

# CITY OF HERMISTON

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April 3, 2000

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

Subject: Comments on the Lower Snake River Juvenile Salmon Migration Feasibility Study

Removal of the four Snake River dams would result in movement of significant volumes of sediment downstream. These sediments are composed of erosion-carried soil particles which settled behind the dams. A significant portion of these soil particles originated from agricultural crop lands of the region.

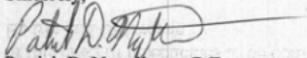
During the period from 1950 through 1982, nearly every acre of cropped land in the arid regions of the Pacific Northwest was treated with organochlorine insecticides to reduce wireworm damage to crops. DDT was the first of this class of insecticides to be commonly used. It was followed by the cyclodiene insecticides Adrin, Dieldrin, Endrin and Chlordane.

1 The tremendous tonnage of sediment behind these dams represents substantial insecticide residue which potentially will be released back into the environment by dam breaching. Residing in undisturbed sediment, these chemicals pose little threat to humans or the environment; however, releasing them by dam breaching raises a substantial series of questions about their potential negative impacts on humans and the environment.

The City of Hermiston and the Port of Umatilla have an active municipal water permit on the Columbia River. As outlined above, dam breaching will pose a significant health risk to our water users.

Therefore, if the Corps of Engineers chooses to remove the dams, the City of Hermiston and the Port of Umatilla will have no choice but to hold the Corps responsible for all present and future additional water treatment costs to meet federal and state mandated water requirements.

Sincerely,

  
Patrick D. Napolitano, P.E.  
City Engineer

PDN/km

c: City Manager Ed Brookshier  
Kim Puzey, General Manager, Port of Umatilla