two weeks ago, NMFS began holding a series of public hearings on three proposed rules under section 4(d) of the Endangered Species Act to enforce the protection of threatened salmon and steelhead and to exempt certain tribal salmon resource management plans.

In his letter, Gorton stated, "Specifically, I'm concerned that of the fifteen public hearings you scheduled, all five of the Washington hearings were set within just a seven day period, and only one hearing was set in eastern Washington."

Gorton went on to request that hearings be set-up in Winthrop, Moses Lake, Tri-Cities, Walla Walla, and Longview as soon as possible.

"These regulations would have a significant impact on citizens in urban as well as rural areas throughout the state," Gorton also stated.

In Yakima, over 400 citizens showed up to express their concerns and ask questions. Approximately 250 others attended the hearing in Anacortes yesterday also wanting further clarification.

Next month, the comment period for the 4(d) rules will close which Gorton believes to be too short of a time period to collect an adequate amount of comment and urged NMFS to keep the comment period open for an additional four months.

Gorton believes that in order to make sound salmon recovery policy, all communities - rural, urban, suburban and agricultural - need to work together and that those people of the Northwest, who will be affected the most, deserve a strong voice in how salmon runs are recovered.

A copy of the letter.

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Slade Gorton

UNITED STATES SENATOR FOR WASHINGTON

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 27, 1999

Contact: Cynthia Bergman
202.224.3401

Gorton: Life Without Eastern Washington Dams

Army Corps Studies: Northwest Would Suffer Economic Impacts of $299 to $342 Million a Year in Perpetuity

Washington, D.C. – Today U.S. Senator Slade Gorton (R-WA) shared some compelling statistics recently released by the Army Corps of Engineers that further prove that removing dams in eastern Washington would be 'an unmitigated disaster and an economic nightmare.'

The Corps studies quantified the economic impact of the removal of the four Snake River dams as it relates to the region's water supply, navigation, and power production.

"To an outsider, one would think the Administration has the momentum. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt has been on a roll – tearing down dams from the California coast to Maine in the Northeast," said Gorton. "But most of us in the region believe we have the facts and support on our side to defeat those who wish to remove the Snake River dams and thereby destroy a central piece of the Northwest economy and a way of life for millions of Northwesterners."

In his Senate floor speech, Gorton expressed surprise at the lack of media attention paid to the release of these three studies, but used the Corps statistics to paint a grim picture of an eastern Washington should we breach the four Snake River Dams:

"We would lose four dams that produce hydro-power, which emits no pollutants into the air, for a thermal based power source that would jeopardize the clean air unique to the Northwest and enjoyed by countless residents and visitors to our state.

"The 37,000 acres of irrigated farmland in Franklin and Walla Walla counties and the hundreds of employees that help supply food to more than a million people would disappear.

"The increased truck traffic on our roads to haul wheat and barley to coastal ports will have an adverse effect on air quality and impose an additional financial burden on the family farm, which for many would be too much to bear and force them to give up their land.

"So what do we get by removing the four Snake River dams? Shattered lives, displaced families and communities who will have seen their livelihoods destroyed, generations of family farmers penniless, industries forced to drive up consumer costs, air pollution, a desert that once bloomed with agriculture products goes dry, a far less competitive Northwest economy and a Northwest scrambling to repay a BPA treasury debt with less revenue, and scrambling to buy or build higher cost polluting sources of power," concluded Gorton.

The text of Gorton's floor speech and statistics from the Corps studies follow.

###

Columbia-Snake River Hydro System Update From United States Senator Slade Gorton

June 22, 1999

Dear friend:

You have probably heard of my recent efforts to preserve and protect the Columbia-Snake River Hydro System. I thought you would appreciate an explanation of my plan to do this.

Last year, we reached an impasse with the Clinton/Gore Administration over Northwest dams.

My position - that no dams will be removed or breached unless and until the region supports it and Congress authorizes it - remains unchanged. Unfortunately for the region, the Clinton/Gore Administration's position is also unchanged: they will not take dam removal "off-the-table."

So this year, I am changing my approach, realizing that we are at a stalemate as long as we have a Clinton/Gore Administration.

The bottom line is money. If the Clinton/Gore Administration wants to remove dams, they will need money to do so. I will use my position as Chairman of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee to make sure those funds are unavailable.

Here is exactly how I am using the appropriations process to preserve "the great waterway."

Just days ago, the Senate passed [by a vote of 97-2] the following three measures I authored:

1. I offered legislation to prevent BPA from creating a dam removal slush fund. Northwest ratepayers should not be asked to pay higher utility bills to support the Clinton/Gore Administration's efforts to tear down dams.

2. I secured $70 million in Columbia River fish mitigation funds with the caveat that not one dollar of that money is spent for drawdown studies at John Day or McNary dams. Of course, everything we can do to make the dams more "fish-friendly" will solidify our position that the dams should remain in place.

3. Lastly, I included a measure to extend the life and expand the scope of the Independent Scientific Review Panel, the objective scientific panel that acts as a counterbalance to the extreme environmentalists' organizations.

Since last year, we have observed several positive developments in the area of preserving and protecting the Columbia Snake River Hydro System. One, local community support for the dams is at an all-time high, as evidenced by the SAVE OUR DAMS rally in the Tri-Cities. Two, Governor Locke and Senator Murray announced they were opposed to removing some dams. And, three, recently, an environmental group, the World Wildlife Fund released a study linking global warming to salmon declines, thus blowing holes in the argument that dam removal is the answer to restoring salmon runs.

While these are small steps towards victory, we still have work to do to ensure that the dams will remain a part of our Northwest economy.

Rest assured, while there will be heated debate over the Columbia-Snake River System until the next Presidential election, dams won't come down on my watch. I remain adamantly opposed to dam removal and will continue working through more effective means, to protect the livelihood of those in eastern Washington.

Sincerely,
SLADE GORTON
United States Senator

"I will work hard to preserve and protect our hydroelectric system so that we retain the benefits of irrigation, navigation, transportation, recreation, flood control and environmentally-friendly, inexpensive power production. Put simply...the Columbia-Snake River dams should stay put. This is a critical element in protecting the Northwest way of life." - Slade Gorton

Army Corps of Engineers Economic Studies

On July 15, 1999 the Army Corps of Engineers released three preliminary economic studies that will be included in the overall Lower Snake River Juvenile Fish Migration Feasibility Study to be completed later this year. The Corps released studies quantifying the economic impact of breaching the four Snake River dams as it relates to the region's water supply, navigation, and power production. The following is a summary:

POWER PRODUCTION IMPACTS

- The economic effect of breaching on the region's power supply would be $251 million to $291 million a year.
- Residential bills for Northwest families and senior citizens would increase $1.50 to $5.30 per month.
- Industrial power users, which rely on cheap power to provide thousands of jobs can see a monthly increase ranging from $387 to $1,326. Aluminum companies would see an increase in their monthly bills ranging from $222,000 to $758,000.
- If the Snake River dams are breached, 1,231 megawatts will be lost annually. (It takes 1,000 megawatts to serve Seattle).

WATER SUPPLY IMPACTS

- The Corps report assumes that there is no economically feasible way to continue to provide irrigation to the 37,000 acres of farmland served by the four Snake River dams.
- The loss of irrigated farmland would cost $9.2 million annually.
- Retrofitting municipal and industrial pump stations would be $.8 to $3.8 million a year.
- The cost to retrofit privately-owned wells would be $3.9 million annually.
- The Corps estimated the economic effect on dam breaching on farmland value would amount to more than $134 million. The Corps also considered ways to alter the irrigation system in order to continue to irrigate the 37,000 acres – to accomplish this alternative, we would have to spend more than $291 million – more than the value of the land.

TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS

- The transportation costs resulting from breaching the four Snake River dams would rise to $1.23 per bushel from .98 cents per bushel – a 26 percent increase.

- The annual increase in transportation costs to the region would be $40 million for all commodities.

- Breaching the four dams would remove 3.8 million tons of grain from the Snake River navigation system. Of this 3.8 million, 1.1 million would move to rail transportation and 2.7 million tons would move to truck transportation.

- According to the report, barge transportation of commodities on the Snake River limits the cost of rail transportation and truck transportation. Removing competition among these transportation could drive up costs. According to the report, barge transportation has saved, on average, $5.95 in per ton when compared with other transportation alternatives. "Disturbing this competition would be one of the most important regional consequences of permanent drawdown."

- According to the Washington State Legislative Transportation Committee, additional costs resulting from road and highway damage range from $56 million to $100.7 million.

- The navigation system of the Columbia allows enough barge transportation that if it were destroyed, more than 700,000 18-wheelers a year would be added to our already congested state roads and highways to replace the lost hauling capacity. (Source: Pacific Northwest Waterways Association)

Senator Slade Gorton: *Water Supply, Irrigation, and Power Production Without the Snake River Dams*

July 27, 1999

Senators from the Northwest are sometimes frustrated in trying to get our message across, to deliver or reflect the views of our constituencies 3,000 miles away, and to let our Senate colleagues from around this country understand what it's like to live in the Northwest.

The Northwest is known for its clean air and water, high quality of life, picturesque landscapes, the beauty and majesty of the Cascade and Olympic Mountains, the rolling hills of the Palouse, lush wooded forests, sparkling lakes, a playground for backpackers, hikers and recreational enthusiasts, home of America's success story – Microsoft, the apple capital of the world, breadbasket to the nation, a vibrant salmon fishery and home of the most wonderful people who possess a zest for life and fierce instinct to preserve and protect these truly unique qualities of my great state of Washington and of Oregon, Idaho and Montana as well.

Mr. President, I share the passion of my constituents. I consider it an honor to represent a state as great and diverse as mine. But what is often overlooked is the fact that our hydroelectric power system is a central part of what keeps our Pacific Northwest a clean, healthy, and affordable place to live, work, play, and raise a family.

I've come to this floor many times to explain what makes the Northwest tick to my colleagues and to others unfamiliar with the region. And I've been frustrated or puzzled by the reaction I get when I reflect the views of my state, and in particular, my eastern Washington communities.

We have been waging a battle with this Administration, radical environmental organizations, and other dam removal advocates over the issue of removing Columbia-Snake River dams.

Advocates of dismantling our Columbia River hydro system place the choice in stark terms of dams or salmon. That choice, presented in either or terms is false. The truth is that by applying adaptive management to our hydro system, we can and will preserve endangered salmon runs and our valuable hydro system.

I reject the false choice of salmon vs. the Columbia hydro system. I believe passionately that we can and will restore a vibrant salmon fishery to the Columbia and that we can do so within the confines of the hydro system.

To an outsider, one would think the Administration has the momentum. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt has been on a roll – tearing down dams from the California coast to Maine in the Northeast.

But most of us in the region believe we have the facts and support on our side to defeat those who wish to remove the Snake River dams and thereby destroy a central piece of the Northwest

economy and a way of life for millions of Northwesterners.

I've asked myself --What do we have to do?

We can have thousands rally to 'Save Our Dams' -- as we did in eastern Washington and Oregon communities earlier this year.

We can have our local, state, and federal officials unite in their opposition to dam removal, and we've added Governor Gary Locke and Senator Patty Murray to the ranks of those opposed to removing our eastern Washington dams.

And we can have scientists, federal agencies, and even environmental groups point to global warming as a major cause for salmon decline.

We can have the National Marine Fisheries Service scientists tell us, in a report released April 14th, that the chance of recovery for a few distinct salmon runs is only 64 percent if all four lower Snake River dams are removed, as against 53 percent by continuing to transport smolts around the dams – a difference that is barely statistically significant.

And we can have recent media reports tell us that the 'Outlook is bright for salmon runs this year.' In this July 12th Seattle Times article, scientists and biologists are predicting a potential rebound in salmon stocks in the Pacific Northwest. And the reasons they cite are: improved ocean conditions, better freshwater conditions, and cutbacks in fishing.

But still we hear the dam removal clamor from national environmental groups and bureaucrats in the Clinton-Gore Administration. And we have an energized Interior Secretary who in his words has been 'out on the landscape over the past few months carrying around a sledgehammer' giving speeches saying 'dams do, in fact, outlive their function' and 'despite the history and the current differences over dams, Babbitt said he believes change is inevitable.' (Trout Unlimited Speech, CQ, July 17, 1999)

Well, here I am again, to share some compelling statistics recently released by the Army Corps of Engineers that further prove that removing dams in eastern Washington would be an unmitigated disaster and an economic nightmare.
Last Thursday, the Corps released three preliminary economic studies that will be included in an overall Lower Snake River Juvenile Fish Migration Feasibility Study set for completion later this year.

The Corps studies quantified the economic impact of the removal of the four Snake River dams as it relates to the region's water supply, navigation, and power production.

I simply can't overstate the importance of these studies and what they mean for the future of the Pacific Northwest, its economy and the livelihood of our families and communities.

That's why I was surprised when there was little attention paid to the release of these 3 studies. I

can remember that as recently as March of this year when the Corps was preparing to release a study on recreation benefits involving the four lower Snake River dams, environmental groups including the Sierra Club, NW Sportfishing Industry Association, Trout Unlimited, and Save Our Wild Salmon were tremendously successfully in getting the media's attention and substantial coverage of their claims that removing the four Snake River dams would bring a $300 million annual recreational windfall to the region.

The environmental groups leaked the $300 million number knowing that the study was incomplete...but the false information made big news. Then, the report was completed and the truth was told. In fact the real number, according to the Corp report is: "Under the natural river drawdown alternative, the value of recreation and tourism then increases to $129 million annually, which represents and increase of about $67 million per year."

Why did THIS report, with complete analysis receive so little attention?

Now, I'm surprised at the lack of attention, by comparison, given to the results of the latest 3 studies, which standing alone, send such a clear signal to this Administration, radical environmental groups, and dam removal advocates everywhere that they should abandon their cause.

Let me share these numbers with you:

First, starting with power production.

The economic effect of breaching on the region's power supply would be $251 million to $291 million a year.

Residential bills for Northwest families and senior citizens would increase $1.50 to $5.30 per month.

But the region's industrial power users, which rely on cheap power to provide thousands of jobs can see a monthly increase ranging from $387 to $1,326. Our aluminum companies would see an increase in their monthly bills ranging from $222,000 to $758,000.

If the Snake River dams are breached, how would we replace the 1,231 megawatts the dams produce annually? (Keep in mind it takes 1,000 megawatts to serve Seattle). The answer is – there is no cheap alternative. We can increase power production at thermal power plants or build new gas fired combined-combustion turbine plants.

Finally, these power estimates wouldn't be complete without reminding my colleagues that last month the Administration sought to collect at least $1 billion beyond normal power costs to create a 'slush fund' to fund the removal of the four Snake River dams. I was delighted to prohibit the Bonneville Power Administration from raising rates on Northwest power customers for a project they don't even want.

The second study address water supply.

The Corps report assumes that there is no economically feasible way to continue to provide irrigation to the 37,000 acres of farmland served by the four Snake River dams. The report assumes 37,000 acres of farmland will be taken out of production as a result of breaching those dams.

What does this loss of water supply mean for eastern Washington?

- The loss of irrigated farmland would cost $9.2 million annually.
- The cost to retrofit municipal and industrial pump stations would be $.8 to $3.8 million a year.
- The cost to retrofit privately-owned wells would be $3.9 million annually.

In light of these sobering statistics, what options would be left for irrigators? The Corps estimated the economic effect on dam breaching on farmland value would amount to more than $134 million. The Corps also considered ways to alter the irrigation system in order to continue to irrigate the 37,000 acres – to accomplish this alternative, we would have to spend more than $291 million – more than the value of the land. Our farmers and agricultural communities are struggling enough as it is, and removing their ability to even water their crops puts them beyond despair. Therefore, the Corps assumes this irrigated farmland will disappear.

Lastly, let's look at transportation.

The Corps studied transportation impacts of breaching the four Snake River dams.

- The transportation costs resulting from breaching the four Snake River dams would rise to $1.23 per bushel from .98 cents per bushel – a 26 percent increase.

- The annual increase in transportation costs to the region would be $40 million for all commodities.

- Breaching the four dams would remove 3.8 million tons of grain from the Snake River navigation system. Of this 3.8 million, 1.1 million would move to rail transportation and 2.7 million tons would move to truck transportation.

- According to the report, barge transportation of commodities on the Snake River limits the cost of rail transportation and truck transportation. Removing competition among these transportation could drive up costs. According to the report, barge transportation has saved, on average, $5.95 in per ton when compared with other transportation alternatives. "Disturbing this competition would be one of the most important regional consequences of permanent drawdown."

- According to the Washington State Legislative Transportation Committee, additional costs resulting from road and highway damage range from $56 million to $100.7 million.

- Further, it is important to note that the navigation system of the Columbia allows enough barge transportation that if it were destroyed, more than 700,000 18-wheelers a year would be added to our already congested state roads and highways to replace the lost hauling capacity. (Source: Pacific Northwest Waterways Association)

I want to put all this together and construct a picture for you and what this scenario would mean in eastern Washington.

In exchange for breaching or removing the four Snake River dams, here's what the citizens of the Pacific Northwest could get:

We would lose four dams that produce hydro-power, which emits no pollutants into the air, for a thermal based power source that would jeopardize the clean air unique to the Northwest and enjoyed by countless residents and visitors to our state.

The 37,000 acres of irrigated farmland in Franklin and Walla Walla counties and the hundreds of employees that help supply food to more than a million people would disappear.

There is a likelihood that there would be a temporary loss of water for well users after dam breaching due to the inability to alter well depths until the actual removal of dams.

The increased truck traffic on our roads to haul wheat and barley to coastal ports will have an adverse effect on air quality and impose an additional financial burden on the family farm, which for many would be too much to bear and force them to give up their land.

So what do we get by removing the four Snake River dams? Shattered lives, displaced families and communities who will have seen their livelihoods destroyed, generations of family farmers penniless, industries forced to drive up consumer costs, air pollution, a desert that once bloomed with agriculture products goes dry, a far less competitive Northwest economy and a Northwest scrambling to repay a BPA treasury debt with less revenue, and scrambling to buy or build higher cost polluting sources of power.

So according to these three latest studies, the bottom line is that if we breach the four dams to increase our chances of bringing a select number of salmon runs back by only 11%, the Northwest will suffer economic impacts of $299 to $342 million a year in perpetuity. This staggering figure doesn't even include the estimated $1 billion it would take to actually remove the dams.

If we remove the Snake River dams, over the next 24 years we only improve our chances of recovering spring and summer chinook to the survival goals set by NMFS by 11 to 30 percent over the current system of barging. Over 24 years, NMFS would like to reach the survival standard of returning 150 to 300 spring and summer chinook to the Snake River tributaries each year.

But there is something else that these numbers, studies and data can't quantify:

What many outside the region don't understand is that the four dams on the Lower Snake River are part of our life, heritage, and culture.

I repeat the call I issued last month to the Administration and dam removal advocates: abandon your cause and work with the region on cost-effective salmon recovery measures that can restore salmon runs and preserve our Northwest way of life.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Jan. 19, 1999

Governor proposes water-law changes to save salmon

OLYMPIA — Gov. Gary Locke today released the first complete draft of the statewide salmon recovery strategy, and called on legislators to begin implementing the strategy by adopting comprehensive legislation to update Washington's antiquated water laws.

At a news conference today in Olympia, Locke released the first complete draft of a salmon strategy developed by his Joint Natural Resources Cabinet over the past year.

The final strategy will be submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service this summer for approval. However, Locke said he isn't waiting for federal approval to begin efforts to recover salmon runs.

"We know the key to saving salmon and protecting our long-term economic vitality is to solve the water gridlock in this state," Locke said. "Salmon cannot survive in streams that are too polluted, too warm or too shallow — and our communities cannot survive unless we find new sources of water to meet their long-term needs."

Locke's proposed legislation, entitled *Water for People and Fish* , would make conserving and re-using water a top priority throughout Washington. It also would step up enforcement of water laws and allow greater flexibility in managing water use for current and future needs.

"This legislation focuses on fish, but it's also about the people who are living and working and doing business here in the state of Washington," Locke said. "Salmon and humans both need a plentiful supply of clean, cool water to survive. These steps to protect salmon are necessary to secure the preservation of our state's natural resources."

Key provisions of the legislation include:

- Improving agriculture irrigation systems to conserve water.
- Creating efficiency standards for water use.
- Launching projects to re-use treated water where drinking-quality water is not needed.
- Providing funding to purchase privately held water rights and place them in "water trusts" to help restore stream flows.
- Authorizing private entities to hold trust water rights, and thus augment the statewide salmon recovery efforts.
- Establishing a system to account for groundwater withdrawals by new wells.
- Allowing the Department of Ecology to process changes to water rights ahead of requests for new water rights, thus making it easier to free up water for salmon recovery, economic development or other uses.
- Hiring more water-enforcement personnel and raising penalties from a maximum of $100 to a maximum of $25,000.

The legislation is scheduled for hearings next week in the Senate Environmental Quality and Water Resources Committee. The House Agriculture and Ecology Committee also is scheduling hearings.

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Contact: Sandi Snell, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, 360-902-2229

H-2233.1

SUBSTITUTE HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4010

State of Washington **56th Legislature** **1999 Regular Session**

By House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology (originally sponsored by Representatives G. Chandler, Grant, Mastin, Linville, Clements, Lisk, Delvin, B. Chandler, Cox, Schoesler, Sump, Mitchell, Huff, McDonald, Mulliken, McMorris, Kessler, Buck, Reardon, Hatfield, Radcliff, D. Sommers, Edwards, Thomas, Ogden, Bush, Hankins, Skinner, Koster and Dunn)

Read first time 03/02/1999.

1 TO THE HONORABLE WILLIAM J. CLINTON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED
2 STATES, AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
3 OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
4 THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:
5 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
6 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
7 represent and petition as follows:
8 WHEREAS, The federally owned or licensed dams on the Snake and
9 Columbia rivers in this state provide the fundamental building blocks
10 that support the northwest way of life; and
11 WHEREAS, The dams provide the electrical power that fuels one of
12 the greatest economies in the nation and do so without contributing the
13 air pollution faced by expanding economies elsewhere; and
14 WHEREAS, The dams provide their electrical power at a cost that
15 attracts the type of high-paying industrial jobs that support families
16 and communities; and
17 WHEREAS, The dams provide their electrical power at a cost that is
18 affordable by all of its citizens, a situation enjoyed almost nowhere
19 else; and
20 WHEREAS, The dams provide a river route to eastern Washington for
21 ships and barges and for allowing commodities and goods from the

eastern part of the state, as well as potato products from southern Idaho, bentonite from Wyoming, talc from Montana, grain from the Dakotas, and lumber from Canada to compete in the world economy; and

WHEREAS, The river system is the nation's largest gateway for wheat exports and the second largest grain corridor in the world and its thirty-six deep and shallow draft ports serve commodities and products from more than forty states; and

WHEREAS, By allowing these commodities and goods to move on the river system, the dams relieve the state's highway system of the incredibly expensive job of accommodating the truck and other traffic needed to support that commerce; and

WHEREAS, Some have nonetheless asked that dams on the system be breached to allow a more natural operation of the river to accommodate fish runs; and

WHEREAS, In 1995, the United States Army Corps of Engineers examined a wide range of options for operating the Columbia and Snake River basin to enhance anadromous fish runs and compared the costs and benefits of thirteen of these options; and

WHEREAS, One of the options examined was a "natural river" option for the Snake River in which the water levels at the four lower Snake River dams would be lowered to nearly river bed levels year-round and the water in the John Day Dam on the Columbia River would be lowered to the dam's minimum dam pool; and

WHEREAS, Although the Corps' 1995 study was for only one part of the system, the lower Snake River dams, its findings provide a warning that applies to all dams in the system; and

WHEREAS, The Corps found benefits to fish runs for the "natural river" option that merely approximate juvenile fish survival under other options that involve fish transport rather than breaching dams, and it also found the costs of such a dam-breaching option to be staggering; and

WHEREAS, The Corps found the costs of this Snake River option in electrical power alone to be in the range of one hundred thirty-two to one hundred sixty-seven million dollars annually; and

WHEREAS, The Corps found the cost to shallow draft transportation of thirty million to over thirty-seven million dollars annually; an increase in the cost of pumping municipal and industrial water of approximately four and one-half million dollars annually and a like increase in the cost of pumping irrigation water; and an annualized

cost of forty-five million dollars just to implement the changes at the Snake River dams and the John Day Dam that would be necessary for such a "natural operation" of the river; and

WHEREAS, A follow-up to the Corps' study being conducted by a federally convened drawdown regional economic work group may find that the Corps' cost estimates are too low, with more recent estimates of the power costs in the two hundred million dollars per year range and increased costs to irrigators at ten million dollars per year; and

WHEREAS, These costs would be borne by the people of Washington in very real ways, with thousands of jobs lost in this state alone and dramatic increases in power and transportation costs; and

WHEREAS, Any such breach-the-dams option would even damage the region's ability to repay its debt to the federal government for the Columbia and Snake River system by reducing the power revenues of the Bonneville Power Administration used to repay that debt;

NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the federal government acknowledge that breaching dams on the main stem of the Columbia or Snake rivers or operating these dams under a natural river operating system would not be more effective than other options for enhancing anadromous fish runs and that these other options can be implemented without the staggering costs to the region caused by the dam breaching option, and pray that the federal government no longer consider breaching these dams as a productive option for enhancing anadromous fish stocks.

BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately transmitted to the Honorable William J. Clinton, President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of Washington.

--- END ---

Federal Caucus Members
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