



# GRANT COUNTY

OFFICE OF

## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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APR 07 2000

*Let 3-29-00*

Date: March 29, 2000  
TO: National Marine Fisheries, NOAA and Federal Caucus  
RE: Arbitrary Federal Actions to SAVE Salmon Species

Dear Sirs:

- A. Salmon are very adaptive to changes in their environment.

Fishery biologists we have spoken with and who have testified before you have told of salmon runs being transplanted from the northwest to rivers in New Zealand and they are thriving.

- B. Hatchery production is credited with preservation of salmon numbers surviving to date.

It is clear from reading historical data that prior to 1900 fish populations were on a severe decline due to natural cycles and over fishing. Intervention by fishery managers with hatchery incubation programs long before any dams were constructed on the Columbia and Snake River system has preserved harvestable salmon runs.

- C. Harvest management is sorely lacking in real numbers of fish from specific E.S.U.'s.

Spring Chinook, Summer Chinook, Fall Chinook, Spring, Summer and Fall Coho, etc. are categorized by date of movement grouping. It appears that harvestable numbers are generated by the timing and estimated run size, with little or no regard for E.S.U. identification.

This brings us to the main point of our letter and a simple question.

How can a salmon from a stream in Okanogan County, on the Mid-Columbia be treated as an endangered species and there co-mingle with large numbers of summer or fall returning fish and become a harvestable number just three or four years later?

We believe the current management approach is indefensible. The arbitrary application of the endangered species act in some areas with stringent restrictions while ignoring

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blatant takings in other areas leaves management agencies and all levels of government with a very serious credibility stain.

During the three Federal caucus hearings which we attended, the citizens most directly impacted by your stringent management proposals spoke very passionately on the direct consequences of your proposed actions. They each had a different paradigm or vision of the situation but ALL, I repeat ALL had the same theme woven into the fabric of their message. That is;

**"THE EMPEROR HAS NO CLOTHES"**

to take an analogy from the children's book by the same title, where a slick salesman convinced the king that his new invisible garment would set a new fashion trend, only to be questioned by a child who pointed out that the king was naked. This parallels the current salmon discussions.

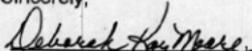
To impose schemes to the ludicrous level of taking out energy and transportation improvements while allowing harvest of these so-called endangered species leaves your agencies in a very naked position. What you heard at the hearings we believe is the tip of the iceberg. In Pasco, one woman stated, "Whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting." If you continue to speak of stringent water related actions the grass-roots movement which you've witnessed will only get larger. Like the iceberg, you will generate motivation for the silent majority to mobilize and governance as we know it will then be changed forever.

Please focus the future discussions around hard data and actual numbers to add certainty with attainable goals, not hypothesis and assumptions.

Please focus future debates on fish numbers in general, and not on this fictional definition of "wild salmon". As the lady in Seattle said, "There are no hatchery buffalo."

In closing, it is imperative that you, the federal agencies show leadership and bring this issue back to a more realistic approach. Government at all levels is being judged by your actions and therefore we at the county level ask for your relief.

Sincerely,

 Chairman





cc: President  
Senators  
Congressmen