



Submitted 29 Feb 00  
Seattle  
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## PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 2 OF GRANT COUNTY

MEETING OUR CUSTOMER ENERGY NEEDS IN A COST CONSCIOUS MANNER.

P. O. BOX 878 • EPHRATA, WASHINGTON 98823 • 509/754-0500

MAR 24 2000

### Grant County PUD # 2

Statement of Position

February 29, 2000

The health and abundance of salmon that inhabit the Columbia River have long been a primary concern for Grant County PUD. For decades we have been working to protect salmon runs that pass through our project for the use and enjoyment of future generations of Americans.

Grant County PUD is a publicly owned utility which operates two of the main stem dams on the Columbia River-----Priest Rapids and Wanapum. Together these hydroelectric facilities provide almost 10 billion-kilowatt hours of energy during an average year - more than enough electricity every year to supply the entire Seattle area. Over 60 % of this energy goes to customers served by a group of northwest utilities that includes Puget Sound Energy, Portland General Electric, Pacific Power and Light, Avista Corporation, Cowlitz PUD and the cities of Eugene, Milton-Freewater, McMinnville, and Forest Grove in Oregon and Tacoma and Seattle in Washington. Approximately 45% of the output from our projects is shared with millions of customers in Western Oregon and Western Washington

Grant PUD acknowledged long ago that our projects create hazards for salmon, and we have been aggressively working to mitigate those problems. We have used spill to keep young fish out of the turbines, developed successful hatchery programs, reduced predators and initiated some of the most innovative salmon protection programs in the region. Each year, our utility invests nearly \$50 million on salmon protection and enhancement.

We are particularly proud of the part we have played to keep the populations of fall and summer chinook among the healthiest in the Columbia Basin. It was not long ago that fall chinook returning to the Hanford Reach were among the most depleted of Columbia River stocks. Their turnaround has been accomplished through the cooperative efforts of all operators of mid-Columbia hydroelectric projects working in concert with concerned federal and state agencies and Indian tribes. We have had great success using this "collaborative" approach to solving salmon problems. This is but one example of a collaborative process that has led to much success. The essence of these collaborative successes is that they are based on good science and the willingness of all concerned parties to work together to improve the salmon situation.

In contrast, the debate surrounding the salmon-related issues on the Snake River is contentious, adversarial, and adrift in poor (and often conflicting) science. This fragmentation has led to polarized positions

Grant PUD would like to go on record as:

- ⇒ Being committed to stewardship of our environment,
- ⇒ Being successful at enhancing salmon runs through use of the collaborative problem solving process, and
- ⇒ Supporting use of the best scientific information available to make decisions.
- ⇒ Urging decision-makers to act responsibly by not supporting unfounded choices or believing they must choose sides. We can have both a healthy environment and a healthy economy. They are not mutually exclusive.
- ⇒ Opposing the breaching of lower Snake River dams – this is a radical proposal which merely serves as a convenient distraction from practical solutions that will help salmon. The idea that removing the dams and losing all that they return to the Northwest in return for 2000 salmon is not a balanced approach and will ultimately freeze out the kinds of steps that can should be taken to enhance Snake River salmon runs.

The Northwest can save the salmon while maintaining a healthy environment and strong economy. We can do so only if salmon recovery solutions are:

- Reasonable
  - Balanced
    - Fair
      - Derived by involving all interested parties (and most importantly)
        - Grounded in sound science.

This approach will benefit everyone who lives in the Northwest, including the salmon.

Thank you.

*Mark Conley*  
Committee Member



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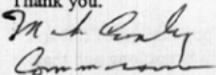
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M. H. O'Leary  
Commissioner