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PUBLIC MEETING SESSION
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
DRAFT LOWER SNAKE RIVER JUVENILE SALMON MIGRATION
WITH
FEDERAL CAUCUS CONSERVATION OF COLUMBIA BASIN FISH
“ALL-H PAPER”

BOISE, IDAHO

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

FEBRUARY 23, 2000

TRANSCRIBED BY NANCY J. SMITH

RIDER & ASSOCIATES

COURT REPORTERS

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(Transcribed from taped proceedings.)

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: -- use a more prudent, common-sense approach on the drawdowns at Brownlee Reservoir during the peak recreational periods, which is from Memorial Day to Labor Days. The local economies surrounding the Brownlee Reservoir would greatly appreciate your efforts. Thank you very much.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: -- approach to accomplish their reasonable salmon recovery goals. There's not a lot of these people at this meeting. I believe they are in the general public and will be heard. Common sense must prevail. The tail should not wag the dog.

I don't believe Dombeck and Babble and the honorable Clinton-Gore administration have any worthy goals in mind other than ego massaging and legacy leaving. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I would be available for any additional support in the opposition of this dam. Thank you.

MR. ALEXANDER: My name is Richard Alexander. I live in Boise. My address is 1114 North 13th Street, 83702. I'd like to comment on both the EIS and the 4-D Section. I'm concerned primarily about the economic issues and the issue of government leadership in this issue.

I think that the failure to breach the dams would be the end of a genetically-sound salmon population. I think it would be a disaster. I think when we look at the issue of spending an additional \$5 a month on our electrical bills, I don't really think that's too much for the population to bear.

You know, in this country, we help people affected by disasters. I think losing the salmon would be a disaster. We spread the economic impact over all of the people so that really no segment bears all the financial loss. That's why I consider it an economic issue. When the salmon is gone, what happens to the people of Idaho and in the Northwest? When people whose jobs depends on the salmon, what will they do?

1 The outfitters, guides, even people who sell recreational vehicles, motels, travel
2 agencies. all these people will suffer.

3 So I think a lot of people in Idaho, additionally, besides these groups, would
4 also just like the opportunity to fish for salmon. So I'd like to see our government show
5 their leadership and spread the impact, the economic impact amongst the entire
6 population. And let's give our children a chance to have the opportunity to see salmon
7 and to fish for salmon in the wild.

8 So I don't think these dams -- I think they no longer make sense for Idaho
9 and the Northwest. Thank you.

10 MS. LeCOURT: Hello. My name is Suzann LeCourt. I live at 2210 North
11 9th Street, Boise, Idaho. I'm an organic farmer, and I'm here to comment on the 4 All-H
12 4-D paper as well as, maybe, the Corps EIS about habitat for the salmon. And I'm
13 basically here to state my -- my opinion is that extinction is not an option, and what is
14 currently being done does not work. And extinction looks like it may happen soon, so I'm
15 here to support the breaching of the dams. Thank you.

16 MR. KIERNAN: Yes. My name is Bob Kiernan. I live at 806 North
17 Boundary Street in Nampa, and the zip code is 83651. I'm here today speaking on
18 behalf of the salmon and other people that couldn't make it, and for the Native
19 Americans.

20 I noticed the other day in the paper the governor of Oregon come out and
21 said he is in favor of removal of the dams. The dams on the Snake River were put there
22 for r the purpose of barging, transportation for the area. People talk about it's going to
23 affect the economics.

24 We have spent billions in the past trying to truck or barge the salmon
25 around these barriers that we created, and I think it's time to remove the barriers. It will
26 make up for economics in other ways. Our government can meet its treaty obligations.

1 Hopefully, they can focus on something besides taking away the pride of the Native
2 Americans.

3 I talked to a tribal council member from the Nez Perce Tribe, and they said
4 since 1977, they've had spring run return for their tribe. To them it's a ceremonial,
5 religious thing when the salmon return to the river. So it's more than just the fish, it's their
6 pride they're looking for. Thank you for your time.

7 MR. DAHLGREN: Okay. My name's Dick Dahlgren. My address is Box
8 4402, Ketchum, Idaho. I have two questions. The first one is about the existing
9 hatchery system on the Pessimeri (phonetic), the Stanley, the McCall hatchery and the
10 Dworshak. Those hatcheries were mitigated and built for one thing, to provide fisheries
11 -- or salmon and steelhead for sports fishing. The target number for the Stanley
12 hatchery was 18,500 adult chinook.

13 We're down to 197. Now the hatcheries are being used for other purpose,
14 to enforce the Endangered Species Act. Not right. My second question -- concern is that
15 the studies have not addressed the value of recreational real estate along these streams
16 and rivers. Now, if that fishery is restored, I want to tell you as a 30-year person that's
17 practiced selling real estate for 30 years, that those properties will become worth billions
18 of dollars.

19 Right now, they stand vacant. Many of them have been abandoned. And
20 there's a tremendous economic value of recreational real estate. Thanks very much.

21 MR. GILBERT: My name is Byron Gilbert. I am currently residing at 1123
22 Camelot in Boise, Idaho, and that's 11 -- 83704. In the argument over whether to breach
23 or not to breach, it seems that an alternative method has been overlooked. That method
24 would be run a large pipeline under water from the fast water down the rivers and under
25 the reservoirs bypassing the dams. This would carry the smolt at a near normal rate and
26 deposit them near where the Columbia empties into the ocean.

1 They would have a trip free from predators and should retain the instinct to
2 return to their spawning grounds. This would leave the dams intact serving the shipping
3 needs, electrical generation and water sports. Idaho water would not need to be
4 sacrificed.

5 I believe the cost of construction would be far less than many of the
6 alternatives, and everyone will quit calling each other names. Thank you.

7 MR. WHITE: Okay. My name is Pritchard White from Boise, Idaho. It's
8 4075 Kitsap, 83703. And these are my comments regarding the conservation of
9 Columbia Basin fish on February 23rd, the year 2000.

10 Scientific studies are in. The overwhelming majority of competent fish
11 biologists agree that the only hope for complying with the Endangered Species Act and
12 saving the Snake River salmon and steelhead populations from total extinction is to
13 breach the four lower Snake River dams and create a natural river.

14 There have been no alternate state or regional plans proposed and
15 examined which have any rational chance of recovering the fish to sustainable
16 populations. Idaho, Montana, Washington and Oregon, not to mention the Northwest
17 Power Planning Council, have failed to demonstrate any leadership to solve the problem.

18 Technofixes introduced by the Corps of Engineers in order to save the
19 hydropower and navigation system such as juvenile fish barging, fish-friendly turbines,
20 bypass collectors at dams and hatchery augmentation have proven to be expensive
21 failures. Politicians and lobbyists for businesses profiting from the generous public
22 subsidies of the Columbia, Snake River hydropower and transportation system seek to
23 divert attention away from the truth by blaming the weather, the Indians, the Canadians,
24 the sea lions and the Caspian terns.

1 They fight desperately to preserve their corporate welfare at the expense of
2 taxpayer funds and the very existence of the Pacific Northwest cultural symbol and
3 economic resource.

4 While it is morally and economically sound to remove the dams and return
5 to a natural river, we must recognize the political and economic power structure.

6 We have to make a deal with the devil and pay the ransom. We have to
7 pay off those businesses that are killing the business, the fish for profit.

8 The agriculture and customers that have profited from the public subsidies
9 will have to keep these subsidies for them to maintain their earnings.

10 If the fish are to recover and commercial fishing, sport fishing, Native
11 American fishing and the related support industries are to revive and thrive, the money
12 will have to be transferred from one pocket to another.

13 Because the economic and social benefits of a restored river and fish
14 population are greater than the cost of current recovery operations and subsidies, it will
15 be a total benefit for the entire Pacific Northwest. We can have our fish and eat them,
16 too.

17 MR. JOHNSTON: My name is Matthew Johnston. My home address is
18 3224 Chicory Way, Boise. I'm a retired professional engineer, and I have experience,
19 most of my career, in river works, hydroelectric projects, canals, and I worked for the
20 Bureau of Reclamation, retired from Morrison-Knudsen. The overly-simplistic suggestion
21 to remove the earthen abutments of the four Snake River dams in order to breach them
22 must disregard the disastrous results. Hydroelectric dams generally have a core of
23 concrete structures, some massive and others basically reinforced concrete structures to
24 sustain the penstocks, outlet works, spillway, gate structures and other ancillary parts of
25 the dam. Removing just the earthen abutments would leave massive concrete structures
26 exposed within the stream, which unless demolished at great expense and ecological

1 damage, would certainly cause the stream to commence cutting its own diversion around
2 the obstructions.

3 This in turn would carry tons of eroded sediment downstream, which
4 eventually would change the natural bottom grade of the riverbed causing even further
5 rearrangement of the river, perhaps to the detriment of properties further downstream.

6 In view of all of this, it is absurd to even think of breaching the dams when
7 the present livelihood of people and industries are benefiting by their existence. If the
8 total extinction of species as wonderful as the salmon were at stake, then, yes, remove
9 all the dams all the way to the Pacific.

10 But salmon abound, perhaps not as abundantly in Idaho as before. But
11 even in Idaho, the solution is not impossible without sacrificing public works that have
12 tremendous benefits for the region as a whole, including recreation, flood control,
13 renewable power, shipping and jobs. We need to abandon this unwise campaign put
14 forth by special interest groups. The time and money spent should be for optimum
15 solutions by intelligent and qualified people that leave the dams unbreached. Thank you.

16 MR. BOWERS: I'm Chet Bowers, 6912 Randolph Drive, Boise, 83709,
17 208-375-8787. My comments regarding the salmon recovery program are short. They
18 include breaching the dams as the most favored option, with other mitigating efforts to
19 save salmon for the future of our country.

20 I think that there needs to be drastic action at this time. And what has
21 happened is that we've had nothing but obstructionism from the Idaho delegation and
22 most of the legislature, all of whom are involved directly or indirectly, in farming, mining,
23 logging or other basic industry pursuits. And I do think it is time this country moved on
24 this, because its been studied to death. It's almost there already. I think that we're past
25 that point. And there's a risk involved in any action, but I think the risk of removing the
26 dams is far less than people imagine today.

1 And I think that there could be a scene in the late 2000's where people
2 would be actually happy with removal of the dams, be more gainfully employed, directed
3 toward other industries and businesses that would actually be better than their present
4 pursuits. And I think that our governor and our lieutenant governor and our legislature
5 should become aware of the demographic change in Idaho, that we are not basic
6 industry-oriented anymore.

7 The majority of the Idahoans want to see more fish, game, preservation of
8 our habitat and wild places to visit. So I think this is something that figures in the
9 economy of the future, and our leaders are listening too much to the very small-interest
10 groups who seem to control our politics. Thank you.

11 MR. GROSS: Good afternoon General Strock and other distinguished
12 panel members. I am Alan C. Gross. Forty-eight-year-old Idaho native. My address is
13 Post Office Box 594, Fruitland, Idaho 83619. I was born and raised in Weiser, Idaho. I've
14 spent my entire life working, hunting, fishing, recreating and raising my family in this
15 wonderful state.

16 I would like to state for the record that the following comments and opinions
17 are mine and those of my family. To bypass or not. Is this really a question? The
18 evidence is in, and bypassing is the only workable plan to save our salmon and
19 steelhead, our Idaho water, and the Idaho jobs in farming, mining, timber and the
20 recreation industries that depend on it.

21 Bypassing allows us to save our salmon and steelhead, and to use our
22 Idaho reservoirs as they were intended for irrigation, recreating, power generation and
23 flood control, not for fish flushing, a process that has flushed not only Idaho water, but
24 Idaho dollars as the recreational bass, crappie, and trout fisheries in our reservoirs have
25 deteriorated drastically due to exposed spawning beds, high water temperatures, algae

1 blooms and fish literally being flushed downstream from the reservoirs in the Hells
2 Canyon complex.

3 The loss of recreational fishing from flushing means the loss of jobs and
4 revenues in the fishing-related businesses. In addition, salmon and steelhead numbers
5 have continued to decline. Bypassing means restoring salmon and steelhead numbers to
6 self-sustaining levels and saving Idaho water and the Idaho jobs that are dependent on
7 normal reservoir levels.

8 Bypassing will also create new jobs in the recreation industry and restore
9 jobs that have been lost in the Columbia River Basin due to depleted salmon and
10 steelhead numbers.

11 As the time closes on our dwindling fish runs, I urge the governor and our
12 elected representatives in congress to join with Governor Kitzhaber of Oregon in
13 supporting the bypassing of the four lower Snake River dams and to help develop a
14 regional economic package to ease the short-term economic impacts on affected
15 communities.

16 Kim Thorn and our political representatives do not lack the knowledge to
17 save the salmon. It is clear that either dam removal or massive amounts of southern
18 Idaho water will be needed to aid salmon recovery. Governor Kim Thorn has been
19 quoted as saying it's our time, it's our turn and our time to save the salmon, and he also
20 stated that this is the generation of the child.

21 In that case, Governor, let's save the salmon, pass this legacy onto our
22 children what is morally, scientifically, and economically correct. In closing, my daughter,
23 who attended the Lewiston hearings, asked me to personally thank the general for
24 explaining to everyone present that fish-friendly turbines do not exist. Thank you. Alan
25 Gross.

1 MS. ENSIGN: I'm Stephanie Ensign. My address is 2780 North Kimball
2 Street, K-i-m-b-a-l-l, Boise, 83704. And I think this salmon issue has gone on long
3 enough. It's ridiculous. We have had this decline in salmon for over 100 years, since the
4 logging and mining started, and it's just steadily getting worse. And I think part of this is
5 the federal government is afraid just to pay off the Indians now instead of later. It's going
6 to happen sooner or later the way the population is increasing and the salmon are
7 decreasing out in the ocean, as well as the incoming runs are decreasing.

8 They spend two-thirds of their lifetime, the salmon do, out in the ocean.
9 And the Japanese and other countries are, you know, ruthlessly taking all the harvest
10 they can, and it's going to happen. We're just not going to have any salmon in a few
11 years, and people need to face up to the fact, unless we can decrease the population,
12 which doesn't sound very helpful.

13 And if we do take out the dams, then we'll just have to replace them with
14 coal-generating plants because we've allowed just about everything else like hydro plants
15 and nuclear power plants we've -- we have to realize that 50 percent or more of our
16 electric generating plants in the United States are run by coal power, which is a dirty
17 fossil fuel that fills our air. And I just read this morning that our global warming is getting
18 worse, gets worse and worse, so that's just going to rob Peter to pay Paul.

19 And I just want to say again that I'm against it. And if they do take out these
20 dams, they need to reimburse the people that lose their jobs and provide job training for
21 several years for every individual that loses their job because they can't work at the trade
22 they were doing before they lost their job because of taking out the dams. So I
23 appreciate this. Thank you.

24 MR. HEDGES: Hi. I'm Ed Hedges. I live in Boise at 2001 Broadmore,
25 83705, Boise, Idaho, 208-344-3400. I served a couple of sentences -- I mean terms in
26 the House of Representatives on the resource committee, and there's some collective

1 amnesia that has settled over this end of the world, that they have forgotten things that
2 we already knew.

3 And so I'll speak to very specific things that others might not. And one of
4 them has to do with the northern squawfish, which is referred to down the Columbia River
5 as clearly the major predator of juvenile salmon eggs.

6 The bounty, and the only bounty left in the world, is on the squawfish. It's
7 \$3 apiece if it's over eleven inches. It's like throwing money at a wall. It has nothing to
8 do with anything. But old-timers, antique people about my age go down there at the
9 dams where the predator, the pray and the bounty fishermen meet in the evening where
10 the light is extended by the lights on the dam. And they sit there all together because
11 they're all attracted by the same light. However, if you turn the lights off on the dam, half
12 of the little fish go through because they try very hard to get through in the dark. And the
13 squawfish is a sight feeder and he eats what he can see.

14 So if we just turn the lights off on the dams, half of them get through. So
15 I've suggested to Judge Marsh that they just turn the lights off on the dams and they have
16 the river traffic during the daylight hours as one of the solutions. Now, also in Idaho --
17 I'm a BSU and Washington State Cougar man. But the vandals up in Idaho developed a
18 thing called Squaxin, a selective squawfish toxin, about 35 years ago that kills only
19 squawfish. And squawfish are very effective. For instance, the record on the Columbia
20 for one squawfish is 15 steelhead smolts, so they do a pretty good job, like a vacuum
21 cleaner. They eat lots of smolt. So anyway, at the University of Idaho, they developed
22 Squaxin, selective squawfish toxin. And it kills squawfish and nothing else. So they used
23 it between McCall and Cascade, and they killed 200,000 in just one week and then the
24 fishing got great at Cascade Lake for a good long time after that.

25 Well anyway, on the Columbia River, that can be done, too. All the
26 tributaries, there's that time certain when those squawfish go up to spawn. And if you

1 just treat those streams at that time, we could turn the Columbia white with the bellies of
2 squawfish at lot less than \$3 apiece. So there's a couple of ideas that I'd like to have you
3 think about that others may not talk about nearly as much.

4 We have to figure out some way to bypass those dams with something
5 along the way, because it just too long for those little fish to make that trip. And there's a
6 certain amount of time that they have to make that trip and then their little clock runs out.
7 It's called take your time, but hurry. And those little rascals are in a hurry.

8 And we can get rid of those Caspian terns while we're at it and stop
9 worshipping things that kill fish. If it will kill a fish, we protect it. And we've got to think in
10 some other terms about that, too. So thanks for your time.

11 MR. WALKER: Hello. I'm Max Walker from 718 Crestview Drive, Nampa,
12 Idaho. And I want to thank you for allowing me to provide my input on this very
13 important issue of salmon recovery.

14 As a young boy, my father used to tell me about when he was young, he
15 would travel into the Bear Valley area near Stanley Basin. And sometimes during the
16 summer on their annual family fishing trips there, the entire valley would stink from so
17 many salmon being kicked out on the banks from dying and from the bears kicking them
18 out and so on.

19 When I was young, we used to enjoy annual fishing trips up to the Lemhi
20 and the main Salmon River, and we could see the schools go by, and it was quite a thrill
21 to catch such a massive --such a huge fish compared to anything else we could catch.

22 Such a strong and powerful fish. It was really quite a thrill and something
23 that I had hoped to take my family and do. Unfortunately, when my children were being
24 raised, there weren't enough salmon. The stocks were so depleted that it really wasn't
25 reasonable to fish for them anymore even at the last of the very limited seasons.

1 I'm hoping that this can be changed for our grandchildren. I'm hoping that
2 this resource can be recovered. It seems to be me there are a lot of economics involved,
3 you know, on this issue. Many others, you know, how the humans are interacting with
4 the planet, the future of ourselves as well as these other species. But I would certainly
5 think that a return of 10 million salmon per year for essentially all of eternity is a very
6 valuable resource, and shouldn't just be tossed away for the certain gains that we have to
7 look at right now.

8 And certainly the economics may be viable in the very, very near future to
9 have these salmon recovered. There are all kinds of issues that need to be corrected.
10 We've created a lot of problems over the last many years, and many of them needs to be
11 changed or completely altered. I think the most severe and the most destructive problem
12 is the dams.

13 It's too little and too late now to just start working on technofixes or to
14 proceed with some of the things we've been doing. I think they need to be breached.
15 The harvest, especially commercial, but also sport fishing, needs to be reduced
16 significantly. Logging practices must change to stop siltation of the streams just like
17 roads and construction must stop or change, be altered so that we're not damaging our
18 environment with the progress that we're enjoying. Cattle grazing practices have to be
19 altered, the Caspian tern colonies on the lower Columbia must be reduced, and the
20 squawfish need to be reduced.

21 There are a lot of things that need to be done. There are many other
22 issues, also. We need to proceed now to make a decision to get this entire habitat
23 improving so we can bring these salmon back, and hopefully we'll be able to enjoy a live
24 and healthy resource in the future. Thank you.

1 MR. OVINSKI: My name is Peter Ovinski. I live in Caldwell, Idaho. I have
2 lived here in Idaho since 1960. I have fished -- 20 years of my original life -- was born
3 and raised in Pennsylvania where I fished considerably.

4 I went, after I got married, and lived in Wisconsin for about 15 years and
5 fished Wisconsin. And the last 30 or 40 has been in Idaho here, especially on the South
6 Fork and its tributaries.

7 And that is my primary interest in coming here to try to save the salmon,
8 because in all these places that I lived, there's no place that has the scenery or the
9 beauty or the wonderful fish that are here. And it will be an awful shame if we do lose
10 these fish for future generations.

11 These have been a renewable resource since time memorial. Sad to say
12 the Indians did a better job than we did. They left the legacy of fish for us.

13 And in the short time of the 30 years that I've been here in fishing that
14 South Fork and the tributaries, I can't believe what we have done to probably one of the
15 finest and best spawning grounds in the whole Northwest.

16 That's a tremendous statement to make when you stop and think of it. We
17 have devastated them tributaries, and it is only through some fortunate high water years
18 that we were able to go up to -- Boise Cascade sedimented [sic.] them whole spawning
19 beds, which like I said were probably the best in the whole Northwest.

20 And they destroyed them spawning beds in just a short order. It's
21 unbelievable. However, and little it be known, but the federal agencies have been
22 working on that South Fork to return them spawning beds to the original shape, and
23 they've come a long way in developing those spawning beds to where if we are able to
24 breach those dams and give them fish a chance to regain what they were favorably, not
25 what they used to be, but favorably, it would be the way to go because it was a dramatic
26 drop after the first four dams were put in. Thank you.

1 MR. THOMAS: All right. My name's Bruce Thomas, 3700 West Lakehazel,
2 Meridian, Idaho. I'm a life-long Idahoan, and I wanted to comment. And I'm concerned
3 about the politicians in the Northwest, Idaho in particular, who don't seem to want to do
4 anything about the salmon, just want to let them go away and not have any
5 repercussions on themselves.

6 I feel we need to make an effort to do something for the fish. We have no
7 right to let this species just be annihilated because of power or farming, whatever. I
8 mean, they were here a long time before we were. And I used to fish for them myself
9 before 1975. Something needs to be done.

10 I feel to breach the four lower Snake dams probably has the least effect and
11 is probably the best solution in the long run or short-term, either one. I feel, like I say, the
12 politicians in this area want the issue to just go away, and they prefer to just wait. They
13 don't want to give away any of our water or do anything for them. They just hope they'll
14 go away and somebody else will have to do the work for them.

15 Anyway, we can't let this species be annihilated, so that's all I have to say.
16 Thank you.

17 MR. KISTER: I'm Ron Kister. I live at Marcine, Idaho, Box 308, Route 1,
18 896-4616. I'm a native Idahoan. I owned and operated a farm over 30 years. My father
19 and grandfather homesteaded their farms in the 40's. I supplement my income. I've
20 worked -- supplemented my income. I've worked as a lumberyard foreman and a partner
21 in construction, and the past 17 years as a water master foreman for a 40,000-acre
22 irrigation project.

23 Being in farming, irrigation and working in a farming community, I feel that I
24 need to say something on behalf of the people who are the backbone of our society. As
25 water master, I've had the pleasure of touring the Big Thompson project in Colorado, the

1 Mesa project in Phoenix, Arizona, the Bakersfield project in California and the Oregon
2 and Washington projects.

3 I've seen the vast amount of money being spent on these projects to save
4 water and produce power. It's nothing but ludicrous and hypocritical to eliminate water
5 from any lands, especially cheaper power sources as hydro dams. Our neighboring
6 states would gladly put our sources to a productive and common sense use.

7 When I use the word "ludicrous," I mean to remove these dams, taking
8 away power, taking away water usage, taking away commodity transportation is nothing
9 else but ludicrous. When I use the word "hypocritical," I believe anyone who supports
10 hydro removal, irrigation removal, transportation removal, should be described as such.
11 I'm sure such a person has a heated home, water for the home, lawns, gardens and a
12 meal at the table, and very cheap power at present.

13 At a recent meeting, a man told me he moved here recently from California
14 saving close to \$2500 in power costs annually. Dam removal, power deregulation will
15 raise our power at least 15 percent, but more like 30 percent, not figuring the cost of
16 commodity transportation.

17 If we would have taken the 20-million-plus study and put it to actual, on-
18 hands improvement for the salmon, this would have been more productive. If people
19 want to go back to the Stone Age, so be it, but we all know that is not -- will not happen,
20 so let's move on and improve what we already have.

21 There is only one option; that is to take what we have in place and make it
22 better. Water and power is and always will be our future option -- major option to future
23 survival. Once again, I stress only -- I can only stress how the neighboring states
24 handled their water and power problems. Pump backwater for power-capturing rivers
25 such as the Colorado from head to end, pump water into underground aquifers for use at
26 a later date, spending millions to make man-made lakes as in Phoenix, Arizona.

1 Touring these areas has installed a picture in my mind of the great
2 importance of what people have. We need to look very close before giving a gift away of
3 such importance.

4 MR. BENNETTT: My name is Raymond Bennett. My address is 7780
5 Arlington Drive, Nampa, Idaho. I've spent my last 39 years in New Meadows, Idaho in
6 Adams County, which is a timber county. I've spent six years as county commissioner of
7 Adams County and 12 years on the city board of New Meadows as mayor. I've written --
8 I've got writer's cramp from writing public comment. Testified in Washington D.C.,
9 everywhere -- every place that they have a hearing, it seems like I went and testified.

10 I'm just about to give up. Too bullheaded to quit completely. But I've been
11 involved in this thing since Rare I, Rare II, wilderness -- or the wilderness -- Frank Church
12 Wilderness, Wid & Scenic Rivers, the NRA on the Hells Canyon, salmon recovery, the
13 PAC fish, Snake River adjudication, 2477, RS-2477, roadless area, timber base and so
14 forth and so on.

15 Rare I was supposed to be our timber base for -- after they put the
16 wilderness in, that was supposed to be our timber base. Guess what happened to that?
17 Frank Church stated that if we give him his way on the wilderness, that Mallard -- Big
18 Mallard and Jersey Jack timber sales in the Elk City area would be excluded from the
19 wilderness for their timber base.

20 Guess what? They went 17 years before they ever harvested a stand by
21 making it illegal to build a road in there. And after that, they had a hippie chained to the
22 trees, every one you went to cut.

23 I had about lost all hope when Jack Ward Thomas, chief of the Forest
24 Service, admitted that he didn't run the Forest Service. When pressed who did, he
25 answered that Al Gore did. So what chance do we have to use a little common sense
26 when an executive order overrides everything else.

1 Indian treaties are law. The sore -- RS-2477, and by law, motorized craft
2 cannot be banned from the NRA, but no judge will hear an RS-2477 suit, and they were
3 banned off of the NRA 21 days every summer. In other words, I think politics stinks.

4 MR. McGLINSKY: My name is Al McGlinsky, and I'm here giving testimony
5 as a citizen for my wife and myself. We favor the number four option, breaching the four
6 dams on the lower Snake.

7 My testimony includes a picture which I hope you have the time to review,
8 and I'm going to leave that with you. It hangs in our house. One of the most moving
9 photographs we've ever seen, was taken around 1902 on the Columbia River by Ben A.
10 Gifford. Celilo Falls spans the width of the frame. In the thundering fury just
11 downstream, the photo's left corner shows a shawled Native American figure standing on
12 an outcropping of rock alone and contemplative gazing into the raging waters.

13 His black, broad-brimmed hat is pulled down firmly to withstand the rushing
14 winds. Now, almost a century later, my wife and I try to imagine that moment so long ago
15 when the camera clicked and deposited this image on its silvered plate. What thoughts
16 might have lingered in this human's mind, we wonder.

17 Surely the sounds from the crashing and churning were registering. The
18 swirling sprays and the mists he had to feel. We can nearly, just from looking at the
19 picture -- been there, done that, we say these days. Surely the river's power, its sheer
20 unstoppable strength would have been thrilling to witness from so close. Here in deed
21 was a stretch of the awesome within vast lands of already wondrous beauty. This man
22 could well have been experiencing a spiritual communion with the creator as he studied
23 these waters.

24 Like the land, the river was sacred, a living gift of the creator. It was life-
25 giving and life-sustaining. The salmon within were also wondrous gifts from the creator.
26 One could easily feel grateful and shrouded in such generousities. We know that Native

1 Americans saw the rivers quite differently than we have come to see them. They still do.

2 And now here we stand, citizens of the wealthiest nation ever known to the
3 planet, debating whether it is the fish or the dams we need more. Wonder and beauty
4 and spiritual oneness are not our measures. We talk money. Bullish times aside, we
5 need more. We aren't yet rich enough. Not so. My wife and I join Native Americans and
6 others who mourn what else has been lost. We are poorer, not richer, to have taken so
7 much from the lands and the waters, conveniently disregarding the needs of most other
8 living creatures we see. We're sharing our spaces, but we're interfering with our
9 schemes to acquire additional health.

10 Breaching the four lower Snake dams won't bring back Celilo Falls lost
11 probably forever, and breaching the dams may not even bring back the salmon that once
12 thickened with red, but now quiet Columbia and Snake Rivers. But the best scientific
13 minds of our times favor breaching to try to prevent the extinction of native salmon once
14 thought so abundant as to last additional eternities no matter what we smart men would
15 do.

16 Progress always requires that we build more, that we not tear down. Not
17 us. By now, the smart have learned that our earlier ideas about building dams
18 compatible with fish were wrong. Dams inevitably chop and confuse, silt and smother
19 what was once sacred. It is far too late to wish for a natural Columbia River system,
20 though my wife and I suspect we might be adequately wealthy as a nation without having
21 harnessed it so.

22 But it may not be too late to restore the salmon that once could be viewed
23 from Celilo Falls and perhaps see them again, even in some of the Snake's most distant
24 reaches.

25 We favor breaching the four dams on the lower Snake. We will be able to
26 take pride as responsible stewards by correcting those -- these few of our past mistakes

1 | which are now so obvious. We will be helping assure a more diverse and thus a better
2 | world, and that is progress.

3 | MR. ALLEMAN: My name is Vern Alleman, and my address is 2101 East
4 | Ustick, Meridian, Idaho, 83642. I oppose breaching the dams. My position is the same
5 | as what Mr. McClure's position is on these. I don't believe that we need to take away our
6 | generating power by means of replacing it with other sources.

7 | We already have the problem with getting rid of our nuclear by-products,
8 | and we can't figure out how to do that, so we don't need to add to our other problems. I
9 | support leaving the dams and going with Mr. McClure's position. Thank you.

10 | MR. SUTTER: All right. My name is Jason Sutter, and I am a citizen of the
11 | United States of America and a resident of Idaho. I support breaching of the dams. I
12 | believe that the elected officials here in Idaho do not represent my opinion. And so
13 | therefore, I feel it is my duty to come forward as a personal -- to offer personal testimony
14 | to say that I support breaching the dams.

15 | I don't think I want to get into the details of why to breach the dams, I just --
16 | I am a wildlife biologist. I have read many of the scientific reports beyond just the sound
17 | bites and publicity stuff that you read in newspapers, therefore, I am more qualified -- I
18 | feel that I am somewhat qualified to make an assessment on what needs to be done. It's
19 | obvious that the dams are one of the major impediments to the survival of this species,
20 | and that by doing nothing about the dams, we surely will -- we'll make sure of their
21 | extinction. I believe we have a duty to the Native Americans who have signed treaties
22 | with our government that assured them fish for the rest of their lives.

23 | And I am also a bit appalled about the selective socialism for some of the
24 | farmers in that areas and the privileges that special interests get from the elected officials
25 | in Idaho. Therefore, once again, I'd just like to state that I am for breaching the dams.
26 | Thank you.

1 MR. WHITEPLUME: My name is Jacob Whiteplume. I'm from Lapwai,
2 Idaho. I'm a Nez Perce tribal member. I think it's a good idea to breach the dams to
3 save the salmon, and I think it's something that needs to be addressed sometime soon,
4 and I hope the federal government don't drag it on, you know, take another two to three
5 years. And it's pretty important for the salmon and the region. It will benefit the region
6 overall, and it will benefit all the people around it and it will benefit the world as well. It's
7 not just going to benefit the people in the immediate area, but it will benefit people
8 overall.

9 Myself as a Nez Perce tribal member, I believe it's very important for the
10 mental, the physically, the spiritual aspects on behalf of the Nez Perce people. I'm
11 speaking from my heart, for myself, and I'd like to see the salmon to live on for something
12 that the kids can see that are still down the road, something that my children's children
13 could see. And we're already talking extinction of salmon. So right now is a pretty crucial
14 time for the United States government and the United States people and the indigenous
15 people of North America, the Native American tribes. So thank you very much.

16 MS. HANSON: My name is Annette Hanson, and I live in Boise, Idaho, and
17 I'm here on behalf of my husband, Robert Hanson. And we are testifying today with hope
18 in our hearts. We confess that we fear the loss of salmon and the loss of rural
19 communities. Our fear is not that we will lose one or the other, but that we will lose both.

20 As we look around Idaho, our natural resources -- resource-dependent
21 communities are in decline. Logging towns, farm towns and mining towns are all in
22 decline. Will they ever become what they once were? Will a town ever be fully sustained
23 by logging, mining and industry alone?

24 Our fear is that if we don't find a way to make these economies become
25 more diversified and stable, they would die trying to remain what they can no longer be.
26 Breaching the dams for salmon recovery could be a new dawn not only for salmon but

1 also for Lewiston and other neighboring communities. Taking the money spent from the
2 ineffective salmon-saving activities and redirecting that money to communities is a way
3 for the federal government to create a win-win situation.

4 Our current economy and budget surplus polices create the opportunity to
5 do something historic. and saving the salmon by breaching the dams and also by helping
6 natural resource-dependent communities experiment in determining what is needed to
7 create economic sustainability.

8 Investment in infrastructure, new businesses, education, computer
9 facilities, high-tech communications and quality of life amenities are some of the things
10 that local communities could do with the federal money that is not going to things like
11 barging. This should be a part of the price of saving salmon.

12 We believe strongly in the ability of humans to adapt. Given the opportunity
13 and the resources, the people of the region could adapt to life without four dams. Give
14 people a chance to adapt to four fewer dams because we have seen the salmon could
15 not adapt to the dams that are there.

16 We believe that this is also a spiritual matter and that we were created that
17 we can adapt. And time has shown that our ways of doing things with the salmon have
18 not been efficient. Thank you very much.

19 MS. BILLINGS: My name is Bobbie Billings. I moved to Idaho early in the
20 1970's before the dams were built, and there were salmon all over, which we showed our
21 children and we're very pleased to be in a place where there was so much wonderful
22 wildlife. As I have lived in Idaho all these years, I have seen us go through phases where
23 there was lots and lots of news about hatcheries, and there were less and less seasons
24 on fishing for the ocean-going species.

25 And of course now, we're here looking at the brink of extinction. I think that
26 keeping those runs alive should be a high priority. I think that removing the dams is

1 probably one part of the most effective solutions, and I think that if the dams are
2 removed, there must be mitigation for the communities and the livelihoods that are
3 affected. And I think those should be priorities. I don't believe those dams give enough
4 power or water to really be as significant as the salmon runs themselves. But I do think
5 that those communities that depend on the barging will be especially impacted, and we
6 need to think about that.

7 I'm worried as an Idahoan about what will happen to our water supply if we
8 do not start to make progress on saving the fish with some other way besides spilling
9 water down the Columbia from Idaho. These are my concerns, and I would like to see
10 my government stand up and make some decisions and quit fiddling around with it and
11 reporting it to death because it will be the salmon which are extinct if they continue to just
12 do reports.

13 MR. SMITH: Alexander Smith, 531 Lynden Drive, No. 3, Lewiston, Idaho.
14 I believe we should breach the dams. A treaty was written a long time ago that promised
15 us, you know, that we would always have fish, and the dams are putting a death to that.
16 And all the attempts to rectify that is to no avail. The way as I see it, is a treaty is a
17 promise. It's just written on paper between two governments.

18 And a promise is meant to be kept forever, not to end when convenient for
19 one or the other. But this is bigger than treaties. This is bigger than politics. This is
20 bigger than fish or dams. This is about ecology and world environment. We are here as
21 guardians of the earth. It says so in the Christian bible; it says so in the legends of the
22 Nez Perce. And when we disrupt the earth's environment, we're the ones who pay for it,
23 our children pay for it and their children pay for it.

24 In our way of thinking, we must understand how our actions today will
25 reflect -- will affect the children seven years down the road, seven generations down the
26 road, because if we're not careful with the way we handle our world today, their world will

1 be less than perfect. Our world -- their world will be unlivable, almost, and they'll be able
2 to say there was at one time salmon here, there was at one time elk here, there was at
3 one time a forest here.

4 But because we took the forest, we can't breathe. Because we killed the
5 elk, everything else went crazy. Because we killed the wolves, we had too many rats.
6 You know, everything we do affects everything else. And when we mess with Mother
7 Nature, it is our children and our children's children that pay the price. Thank you.

8 MR. PICARD, JR: Hello. My name is Andre Al Picard, Jr., and I'm from
9 Lapwai, Idaho. And to me, what this whole hearing about here about saving the salmon
10 and stuff is very important to me, my family and all of our people, all the native people all
11 over the Northwest. You know, salmon isn't just any type of fish or anything, it's a way of
12 life. It's a way that we live with the animals in nature and stuff. And this ain't nobody
13 else's -- we're not trying to copy anybody, you know, we're copying ourselves.

14 We've been doing this for over centuries and centuries, way before
15 anybody else came here to this land, we've been doing this type of thing. And I think
16 truly if, you know, our food starts going, we'll be going also, you know, because this -- I
17 guess we're just so used to living, you know, with all this stuff.

18 And if it ever went, you know, by -- I don't know, maybe these dams put
19 them out or anything, you know, really putting them out, would be really tough on us.
20 And the dams, you know, if they were taken out, not much -- not much would have to
21 change like, you know, in the economy. I think that these people are a little bit -- again, a
22 little bit scared and a little bit overreacting on, you know, what could happen and
23 everything.

24 You know, I think they know truly what can happen. And it's kind of -- I
25 guess it's kind of good, though, they're saying all these things because it makes us look
26 like we're more educated and we're more smarter and, you know, so it's -- so by them

1 | doing all this stuff, we've been looking very good. And even if we -- either way, you
2 | know, no matter what happens, I can still say, you know, whoever sounds the most
3 | educated now is us, you know, for dam breaching. Everybody's been sounding so good
4 | and everything. And that's about all.

5 | MR. MENINICK: Hello. My name is J.J. Meninick. I'm from Lapwai, Idaho.
6 | I'd just like to say a little small something about the salmon, those researches down there
7 | from dams getting killed off. This is mainly about, well, our future, our next generations
8 | and all that. It's a culture to us. But we'd like to keep it running on and on and on. And
9 | dams, they produce electricity, but we can go without some. That's pretty much all I have
10 | to say.

11 | MR. WHITEPLUME: Hello. My name is Lee Whiteplume. I live in Lapwai,
12 | Idaho. I am a member -- enrolled member of the Nez Perce Tribe. I'm here for myself to
13 | make some comments on the breaching of the dams, or the salmon issue.

14 | I'd like to say that the United States government and its very foundation in
15 | its infant years clear back to Plymouth Rock has depended on nature, Mother Nature
16 | itself. And even as history has shown us from time to time, even Lewis and Clark
17 | depended on nature at one time and another.

18 | The United States has depended on it. And even today, our people of the
19 | United States that feed and grow food for the United States depend on nature with the
20 | wind and the rain, the earth, the sunlight. And the United States seems like it's doing its
21 | best to live in harmony -- well, I don't know what to say, the word I'm looking for.

22 | But they're trying their best to live harmoniously with nature. And it's only
23 | obvious that the -- before the dams were put in -- that the salmon and the steelhead runs
24 | were thriving before the dams were ever put in.

1 And I hear a lot of words about the predators and harvest and habitat,
2 harvesting and predators, they're part of nature itself. And it's only obvious that the dams
3 are a major obstacle on the migration of the juvenile salmon.

4 And I hear a lot of words about the economy and I might go through a
5 struggle. I believe that the United States economy is strong enough to overcome such an
6 endeavor. I think it's just up to our leaders to recognize -- to recognize and to listen to
7 nature, so to speak.

8 Return the Snake River to nature and see what nature can do for us. I think
9 that's a step in the right direction. That's about all I have to say.

10 GROUP OF CHILDREN: The future of the salmon is in our hands. We the
11 children understand. We all think the dams must be gone so that the salmon can simply
12 spawn. My animal totem is salmon so they must live.

13 My animal totem is a (inaudible) agrees on the salmon. Salmon are living
14 things, damaged or not.

15 MR. THOMPSON: Terry Thompson, Kuna, Idaho. As a life-long resident of
16 Idaho, I have witnessed the dramatic decline in the numbers of salmon and steelhead
17 returning to Idaho in just the last 25 years.

18 I'm here today to voice my support to save Idaho's anadromous fish by
19 breaching the four dams on the lower Snake River. I am not here today to rehash the
20 biology of these magnificent fish or expound on the countless studies that have
21 continually pointed to breaching as the biological solution to save the fish.

22 The science is clear. It's time to move forward and quit hiding behind the
23 promise of just one more study and then we'll have the final answer. It's time to accept
24 the science and begin to formulate a plan that supports the existing economies of
25 northern Idaho and eastern Washington that will be affected by breaching these four
26 dams.

1 In its recent history since Lewiston became a seaport, 1975, to be exact,
2 until 1975, generations of Polouse grain producers were successful farmers all the while
3 transporting their goods to market using rail and truck. It is not unrealistic to think that we
4 can once again return to these viable sources of transportation.

5 What I am here today to say is let's start working on the social ramifications
6 of breaching. We all will agree there will need to be steps taken to mitigate the effects of
7 breaching on the local and regional economies. We are currently spending over 300
8 million dollars a year to recover salmon and steelhead, and we have over 20 years of
9 plummeting fish numbers to show for our efforts. Let's take part of that recovery money
10 and move it to help local and regional economies.

11 I believe we can have fish and strong economies throughout the Northwest.
12 Now is the time to begin developing strategies to address these social issues. Let's start
13 now to develop efficient and cost-effective methods of transporting commodities from the
14 Port of Lewiston to the Port of Pasco and other Columbia River ports.

15 Let's take the subsidies we currently have for the barging industry and, if
16 necessary, transfer them to the trucking and rail industries, thereby providing producers
17 with the equivalent or perhaps enhanced shipping method.

18 Let's start putting our energies into designing new pumping stations so
19 irrigators can access the water necessary to grow their crops pumping from a river
20 environment rather than a slack water pool. Let's start encouraging energy conservation
21 which can reduce our need for electrical power, thereby negating the need for the power
22 generated by the four dams on the lower Snake.

23 Let's put our technology expertise into developing more efficient power
24 generation turbines for the remaining main-stem Columbia River dams. Let's get away
25 from trying to fix Mother Nature with technology, and leave the technological fixes for our
26 mechanical systems.

1 I'm here to say we can have fish -- I'm here today to say we can have fish
2 and a strong economy at the same time. The two go in hand, but only if we are willing to
3 do the right thing, and that is returning the river back to a river. Losing these fish is not
4 acceptable. Let's do the right thing and save our fish.

5 MS. DEINES: My name is Lynell Deines, and I'm from Boise, Idaho. I am
6 in favor of breaching the four lower Snake River dams. Salmon are good for Idaho, and
7 extinction is not an option.

8 MR. GOULD: My name is Aaron Gould. I'm a member of the Nez Perce
9 Tribe. My address is P.O. Box 11, Lapwai, Idaho 83540. I'm for dam breaching for a
10 number of reasons, mainly because I am a fisherman, native fisherman.

11 You know, I've fished for -- all my life. Got my first, you know, steelhead
12 when I was four, shot my first deer when I was nine. Everything outdoors. And the
13 reason why I have these rights is from the Boldt decisions initially. Because they want to
14 put in dams up the Columbia, and they put these dams, the four lower Snake dams in for
15 a purpose -- for their purpose, it wasn't for our purpose.

16 All I can really convey to you people is that these dams aren't serving their
17 purpose, their initial purpose. They were put in, as far as I can see, as a can-we-do-it
18 type thing, or they asked should we do it.

19 Their purpose has been served, and now the purpose is, as far as socially,
20 is lacking, a lack of purpose socially.

21 Economically, You know, you might have to take a few bumps and bruises
22 on down the line, but I think Idaho -- Idaho and the Nez Perce Tribe will be better off if the
23 dam breaching goes through. That's all I have to say.

24 MR. GRUBIAK: My name is Joe Grubiak. My address is 4536 North
25 Fiveshire Way, Boise, Idaho 83713. Several years ago I moved from Texas specifically
26 to experience the natural wonders existing in the largest wilderness left in the lower 48. I

1 | expected to find a state that embraced its natural resources, one that was an advocate of
2 | all the indigenous creatures that have historically inhabited its environs.

3 | And I expected to find salmon and steelhead. The reality that I confronted
4 | upon arrival was something altogether different. Specifically, I found the gem state and
5 | its neighbors creating every obstacle possible to prevent the return of some of its native
6 | inhabitants. I visited the nature center in downtown Boise only to be confronted by a
7 | disturbing video of 50-pound salmon floundering at the base of one of the newly-
8 | constructed dams.

9 | And I found my state representatives unwilling to consider removal of the
10 | dams or study ways to mitigate its resulting economic impact on the human population.
11 | Salmon and steelhead are a national resource, not a regional one. Americans like myself
12 | have and will spend thousands of dollars each year to experience and fish for salmon
13 | and steelhead. We could do it here instead of Alaska if we just had the courage to do
14 | what Mother Nature intended and have free flowing rivers permitting Idaho salmon adults
15 | to spawn in Idaho's river nurseries.

16 | Removal of the four lower Snake River dams will give our Idaho salmon and
17 | steelhead the best chance to reach the Salmon, Clearwater, Lochsa, Selway, and other
18 | Snake River tributaries and spawning grounds. Removing the four lower Snake River
19 | dams will permit the smolts to quickly reach the ocean in spring runoff where the
20 | complicated biological changes to adapt to their salt water environment. And removal of
21 | the dams will affect few Americans in comparison to the gains of all Americans.

22 | For me, it boils down to what world do you want to live in? One of
23 | resource exploitation to the point of extinction, or one of that -- which revolves around
24 | sustainable resource management, capitalizing on an environment designed by Mother
25 | Nature over millions of years. Remove the dams now, protect the salmon and the

1 environment that has become so desirable and envied by the rest of the country and the
2 world.

3 MR. NELSON: Hi. My name is Michael Nelson. I'm from Baker City,
4 Oregon. I'm president of Friends of Brownlee, Inc., and I would like to take this
5 opportunity, first, to say that in no way is Friends of Brownlee, Inc., position adverse to
6 the salmon recovery. We have a simple statement to make, and that's in our bylaws that
7 we are concerned about the recreational activities of Brownlee Reservoir with the current
8 drawdown management practices.

9 We're here to simply ask that a more reasonable, prudent drawdown be on
10 Brownlee Reservoir for fish augmentation that would take in consideration the incredible
11 warm water fishery that has occurred on Brownlee Reservoir. Brownlee Reservoir is a
12 nationally-recognized fishery and a nationally-recognized recreational spot for all of the
13 citizens of the United States.

14 The current management practices have devastated those fisheries and
15 those local economies that depend on that tourism industry. So on behalf --

16 TAFT ECOLOGY CLUB: Our mommies and our daddies and our grammies
17 and our grampies told us of a story of all we got to see. They told us of the blue skies
18 every single morning, they told us of the salmon that swims to the seas. All they need is
19 an opportunity to see all the things that our parents did see. All we need is an
20 opportunity to see all the things that they did see. So think about the future and what is in
21 store, think about the animals not here anymore.

22 Remember us forever and never to return, caring for our planet is what we
23 need to learn. All we need is an opportunity to see all the things that our parents did see.
24 All we need is an opportunity to see all the things we can see. Just give us a chance to
25 see. Just give us a chance to see.

1 MR. WALTON: Hi. Tracy Walton. I'm a senator from District 9. I live in
2 Gem County. My occupation is I farm. I'm opposed to the breaching of the dams. We
3 have quite a bit of silt behind them dams. We've got to -- in our county, they opened the
4 sluice gates on our dams, took it three years for the river to recover just from our small
5 river and small dam. And also it would take longer than that, probably, on the -- if we did
6 all three dams, the silt that -- the damages from the silt alone would cause much more
7 damage than anything else we could do at this time. We need to, first of all, take care of
8 some of the other problems that are major problems. The terns, also, the sea lions and
9 the seals needs to be taken care of. And we have new data that is coming out since
10 1998, is updated over the '95 data, showing the ocean is being much better as far as
11 helping of the salmon. And we need to also look at the ocean and see what's going on
12 there, finding out what the problem is, not only from harvest, but also from the
13 temperature being warmer.

14 We need to realize even by those that are optimistic about the dams,
15 they're saying maybe a 70 percent chance in 20 years this might recover the fish. But
16 we know what it will do if it takes the dams out as far as to the farming. Also to the Port
17 of Lewiston and also adding many more trucks to our roads. We need to be real careful
18 and look at all these things. Thank you.

19 MR. KESINGER: My name's Tim Kesinger. I live in Boise, Idaho, and this
20 is my statement for saving salmon species. The decision process of the 1960's and
21 1970's which originally introduced dams to the Snake River was flawed by insufficient
22 consideration for salmon species, and also by belief in man's ability to provide for their
23 survival.

24 We're, therefore, justified to now correct those flawed decisions by
25 dismantling the four Snake River dams which have delivered our salmon species to the

1 | brink of extinction. Species in peril require decisive solutions. Anything less would be an
2 | endorsement of flawed policies and greed. Thank you.

3 | MS. HUNT: My name's Cathy Hunt from Boise, Idaho. The lower Snake
4 | dams were first proposed to allow navigation to Lewiston. As early as the 1920's,
5 | arguments raged for years between southern and northern Idaho, eastern and western
6 | Washington, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Army Corps of Engineers, railroads and
7 | adherence of navigation. While these arguments went on, we had fish. The lower Snake
8 | might never have been dammed, but World War II broke out creating a need for
9 | hydropower. By the 1950's, the Pacific Northwest produced half of the aluminum made
10 | by the United States. The region grew, and in 1944, the senate and house approved the
11 | Lower Snake project.

12 | The Army Corps determined that four dams would be necessary to be cost
13 | effective and to produce the needed hydroelectricity. State fish agencies questioned
14 | whether fish could survive any additional dams. As it turned out, they could not. But Ice
15 | Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose and Lower Granite were built. And in the
16 | 1970's, Lewiston became a seaport while fish numbers declined drastically. That was
17 | then, this is now. In the year 2000, we have different priorities. We have highly
18 | productive dams that can take up the slack for the lower Snake dams. Lewiston will go
19 | on as an important Idaho city. Alternative transportation systems can carry Potlatch
20 | products and wheat from Idaho.

21 | We'll have to change our thinking, and change is hard. Let's get out of our
22 | comfort zone, do what's right, save our Northwest heritage. Let's remake history.

23 | MS. HERNDON: Hello. I'm Ann Herndon from Boise, Idaho. Thank for
24 | you allowing me to comment. I'm 100 percent in favor of breaching the dams. I've lived
25 | in Idaho all my life. I've stood in streams up at Marsh Creek and Bear Valley Creek
26 | where salmon are -- well, were, and I hope continue to be, spawning in the streams.

1 And it's just a fantastic experience. The fish deserve to be able to spawn in
2 Idaho. They deserve to be able to swim a thousand miles up into their spawning
3 grounds. I believe that breaching the dams is the only way to go. Please go for it. Do it
4 immediately so that our fish can have a chance to survive. Thank you. Oh, I want other
5 generations to be able to enjoy seeing the salmon. It's mainly for the fish. I mean, sure,
6 people can enjoy seeing the fish and there are economic values that are for fish. But it's
7 mainly for the fish themselves and the kids to come that have not even had a chance to
8 experience salmon. Thank you.

9 MR. HOPSON. Tony Hopson from the Roby Creek area, towards Idaho
10 City. The ramifications of this, I guess, being political and economic. I've got a degree in
11 economic science, and it has never made me a bunch of money. You might say it has
12 influenced me and given me some insight to the political and economic problems of this
13 issue.

14 But again, so what. It seems as though all sides are so polarized that it
15 really makes no difference. And it's very hard from the federal aspect and the Army
16 Corps of Engineers' position to be able to deal with this. So it's like a lose-lose situation
17 even on compromise.

18 I'll tell you a little story about a kid that grew up at the headwaters of the
19 Salmon. I used to watch the salmon come in and I played in the same water that they
20 were in. We floated in inner tubes, and we used to hook the dying females with our lures
21 and play with them as they were dying and splashing around because they are a sport
22 fish, and they did provide -- and they do provide a great deal of entertainment for fishers -
23 - fishermen and people who like those sports. I guess the most important point of all of
24 this is that the dead and decaying salmon after they spawn are able to release into the
25 water the organisms and the other nutrients into the water.

1 It probably is, no doubt, that the salmon can return up into Stanley because
2 of their smell or their taste in order to return. I just feel that it's very important that this
3 cyclical, I guess, part of life be considered in breaching the dams. I think it's good for our
4 economy and good for our life. I've been very lucky to have seen this amazing creature,
5 and I am also equally unlucky to have watched its demise. Thank you.

6 MS. HUTCHISON: My name is Amy Hutchison. I'm from Boise, Idaho.
7 The Army Corps decision will have historic implications. The salmon of Idaho have
8 thrived in our waters for thousands of centuries and face extinction in our generation by
9 our hand. The sad thing is that salmon will go extinct in Idaho so that residents in
10 Washington and Idaho won't have to pay approximately \$1 more a month in electricity
11 costs.

12 And so the few hundred people in Lewiston can keep their current jobs as
13 longshoremen. The Potlatch Corporation also doesn't mind the high water. It helps hide
14 their illegal warm water discharge into our river. These dams don't make sense for
15 people or for fish. They have cost us 3 billion dollars so far, with the promise of
16 staggering burdens in the future.

17 Let's not be bamboozled by the Farm Bureau or the timber interests or
18 believe the politicians when they scream imperialism. If we keep the dams, we will pay
19 dearly. Ten billion in reparation payments to the tribes guaranteed by treaty. The end of
20 Pacific salmon fishing, drying up 680,000 acres of Idaho farmland and the social costs it
21 will bring to these farming communities. The extinction of five species of fish and all that
22 depends on them. Further polluting of our river, further restrictions on logging, road
23 building and mining.

24 With the removal of the dams, a once thriving fishing industry will return
25 with fish. It means 170 million a year to the hard-pressed river communities of Orofino,

1 Stanley, Riggins and Salmon. With return of the fish, we will see the return of a fishing
2 culture in Idaho which is now only a memory.

3 Who here wouldn't like to pull a 20-pounder from the Salmon on a summer
4 weekend? Who wouldn't like to teach their kids how to do the same? Some will say
5 farmers will suffer from a lack of water. Not true. With no slack water, less water will be
6 needed from upstream sources to flush the flooded backwaters of the reservoirs every
7 year.

8 Irrigators in Washington need only draw water from a free-flowing river
9 rather than from a reservoir. Nobody will lose any farmland or irrigation rights. Nobody
10 here has any desire to end farming along the Snake River period. So I ask you, why do
11 we need these dams? We don't. We need salmon.

12 MS. SCHNUPP: My name is Lynn Schnupp. I live in Boise, Idaho. I've
13 been an Idaho citizen for 35 years. I love this state. And I believe very strongly that we
14 need to save the salmon for every kind of reason, for economic reasons, for social
15 reasons, and for spiritual reasons. They're another species that we should not let go.
16 We should save them. It's our responsibility. And that's about it, I guess. Thanks.

17 MS. MENDIOLA: My name is Cheryl Mendiola, and I'm from the Boise,
18 Idaho, area. And what I have to say is that I would like the fish to be fully recovered for
19 my son, that he and his generations afterwards would be able to enjoy these fish and
20 continue that on.

21 And I would hope that there would be some kind of middle ground for -- to
22 make the humans happy and to make the fish happy. And I hope that there could be
23 some kind of mediation to where the fish won't suffer and the humans won't suffer as
24 well. Thank you for your time.

25 MR. DUKE: Yeah, good evening. My name is Steve Duke. Private citizen.
26 Live in Boise, Idaho. Anyway, I'm here to just talk in support of the breaching the dam

1 alternative. I'm a fisheries biologist by trade, one of the 200-plus scientists that signed
2 the letter to the president. And even though I don't work directly with salmon, I spent
3 several years doing research on predation and other types of research on salmon on the
4 lower Columbia River in the '80s. I guess my only comment is, I think it's time for the
5 region to do what's necessary to bring salmon back or to at least allow them the chance
6 to recover.

7 And it seems like dam breaching is just one of many options that should be
8 implemented soon. And I guess my comment to the politicians of the Northwest opposed
9 to dam breaching, why are the few remaining jobs affected by -- that may be affected by
10 dam breaching more important than the 25,000-plus jobs that have already been lost in
11 the lower Columbia River? Thank you.

12 MR. HOWARD: Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I want to thank the
13 Corps of Engineers and Bonneville Power Administration for giving me the opportunity to
14 comment on the decisions at hand. My name is Rich Howard. I was born and raised in
15 eastern Idaho. As a young boy, I was introduced to the chinook and sockeye salmon
16 runs near Sunbeam, Idaho.

17 It was just downstream from the Yankee Fork that I caught my first chinook.
18 It was a spawned-out buck that was only edible if it was smoked. I witnessed the
19 migratory cycles of these magnificent fish during -- many times during my life. My son
20 and daughter saw this cycle of life as they grew up.

21 Only, unfortunately, it was at hatcheries near Salmon, Idaho, and
22 elsewhere, and not in the main stem or the tributaries of the Salmon River. What have
23 we done to ourselves?

24 What will be left that my children can show their children? The mentality of
25 a previous generation of well-meaning citizens has stolen the future identity of my
26 children and grandchildren and how they will relate to this world.

1 It will be very important -- a very poor statement about our Northwest
2 culture if we let the salmon and the steelhead die out and are forced to call the mighty
3 Salmon River the Squawfish River instead. We need to relearn how to hand off the baton
4 of the present to future generations. The message is clear in the case of the salmon
5 issue and the four dams on the Snake River.

6 Let us take the first step in being a bold, mature, parental society, that with
7 clear reason takes the step to select alternative one as described in the Corps' draft EIS
8 as the best and most meaningful alternative to this decision process, that partial
9 breaching of the four Snake River dams will give us -- give some longer alternatives to
10 future generations of my children and yours while keeping the first salmon tradition alive
11 in the Columbia River.

12 Perhaps fuel cells in combination with solar cell ranches will be the answer
13 to replace the lost power generation. We should explore this through public investment
14 with Idaho Power and Vista Corporation. The technology is already available but lacks
15 the immediate capital to make it happen.

16 It is an excellent way to mitigate for the loss of the dams. Again, thank you
17 for letting me comment on the key decisions about the future of the Columbia, Snake
18 River, anadromous fishery. Rich Howard.

19 MR. HENZLER: Hi. My name is Mark A. Henzler, H-e-n-z-l-e-r, and I'm
20 speaking for four other people. Patty Henzler, Alicia, A-l-i-c-i-a, Henzler, Mark Henzler,
21 Jr., and Alexis Henzler.

22 There's to be five people in this opinion. We support breaching of the dams
23 as soon as possible. We would like your cooperation both from federal and state
24 agencies in doing this.

25 In looking at the proposals of not breaching, the amount of water that will
26 have to be given up by Idaho and/or the economic loss in a legal suit with the Indian

1 | tribes who are guaranteed by treaty 50 percent of historic harvest or catch, will be far
2 | more expensive than any amount of money spent replenishing.

3 | If you look at the analogy in the recent 12 months, the price of gasoline has
4 | went up 50 percent, and most of us accept this as just the way it is. If we look at the cost
5 | of supporting the breaching with buying out the 12 farms, buying out some of the
6 | industries in Lewiston, buying out and/or supplying or supplementing the transportation of
7 | wheat for the farmers, it will be far less expensive and easily paid for by a small increase
8 | in the kilowatt for -- one cent a kilowatt hour per user over a period of time to amortize
9 | those costs. And it will be well appreciated.

10 | The difference is, we got nothing for our increase in the gasoline prices
11 | except for a few projects over in Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Iran. What we will have for
12 | support of a little more expensive kilowatt distributed over everybody's residential and
13 | commercial areas is historic, or at least replacement of catchable levels of salmon.

14 | The salmon is an icon in this region. And during my generation or my
15 | lifetime, if we lose this because of inept -- or political considerations who aren't because
16 | of private/commercial interests to step up to the plate and save it, we have done a great
17 | disservice to the human race and to our fellow species on the planet. Thank you very
18 | much.

19 | MR. REINGOLD: My name is Ben Reingold. I currently live in Boise,
20 | Idaho. And I would like to speak out on behalf of breaching the dams. I was born in
21 | Idaho and raised in Idaho and I've seen the decline of salmon and steelhead. We no
22 | longer have a salmon fishery. And it seems like we've tried everything, habitat
23 | improvement, barging, flow augmentation, other technologies. Nothing's changed and
24 | everything seems to be the same.

25 | We've got tons of habitat out there, and none of its reached its carrying
26 | capacity in terms of numbers of salmon and steelhead. I hear that sediment seems to be

1 an issue. Yes, it's an issue, but I've seen drawdowns, for example, in Brownlee
2 Reservoir. A lot of the sediment stays where it's at, which is usually at the head of the
3 reservoirs, and the water will channel down and eventually move on down, but a lot of the
4 sediment will remain where it is. I don't think it's as big an issue as what people say.

5 I would also like to indicate that I've seen a lot of the economy change quite
6 a bit, and logging and mining seem to be gone now. A lot of the economies haven't been
7 replaced. Sure, there's some recreation and, of course, government, also, and some
8 ranching, but I believe that we need salmon and steelhead to help replace some of the
9 lost moneys that used to be in the counties of Idaho. So I believe that breaching these
10 four projects is the answer.

11 If not all four, maybe Lower Granite Dam. I've spent time on the Salmon
12 River, I've talked to old-timers. And they said, boy, when the Lower Granite went in,
13 man, it really knocked them down. It's an accumulative impact, and we need to look at
14 things different and get these salmon and steelhead back in Idaho. Because if we lose
15 these fish, Idaho will no longer be Idaho.

16 MS. GORSUCH: My name is Jane Gorsuch and I'm from Boise, Idaho, and
17 I'm urging the Corps of Engineers to revise its Draft Lower Snake River Juvenile Salmon
18 Mitigation Feasibility Report and EIS to present meaningful alternatives that can actually
19 contribute to the recovery of Pacific Northwest salmon.

20 The Corps is focusing on the wrong problem. The Corps EIS begins on the
21 wrong track by focusing on a tiny piece of the broad problem of salmon recovery in the
22 Pacific Northwest, the week or two when juvenile salmon migrate downstream past the
23 four dams on the Snake River. It's a narrow focus. It detracts from the primary problem
24 in Northwest salmon recovery, and that's fishery agency mismanagement.

25 The Corps' analysis is inadequate and biased. While migrating salmon
26 obviously require water to migrate, the Snake River does not run dry or even nearly so.

1 The most recent studies show that millions of acre feet of water have been released
2 down river in the spring for salmon, wiping out reservoir recreation, and in many locations
3 have been wasted as they find no measurable effect on juvenile salmon survival.

4 Yet the Corps continues to cite outdated and discredited studies claiming a
5 flow survivalship without any attempt to distinguish good science from junk science. The
6 flow augmentation program cost hundreds of millions of dollars and achieves nothing,
7 making it the least cost-effective salmon recovery program now under way.

8 The Corps' failure even to propose an alternative plan that would stop
9 wasting all that water is incomprehensible. The Corps also proposes to take action to
10 protect juvenile salmon without any regard to the effects in returning spawning adults
11 whose survival is more important to the next generation of salmon.

12 The Corps should provide leadership for sensible solutions. Most
13 importantly, the Corps should exercise leadership in salmon recovery by broadening its
14 focus to actions that all government agencies can take, not just actions the Corps can
15 take.

16 Indeed, and according to the Council on Environmental Quality, the Corps
17 is supposed to include reasonable alternatives not within the jurisdiction of the lead
18 agency and its EIS. The Corps should exercise leadership in salmon recovery by
19 identifying preferred alternative in the revised draft EIS as the CEQ says it must. There
20 are many more positive alternatives for salmon recovery that are omitted from the draft
21 EIS that deserve full evaluation.

22 The most obvious ones include grow more salmon, reform harvest
23 management to protect wild stocks, remove huge colonies of salmon predators, huge
24 colonies of terns, gulls, marine mammals, pinniped should be removed through federal
25 directive. And the Corps actions collectively consume far more salmon than the Snake

1 River dams. And stopping the junk science -- the government-run research is producing
2 reams of junk science, much of it buried in this EIS that fuels bad policy.

3 Instead of collecting solid data on salmon survival, the federal government
4 funds the development of complicated computer models that are based on assumptions
5 rather than data and produce results inconsistent with common sense.

6 Electric ratepayers and others in the Pacific Northwest and national
7 taxpayers have spent hundreds of millions of dollars fixing dams in the Pacific Northwest
8 to protect fish runs. Any objective analysis shows that the Corps has achieved enormous
9 improvements.

10 It's time for the Corps to move on and focus on federal resources. The
11 changes can be made and make a difference for Pacific Northwest salmon.

12 MR. JOHNSON: Hi. I'm Kay Johnson. I'm with Salmon River Foods.
13 We're a distributor of products to the outdoor industry. I'm for breaching of the dams, and
14 rather than comment on all the reasons that other people are going to go over, I'm going
15 to go on a specific area.

16 I think that the recreation industry impact has been underestimated.
17 There's examples like Riggins where the growth and the -- of the restaurants and the
18 hotels and other industry has turned a community around, and I suspect that breaching of
19 the dams would expose other recreational opportunities.

20 As an example, the white water rafting industry is one of the most rapidly
21 growing industries of outdoor recreation across the country.

22 And I feel that that probably was not taken into consideration; that people
23 have looked at sports fishery, which I'm sure is going to be a benefit. But as those
24 rapids come up -- and it doesn't take very many rapids to encourage people to white
25 water raft.

1 Part of the unrepresented -- part of the white water industry, which is one of
2 the most rapidly growing industries is the elderly and the young who often are left out of
3 studies. Back east, there are people who take white water trips just to look at the turning
4 of the leaves, to look at -- out here, they would be looking at historical sites and
5 topography.

6 So I'd like to see those taken into consideration. And just to cite one
7 example, the Arkansas river has over 245,000 guided white water dates per person per
8 year, and probably another conservative 250,000 people that are non-guided. So I feel
9 that these numbers could also happen in the area that is currently under water. Thank
10 you.

11 MR. LANGHORST: My name is David Langhorst. I live in Boise. Do I
12 need to give my address as well? I've lived in Idaho for ten years. Had the good
13 fortunate to fish coastal streams in Oregon and Washington and in Alaska and seen
14 salmon. Unlike some of my friends who have lived here in Idaho and were born here and
15 saw them here, I have not. And I think we're poorer for it.

16 So I'm here to beg you, while there is still a chance to save salmon and
17 steelhead in Idaho, to implement alternative number four, restore a normal active river
18 flow to the lower Snake River by breaching the four lower Snake River dams. It's
19 unconscionable to me that we have leaders in Idaho who I think are simply delaying and
20 would like to see the fishing extinct so that you don't have the option, even, of trying to
21 bring them back from what appears to be near extinction.

22 But -- and a lot of fuss is made over the economic effects. And I'm not a
23 heartless guy. A lot of the people I know aren't radicals. I know a lot of people who could
24 be affected by this. But this is a fact of life. In the United States we've gone through
25 economic conversions throughout our history, agricultural, industrial, what have you
26 throughout, but one thing that can't be mitigated for is extinction. When these fish are

1 | gone, that's it. And again, you have right now, it seems, the presumed power of God to
2 | decide whether these fish will remain or not. And I guess I rely on the advice of the
3 | American Fisheries Society, the Idaho chapter, and a vote they took among their
4 | membership. And I guess about 80 percent of them agreed that a normative river was
5 | the best way to assure the survival of Idaho's salmon and steelhead. So I don't agree
6 | with those who say that the science is not in. And again, I'm weighing in for breaching
7 | the dams. Please do it as soon as you possibly can. Do not delay anymore. Thanks.

8 | MS. REED: My name is Jayne Reed. I'm from Garden Valley, Idaho. I
9 | was born in Idaho, and I choose to live here with my family. While growing up, summer
10 | vacations meant fishing. We fished all over the state for any fish that would bite. I
11 | distinctly remember the first time I saw a salmon. They're amazing creatures. Extinction
12 | is not a choice. The salmon were here before Idaho was a state, before the United
13 | States was united, and before any white man stepped on this land.

14 | Why should we, one generation of one species, get to say live or die for
15 | another entire species. Promises were made to the native people in the treaties with our
16 | government. What kind of citizens are we if we ignore those promises? The studies
17 | have been done, the science is in. Breaching the dams is the answer, and it must be
18 | done now. I support alternative four in the Corps' draft EIS. Thank you very much.

19 | MR. HUDSON: Public information manager for the Columbia River Inter-
20 | Tribal Fish Commission in Portland, Oregon, serving the Warm Springs and Umatilla
21 | tribes. I'm speaking to both the All-H paper and the Corps EIS -- DEIS, rather. The
22 | upcoming decisions will affect many generations of tribal members.

23 | This is a -- these decisions are a sad result of lack of decision making to
24 | date. The federal agencies have had, since 1980, with the Northwest Power Act, the
25 | arrival of the Endangered Species Act to come up with a comprehensive plan to make
26 | management decisions in the basin.

1 The Indian tribes have been very responsive to salmon declines. They quit
2 fishing for summer chinook in 1964, spring chinook in 1977, sockeye in 1988, all on a
3 voluntary basis. Their sole remaining chinook commercial fishery is limited to a brief five-
4 day period and extended in five-day increments. That is not an adequate time to make a
5 living.

6 The tribes also employ fish biologists, hydrologists, biometricians habitat
7 managers in numbers far exceeding the numbers of state and federal agencies on a per
8 capita basis. The tribes are responsive, both in the concessions they've made to the
9 treaty fishing rights, and have been proactive in a degree greater than the other
10 sovereigns in the basin with regard to trying to make an impact on salmon rebuilding.

11 One of the sad results as the public information manager in my attendance
12 of these hearings, is that there has been a large degree of racism amongst some of the
13 citizenry.

14 That's no direct reflection on the federal agency's performance, however, I
15 do believe it's an impact, a direct impact of dams, of the economies and that have been
16 supported and, in fact, created by hydro development, pitting themselves, their prosperity
17 against tribal treaty rights.

18 It is an area that the federal agencies must address. I look forward to my
19 agency, the Fish Commission, working with the federal agencies in finding ways that we
20 can bridge that gap, that underlying racism, mistrust, fear, that is exposing itself in these
21 hearings.

22 It's a by-product that does not have to exist, and I look forward to working
23 with any and all, as well as my organization and the tribes I work for in making sure that
24 those long-term solutions are part of salmon restoration. Yes. My name is Charles
25 Hudson.

1 MR. KRIZ: My name is John Kriz. I live in Boise, Idaho. I've been a
2 resident of Idaho for 29 years. My father was a civil engineer, Bureau of Reclamation,
3 and worked on a lot of those dams. I am -- have come to reason, as he did, that we need
4 to remove those four lower dams so that we can have fish recovery. It's a big move for
5 our culture and for our society, but one that we must do.

6 So I would strongly urge you to look at returning our salmon and getting rid
7 of the four lower dams. Thank you very much.

8 MS. McCARTER: Hello. This is Kathleen McCarter. I am a resident of
9 Boise, Idaho. I am a fourth generation Idahoan from a cattle ranching family. I am
10 strongly in favor of option A, which would breach the four lower dams, and highly
11 increasing habitat protection and continuing the hatchery program.

12 I strongly believe that there -- there are advantages -- the advantages to
13 returning a strong salmon fishery and preserving the steelhead fishery to Idaho will more
14 than mitigate the loss of barging to Lewiston and for the grain shippers.

15 In addition, I believe that people are a lot more mobile and can more
16 easily relocate, change their jobs, change their homes than salmon can.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. NALEN: My name is Arden J. Nalen. I'm from Nampa, Idaho, and I
19 represent myself. I'm speaking in opposition to breaching the dams. I don't think
20 breaching the dams would achieve the desired effect that those who support it -- the
21 economics, the recreation that would be lost from behind the dams, especially at a time
22 when we see greater and greater pressure on our natural resources for recreation, the
23 dams would be lost -- increase other area's demand.

24 I think the barging is a great idea. I think there's yet things that we need to
25 know about the salmon as far as after they've passed through the dams, the lower
26 Columbia dams, what happened to the fish in the sea. I think those things need to be

1 | dealt with and see if there's possible ways -- I know there's possible ways we can take
2 | care of some of those problems. Thank you for your time in taking my comment.

3 | MS. JONES: My name is Shannon Jones. I'm from Boise, and I represent
4 | myself. I'm a legal secretary and Idaho native, an environmentalist, and I support
5 | breaching of the dams. I believe that we are creative enough as a society to replace the
6 | jobs that may be lost. I think that federal allocation can be redistributed to reimburse the
7 | power credits that eastern Idaho now gets and may lose. I just think it's a better
8 | alternative to breach the dams.

9 | MR. RUSNACK, JR.: My name is Richard Rusnack. I'm from Nampa,
10 | Idaho. And I'm here on behalf of the salmon. I wholeheartedly feel that it's long overdue
11 | that we remove the dams. I feel the effort that has been made for the last 20 years or so
12 | to improve the runs has failed, no matter how many scientific studies we do and methods
13 | we try. They're not working. And my preferred alternative would be to remove the dams
14 | and let the flows resume.

15 | I don't think we can afford to stall anymore and allow the politicians to argue
16 | it in court. We need to take action now, let the politicians know that this is the best,
17 | cheapest and wisest method and too risky to lose the heritage of the salmon if we stall
18 | any longer. I'd like to see that -- I think we really need our salmon back now, and I think
19 | that the dams are stupid. And it just amazes me that this has continued so long when the
20 | scientific data has been building for years now that our methods don't work, will not work,
21 | and that breaching of dams is a natural condition. This is the only solution, in my opinion.
22 | Thank you.

23 | MS. FRITZ: My name is Ruth Fritz. I'm from Boise, Idaho. I'm in favor of
24 | breaching the dams. I encourage providing subsidies for rail transport to replace the Port
25 | of Lewiston transport. I encourage the honoring of treaties with our tribes. I believe
26 | breaching is our best hope and our greatest opportunity to save the salmon. Thank you.

1 MR. BRADY: My name is Terry Brady. I represent myself. And actually,
2 I'd like to represent my grandson who is 18 months old at this point. And my request to
3 your committee would be that you consider strongly the removal of the four lower Salmon
4 River dams -- lower Snake dams. I think one of the things that I'm hearing in testimony is
5 that there's not been much mention made of the dollars that have already been spent on
6 recovery, and yet our salmon runs are still decreasing.

7 I feel that there has not been much information made available to the public
8 on the Rice Island issue and the terns that are so detrimental to the smolts as they exit
9 the Columbia system.

10 I feel strongly that mitigation efforts need to be applied in the areas that are
11 necessary to those communities that will be affected by the loss of navigable [sic.]
12 systems. The fact that the power production in the dams is actually a minor percentage
13 of the total production from all the sources in the Columbia Basin.

14 The concern that I have regarding the fish is the large volumes of slack
15 water that the fish have to encounter on their out migration to the salmon -- from the
16 salmon system. I feel that the need to look at the opportunities to remove the dams is
17 one of the only scientifically-viable options that we should consider. I thank you for your
18 time and consideration.

19 MS. HILLER: My name is Deborah Hiller. I am a native of southeastern
20 Idaho. I now live in Boise, Idaho. I'm an attorney, I'm a chemist. I have engineering
21 experience, and I'm here to represent myself as a human being and a citizen of Idaho.

22 I want to state that much of what I want to say was expressed at the
23 comments at the hearing in Boise, Idaho, on Wednesday night of February 23rd, 2000,
24 although it was not, unfortunately, stated by my state representatives. I now have two
25 main points, and the first being from personal experience that I do see change as a
26 difficult process for human beings, but I also see human beings as very competent and

1 creative individuals. And I would really like for us all to focus on our ability to attack
2 challenges that are before us and survive huge amounts of change.

3 I have a father who was paralyzed from the neck down and he was a
4 dentist at the time. Of course, paralysis completely affects your livelihood when that
5 happens. We sold everything we owned that year, our house, his practice, everything to
6 survive that financially. And it took a few years, but we pulled through.

7 And with very much so an inspiration for me and should be for all human
8 beings, and that he adapted his livelihood so that he could make one work for him now.
9 And I just see that if the -- I stand for the breach of the dams and for change and for
10 humans taking that on and having it work for us all, including the communities that will be
11 financially impacted by that. And I just want to say personally as an Idahoan I am very
12 much willing to make the financial sacrifices that it takes to save the salmon. I just do not
13 want to see that resource disappear because of economics.

14 And, you know, just the impact on my life -- the power bill is very low, and I
15 just really see doing what it takes to make that change. The other thing that got brought
16 up by our state legislators tonight was a fear that if we breach the dams, power would be
17 taken away from Idaho. And I just wanted to state that there are other sources of power.
18 I know that in Colorado wind power is a major source for their electricity. And being from
19 southeastern Idaho, I know that there is wind there and plenty of it and this is a
20 possibility.

21 And I just want to really stand for that -- there are possibilities available to
22 us as human beings. And I really like the comment earlier that if we can send a man to
23 the moon, we can certainly figure out how to save these salmon by moving forward,
24 taking big measures like breaching the dams and figuring it out and having humans
25 survive, too. Thank you.

1 MR. CONGER: My name is Michael Conger. I have lived in Idaho for 30
2 years, and I am representing myself as a concerned citizen. My concern for the salmon
3 runs deep. I don't have any political or scientific basis for my argument at this time. I
4 think that there's a lot of information out there that is, perhaps, contradictory.

5 I am speaking from my heart just knowing that I believe that breaching the
6 dams would benefit human society and the Northwest, and perhaps throughout the world
7 as far as setting an example of what is possible when people arrive at a consensus about
8 what is best for people and an ecosystem. I think there's a number of issues going on
9 throughout the world that are very important to a lot of people, however, I think that living
10 here in the Northwest, focusing on salmon -- this is a continuation from the other tape.

11 My name is Michael Conger, concerned citizen. I think that -- I don't think
12 that we can put a price tag on our natural resources. I think they're invaluable. I think
13 that the salmon represent who we are as a people, and if they die, I think we die. I think
14 that that just exemplifies either, you know, who we are as a people for this country, you
15 know. Their survival really is very much a representation of this country and who we are,
16 what we can create as a possibility.

17 I think as far as technology is concerned, we're working with dams that are
18 very old. Their technology is really turning into that of a relic. I think that we need to, in
19 any circumstance, figure out ways we can promote new forms of technology in
20 hydroelectricity. There's also various other forms of electricity available to us. However,
21 the bottom line is that, you know, salmon is an important species, and their survival
22 instinct is incredible. And it's more than incredible, it's something to learn from. And I
23 think that we need to look at the salmon as an example of perseverance in doing what's
24 right. And because, in our sense of time, really, this is a split second, and we're making
25 some very important decisions that could affect this earth forever. Thank you.

1 MR. STEPHAN: My name is Martin Stephan, Boise, Idaho, and it's spelled
2 M-a-r-t-i-n S-t-e-p-h-a-n. And I support alternative four in the Corps draft EIS is the only
3 plan that will restore our salmon and steelhead to self-sustained harvestable levels. As
4 required bylaws and treaties, breaching the four lower Snake River dams must also be
5 included in any comprehensive recovery plan put forth by the federal caucus in the All-H
6 papers.

7 Beyond that, I think the science is out that the dams will save us billions of
8 dollars a year, will also help the tribes and the federal and state governments deal with
9 this long-term issue. I also see the dams as important for recreation in the state of Idaho
10 and also in the Northwest providing jobs to thousands of people and also helping
11 economies like Riggins, Orofino, Salmon and Stanley.

12 It's pretty obvious that dam removal is the cheapest option on the table as
13 opposed to other alternatives, and will save us millions of dollars in the long run, as well
14 as saving our wild heritage of the salmon that have been here for thousands of years.
15 And it just seems as dam breaching is the best alternative right now, and in the long run,
16 will save this unique species from extinction, which I think is the most important thing to
17 consider.

18 While a few changes may have to be made in the local economies, I think
19 that is really a sacrifice that some people are definitely willing to make, and that the
20 federal government can also help subsidize transportation in railroad and roadways to
21 help these economies adjust to these changes. So thank you. That's it.

22 MS. HILLER: My name is Donna Hiller, and I'm from Boise, Idaho. I'm
23 representing myself. I'm a native Idahoan, and I truly love this state and love the pristine
24 waters and love the mountains, and I want to preserve it for my grandchildren and for
25 future prosperity.

1 I've been very frustrated with the rhetoric and millions spent on the topic of
2 salmon restoration. I feel like the scientists and biologists concur that dam breaching
3 gives the salmon the best chance of recovery. I'm very disappointed that our politicians
4 seem to smoke screen and confuse the issue because they won't take a stand. To not
5 make a decision is to make a decision.

6 I'm disappointed that many Idahoans complacently sit by and watch the
7 salmon disappear. Leaving the dams in place helps a few people for today only.
8 Breaching them benefits millions for hundreds of years to come. People can change
9 jobs. They've had to transition in the past from horses to automobiles, from typewriters to
10 computers. They are very adaptable.

11 A few need to sacrifice for the greater whole. I would hate to be known as
12 the generation that allowed the salmon to die. We must preserve them as part of our
13 heritage. Thank you.

14 MR. WOODS: My name is Paul Woods. I'm from Boise, Idaho. And in my
15 testimony today, I just want to testify in support of the breaching option. I think that it has
16 the most benefit for Idahoans and the greatest potential for applying with the Endangered
17 Species Act. And that's the end of my comment.

18 MS. McLEAN: My name's Lauren McLean. I'm from Boise, Idaho. Do I
19 have to give any other information? Okay. I'm in support of breaching the dams.
20 However, I think it's very, very important that studies been done to determine how to
21 mitigate the factors, both economic and social, for the people of the Northwest as regards
22 breaching the dams. We must. It's very important that we look at the treaties that we
23 have established with the Native American people and work our hardest to make it
24 possible for them to take the fish that they were told that they would have. And from a
25 personal standpoint as a mother and having a family, and I think about the future of the
26 Northwest and icon of the salmon. Yes, our culture is now dependent on these dams, but

1 the overall culture and the history of the Northwest is dependent on the salmon. It is very
2 important that we determine ways politically acceptable that would make it possible to
3 bring them back. I think I'm done. Thank you.

4 MS. BARDELAS: My name is Zena Bardelas. I'm from Boise, Idaho, and I
5 support breaching the dams and saving the salmon.

6 MS. KING: Okay. My name is Lisa King. I'm from Boise, Idaho. And just
7 briefly, I don't really know exactly which of the alternatives I support, but I do support
8 saving the salmon with considering the other wildlife in the -- that are affected when we
9 go into making these -- choosing an alternative.

10 So if breaching the dams is the best alternative for us saving the salmon
11 and the native fish and other wildlife, then I would support that. But I'm glad that we are
12 being able to have our testimony and that you're taking these into consideration. Thank
13 you.

14 MR. ROYCE: There's also the issue of the farmers. A total of 35,000 acres
15 are irrigated by 13 farmers that would have -- all that would have to occur is to extend the
16 intake pipes and beef up the pumps to accommodate the lower river flow. These farmers
17 are heavily subsidized by the government, and this venture would be relatively
18 inexpensive for these farmers.

19 The farmers raise the issue that if they lose their cheap method of shipping,
20 they will go out of business. That is an excruciating thought, but so is the fact that cheap
21 shipping these people have enjoyed for years has been paid for by the taxpayers.

22 Tax dollars built and maintain the dams that provide very little power and no
23 flood control. These dams are in place and paid for by the taxpayers to the benefit of the
24 private establishments of Potlatch and 13 farmers.

25 The Idaho Fish & Game did a study and concluded that the science part of
26 the issue was that only the natural river option would work. So the Army Corps of

1 Engineers stepped in to do an Environmental Impact Study that was abhorrently late in
2 coming. The study was to see if barging actually does work or if the dams need to be
3 breached.

4 The study cost the taxpayers our hard-earned money, and in return we
5 expected them to tell us accurately and correctly what would be the best course of action
6 to save the salmon. What we got was far from that. The study stated nothing
7 conclusively and in the end was a waste of time and money.

8 The fact is that barging doesn't work. A one billion dollar effort by the Army
9 Corps has failed miserably and one -- and anyone who's studied the issue with an
10 unbiased approach has come to the conclusion that unarguably the best and most sound
11 method to save the salmon is to breach the dams.

12 Thank you. My name is Josh Royce. I'm from Boise, Idaho. I'm
13 representing myself.

14 MS. HAHN: My name is Christine Hahn. And I'm from Boise, Idaho
15 representing myself. And I'm commenting, I think, on both of the plans, because I think
16 they address sort of the same issues. I just wanted to say that I came here because I
17 very strongly feel what we should do whatever we can to save the salmon, including
18 breaching the dams if that's necessary. I guess that's it. Kind of feel like I had to say
19 that.

20 (End of taped proceedings.)

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