

MONTANANS FOR PROPERTY RIGHTS

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U.S. Senator Max Baucus, Montana
 U.S. Senator Conrad Burns, Montana
 U.S. Representative Rick Hill, Montana
 Governor Mark Racicot, Montana
 General Release

Gentlemen:

We are writing to express our organizations concern, and at this time, opposition to the proposed Federal Caucus Conservation plans presently presented for the Columbia Basin salmon recovery effort.

All of the options presented appear to be based more on political agendas, than good science. Jack Stanford, the director of the University of Montana's Biological Research Station at Yellow Bay on Flathead Lake expressed concerns at a meeting recently that the drawdown requirements on Hungry Horse Dam, to meet needed downstream water flows if four dams on the Snake River are breached, may have serious negative environmental effects on Flathead Lake. This is just one problem associated with these proposals, and in the seeming rush to complete these proposals, there are many others to numerous to mention in this letter.

As a property rights organization, our concerns are the many vague references to private property restrictions, such as: "The habitat measures contemplated by alternative 1 would require significant land use changes on both public and private lands"; "Alternative 5 would place high priority and significant intensity on habitat improvement on both public and private land," etc. What do these vague references to private property restrictions mean?

If we look at other areas in the west, such as the Klamath River system in northern California, which by the way has no dams and very few salmon, what they have meant is a Federal Government take over of all private and state lands in proximity to that river system, under the guise of protecting the quality of the water in the salmon spawning areas. If that is, as our organization believes, the ultimate objective of these vague references to private property restrictions in Montana, you can be assured that our organization will vigorously oppose any such effort by the Federal Government, and encourage other organizations and individuals to do the same.

These proposals are little more than thinly veiled attempts to promote the "new age", "nature worshipping" political agendas of those presently in power in Washington D.C. These proposals are not based on good science nor does it appear that if implemented would in any significant way contribute to salmon or steel head recovery in the Columbia River Basin system.

We ask that you oppose this effort, particularly the breaching of much needed dams on the Snake River, and those provisions that would place onerous and unnecessary restrictions on the property and property rights of private property owners in Montana.

Sincerely yours,

Russell Crowder
 Russell Crowder, V.P.

For: Board of Directors, MFPR