

Drainage Improvement District No. 1

MAY 01 2000

County Administration Building, Room 101
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April 20, 2000

Walla Walla District, Corps of Engineers
Attn: Lower Snake River Study
201 N Third Avenue
Walla Walla, WA 99362

SUBJECT: Salmon Recovery

The Drainage Improvement District No. 1 encompasses an area of 480 acres along the banks of the Cowlitz River, protecting about 2,900 people and businesses. The District provides, operates and maintains 2 miles of levees and a very expensive, complicated system to discharge runoff of up to 41,000 gpm, including runoff from upland areas outside of the District, into the river. We have an assessed valuation of \$57,000,000 and the residents and businesses provide for the annual maintenance and operation costs of approximately \$185,000 per year.

1, 2 Breaching of existing dams is being discussed as a method of salmon recovery. Corps of Engineers' information concludes that the storage capacity of the river systems result in flood levels of 5-6 feet lower at our location than if the dams were not in place. Because of the proximity to the lower Columbia River, these are backed up during high water in the Columbia River.

To raise the levees and modify all of our systems to accommodate higher levels would be extremely costly. A levee raise would require expanding the levee 9 feet landward for each foot of raise (riverward fill would be unacceptable). Discharge pumps would need to be upgraded to handle the increased head. Additionally, some of this levee lies underneath the main north/south Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad.

We object to any breach of dams anywhere in the system, whether those dams are deemed significant or not. A radical, costly, questionable method of recovery such as breaching dams, however well intentioned, would be virtually irreversible.


KENNETH C. STONE, P.E.
Supervisor

KCS:ak

cc: Senator Patty Murray
Senator Slade Gorton
Representative Brian Baird