

APR 05 2000

March 31, 2000

Brigadier General Carl Strock
Department of the Army
Walla Walla District Corps of Engineers
201 North Third Avenue
Walla Walla, Washington 99362-1876
Attention: Lower Snake River Study

We appreciate the opportunity to comment. Please accept these comments regarding the dam breaching proposal.

For numerous reasons, we oppose breaching the four lower Snake River dams – and most specifically oppose Alternative 4. There simply is not adequate evidence that this action will serve its intended purpose of substantially increasing and enhancing the fishery. This is not an “anti-salmon” stance by any means. Instead, in weighing the possible benefits versus the almost certain costs – environmental, social, economic – the wisest decision is to not breach the dams.

We trust that others will make specific comments on the scientific and socio-economic issues. We generally support those comments made by the Pulp and Paper Workers Resource Council in Lewiston.

Additionally, we would like to propose another item for your serious consideration. If the decision to breach is made, We propose that the proponents of breaching post surety bonds. We believe it is in the best interest of the environment, the aquatic life, the economy, the area's social fabric, the people who live in the area, the citizens of the United States in general, for bonds to be posted.

Breaching the dams would be a major industrial project. Today, virtually every other proposed industrial project requires that bonds be posted to ensure that there are adequate funds available to cover future problems. For example, mining companies must post reclamation bonds to help make certain that taxpayers aren't forced to pick up the tab for reclamation.

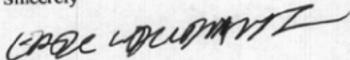
It's a reasonable request that the organizations requesting that the dams be breached post bonds that would cover the cost of any potential socio-economic upheaval this action would cause to local citizens, ports, farmers, ranchers, communities, etc. For example, the proponents' bonds would be used to offset lost income from reduced or eliminated irrigation capabilities. Also, the bonds should be posted to cover any future costs incurred in the event that breaching the dams does not regenerate the fish stocks as the proponents of breaching contend it will. For example, if 10-15 years into the future, scientists determine breaching didn't meet the proponents' professed benefits, the bonds would provide funding to implement the remedies required.

1 | Regarding another facet of this effort, on several occasions, federal officials have told the media and the public that the public comment "is not a vote" and won't be tallied as such, and that "substantive" comments count more. Specifically, how are comments tallied? Clearly, there must be an evaluation system.

For example, how many form letters equal a substantive comment? How does a pre-printed comment form compare in value to a pre-setup comment form on an Internet website? What is the value of a comment – electronic, pre-written, handwritten or otherwise – which simply says the sender favors or opposes a particular alternative? As an example, how many Internet clickable comments equal a five-page original letter with substantive comments? Please detail your evaluation system.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment and voice our opposition to breaching the dams.

Sincerely



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