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Northwest Alloys, Inc.

March 29, 2000

974 N. Main
Colville, Wa. 99114

Department of the Army
Walla Walla District, Corps of Engineers
201 North Third Avenue
Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

RE: Lower Snake River Juvenile Salmon Migration Feasibility Report

Dear Army Corps of Engineers Reviewer:

On behalf of the 350 employees of Northwest Alloys, and the people of our community who depend on our operations, I urge you reject alternatives in your Report that would breach lower Snake River dams.

The region has to make some difficult decisions about how to improve the survival of Columbia and Snake Rivers fish and wildlife while still preserving the benefits of those rivers that are a part of our lives in the Northwest. I appreciate the work you did in your report and believe it will help us make intelligent decisions.

Your report makes clear that we cannot predict what will happen to a number of salmon runs no matter what we do. There are still too many unknowns. At the same time, it is clear that breaching the lower Snake River dams will cause significant harm to many of the people in the region. Losing low-cost, clean hydroelectric generation will cause the construction and operation of other, higher-cost, more polluting sources of electricity. People who depend of irrigation, recreation and transportation from the Snake River will be impacted. Food production will decrease, and there will be more train and truck traffic and associated community impacts when we have to replace barges.

The economic impact of breaching these dams has been downplayed. At Northwest Alloys, we produce primary magnesium and magnesium alloys and sell these products into a worldwide commodity market where price is determined by the market. Electricity is a major cost. Increased power rates that will result from dam breaching will impact our ability to compete and our production levels in the future. Production levels will impact employment, and employment will impact our community. Despite your broad statement that economic impacts of dam breaching will be minor, the impact on employees and communities like ours will be large, and we should not simply ignore this reality.

Current information does not justify breaching the Snake River dams, so please don't recommend it.

Sincerely,

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