

March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2000

# Kalama Chamber of Commerce

*"Where Water, Rail and Highway Meet"*

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

Dear Department of the Army;

I am writing you on behalf of the business community of Kalama to express opposition to the breaching of the dams on the Snake and Columbia River System.

We were shocked and appalled to hear that there is serious consideration being given to removing the dams that President Roosevelt authorized during his historic years in office. We believe that the removal of these dams will present a clear and present danger to the lives and interests of the citizens of Kalama.

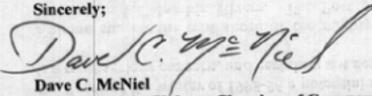
Our community is still recovering from the floods of the winter of 1995-96 when downtown Kalama and many residential areas were under eight to twelve feet of water. Countless businesses, family, friends, and neighbors were affected. In our community today buildings still stand empty because their contents were literally swept away by the floodwaters. The removal of these dams will make the floods of the winter of 1995-96 a potential annual event. For Kalama, because of our location this is a most serious concern, and certainly not acceptable.

Kalama sits on the east shore of the mighty Columbia River, just south of the juncture of the Kalama and Columbia Rivers. The Port of Kalama, where sea going vessels load and unload products that fuel the heart of our community's economy, is located here.

Breaching the dams will stop the important silt removing activity these dams provide, resulting in this silt being deposited in the ship channel. Deposits of silt in the ship channel affect the livelihood of the Port, whose industries provide many jobs. Currently the silt deposited in the ship channel is at such a rate that the Army Corps of Engineers is challenged to secure deposit sites. This additional volume of silt will endanger ships using the channel, as well as the environment of the Columbia and Willamette River systems. More wilderness lands will be needed for silt deposit. To understand the foolhardy nature of endangering the ship traffic using the Columbia River channel one only need look at the situation caused by the New Carissa. An incident of this magnitude no rational person would consider.

In closing I would like to reaffirm our community's resolve against this most shortsighted and ill-conceived idea of breaching the dams on the Snake/Columbia/Willamette River systems. If you or any of your fellow committee members are interested in visiting our community and/or talking with me or any of our Kalama citizens, please feel free to reach me at work or home anytime. My phone numbers are listed above.

Sincerely;



Dave C. McNiel

President of the Kalama Chamber of Commerce