

Brigadier General Carl Strock
Department of the Army
Walla Walla District Corps of Engineers
201 North Third Avenue
Walla Walla, Washington 99362-1876

Attention: Lower Snake River Study

Dear General Strock:

Proposals to destroy the federal dams on the Snake River just don't make sense. We all want to do what's best for the fish, but we must focus on proposals that will really work, and avoid radical ideas that will clearly have drastic results — not just to the economy but to our environment as well. There is no silver bullet. There is no single decision or process that will lead us to recovery overnight. We must pursue salmon recovery across all life stages, and at each level of government and community in the region.

People's lives in the Northwest are built around these remarkable rivers. We can operate these vital dams so that all uses — and our fish — can get along. Taking out the dams on the lower Snake River is a false solution. Destroying the dams would result in huge negative impacts that can't just be brushed away as unimportant. The dams are part of a much larger system that provides navigation, low-cost hydroelectricity, and flood control, as well revenue to help salmon.

Those with radical ideas suggest we can just put all the barge cargo onto train cars or into trucks. This proposal ignores the fact that rail shipments are already backed up because we don't have enough train cars available. And switching vital river cargo to trucks will obviously increase air pollution and cause a glut on our already crowded highways. None of us want to trade a false solution for a certain disaster.

Taking an additional 1,000,000 acre feet of irrigation water for flow augmentation dries up more than 600,000 acres of productive farm land at an annual cost of \$430 million and thousands of agricultural jobs. The Idaho Department of Water Resources has shown that flow augmentation does not work. Flushing our precious water to no good purpose serves no one — not rural communities and certainly not fish.

If we have learned anything by now, it is that there never was a magic solution to our fish problems in the Northwest. Fish runs all over the region are in decline, not just the fish that encounter dams. The people in the Northwest don't want empty gestures at helping fish; they want solutions that make sense — for the fish and for all of us.

Sincerely,