

• District One •
J. Bill Lehning
Chairman

• District Two •
Joel R. Rupley

• District Three •
Jeff M. Rasmussen

• Admin. Coordinator •
Stephanic Dunn

April 11, 2000

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

RE: Opposition to Breaching Dams on the Snake River

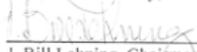
This letter is to express our opposition to breaching the dams on the Snake River in Washington.

In our capacity as the elected representatives of the 96,000 citizens of Cowlitz County, we have come to realize the importance of these structures to our local economy and our quality of life. We have also come to realize, through our efforts toward restoration of local salmon and steelhead runs, that breaching the dams would have only marginal effect on fish recovery. After all, there are no dams on the Columbia River between Cowlitz County and the mouth, yet there are more listed and proposed species in this region than any other in the state. It seems that those advocating breaching may be more interested in free flowing rivers than in fish recovery. Certainly the public resources that would be needed to replace the irrigation and transportation infrastructures could better be directed at effective fish recovery measures.

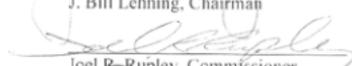
We are also concerned that breaching Snake River dams could lead to selective main stem dam breaching that would reduce flood storage capacity. Cowlitz County is particularly vulnerable to Columbia River flooding both along the river itself as well as along tributaries that would back up.

For these reasons, we believe the best interests of our residents are served by the continued operation of the Snake River dams. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

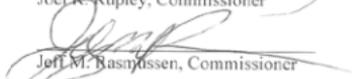
Sincerely,
**Board of County Commissioners
Of Cowlitz County, Washington**



J. Bill Lehning, Chairman



Joel R. Rupley, Commissioner



Jeff M. Rasmussen, Commissioner

Cc: Senator Slade Gorton
Senator Patty Murray
Representative Brian Baird
Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
Bill Vogler, WSAC
Commissioners' Record