

04/09/2000

APR 12 2000

Department of the Army
Walla Walla District Corps of Engineers
Attention: Lower Snake River Study
201 North 3rd Avenue
Walla Walla, WA. 00362-1876

Dear Sirs,

I just read in the local paper that everyone favors breaching the Snake River Dams in the hope that it might bring back the salmon. Well, that is not unanimous: that is the worst of the bad solutions available, and I totally oppose it. [By the way, getting factual data on peoples opinions cannot be derived by holding public meetings where the environmental extremist can salt the gallery with their partisans.] The only way you'll get true information on how the rest of us feel is to have a scientific poll conducted. If what I'm finding in the local population holds accurate, I'd say support from the man on the street is less than 10% for breaching dams.

I think they're right: The loss of these massive investments can never be recovered. The loss of cost effective power to the North West will be devastating. We don't have a viable replacement for this power, so fossil fuel plants will have to be it. The pollution they cause and the depletion of the natural resources they consume make them worse than the problem you're trying to resolve. Other less drastic solutions are available and should be tried first. Although these are politically incorrect, I'll offer 'em up anyway.

Improve Facilities. More effort could be put into improving the Dams to make them more eco-friendly to fish. More Hatcheries could offset our losses, better transportation could improve the survival of the populations we have.

Control Predators. It defies common sense to allow predators such as Turns, Sea lions, Seals, and the like to maraud unchecked and destroy the fish. To allow one of anything to destroy another is the poorest of management practices, if you are trying to keep everything in harmony. This business of allowing the Turns and other predators to flourish as they will is a crock. Like it or not, [and incidentally, I don't], we by our very presence have changed the eco-scape forever. We are going to have to accept that some control and management is necessary to keep the balance that we desire. That means predator control. Period.

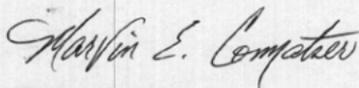
Control Harvesting. This includes Native Americans. Yeah, I know, they have treaties that we have done a piss-poor job of honoring. We're guilty as charged, and I'm ashamed of my Government for it. But it is convoluted logic to say that because of that they may assist in the decimation of the Salmon they profess to revere. That was then, this is now, and we're all in this together, whether they like it or not. Last time I checked, they all used electricity too. To be fair,


CONNATSER CONSTRUCTION
Marvin E. Connatser
P.O. Box 86 Kelo, WA 98626
360-578-1178 LIC#CONNAC*011D3

if they were practicing harvesting as their ancestors did, I don't think they would be having much of an impact, and I would have no objections. But they aren't walking to the river with a spear, they're driving there in a 4x4 with a boat, motor, nets, and modern rifles. It's time to level the playing field on this matter for the animals. All hunters and fishermen should be considered, and treated equally. It will be a hell of a Court battle, but it is one that it is time to fight and win. I would be for a total ban on fishing for a few years until our populations could be stabilized. I'd rather see that than tear down the Dams.

The Dams don't pollute. They don't consume our dwindling supply of fuel. [We're supposed to be out of oil in about eighty years. What in the hell are our descendants going to do for power then, when they have no fuel for the replacement plants?] The Dams provide a stable supply of water, and do a very valuable job of assisting in flood control. Do we want to go back to before and live with-out these assets?. I don't think so. As usual, the truth is seldom found on the far left or the far right: it's in the middle where those of us with some sense live. Get back over here with us where you belong, and shit can this stupidity before someone takes it seriously.

Thanks for letting a working guy toss in his two cents' worth.



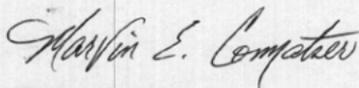
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