

MAR 30 2000

VALE OREGON IRRIGATION DISTRICT

521 A Street West ■ Vale, OR 97918 ■ 541-473-3243 ■ Fax: 541-473-2562

March 27, 2000

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

RE: DAM BREACHING

Dear Sirs:

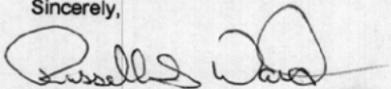
The Vale Oregon Irrigation District would like to go on record as being opposed to the dam breaching proposal because it is too extreme, will not help the salmon and would cause economic harm to the residents of the Pacific Northwest.

Agriculture, river commerce, business growth and reasonable power rates are only a few benefits of these dams. Breaching them would adversely and forever change the face and economics in a basin that produces many natural resources. Although salmon are an important commodity, other alternatives should be explored before devastation is cast upon an entire region.

Reportedly, these four dams were built at a cost of \$1.2 billion and collectively they produce \$1.4 billion in power generation revenue every four years. Without factoring in the cost of operation and maintenance, these dams pay for themselves once every four years. It is estimated that it would cost \$5 billion to breach the dams and once they're gone, so is the power generation, so where is the money going to come from to pay for this extravagant proposal?

Gov. John Kitzhaber certainly does not speak for the majority of people in Eastern Oregon when he says he supports the breaching of dams. Please do not let "power politics" prevail over thoughtfulness and reason.

Sincerely,



Russell S. Ward
District Manager