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PUBLIC MEETING SESSION

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
DRAFT LOWER SNAKE RIVER JUVENILE SALMON MIGRATION
FEASIBILITY REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
WITH
FEDERAL CAUCUS CONSERVATION OF COLUMBIA BASIN FISH
"ALL-H PAPER"

GOLDBELT HOTEL JUNEAU
51 EGAN DRIVE
JUNEAU, ALASKA

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

MARCH 8, 2000
6:30 P.M.

COURT REPORTER: WILLIAM J. BRIDGES, CM, RMR, CSR

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1 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: I've got
2 David Benton speaking on behalf of the Governor, and
3 Allen Osterman, from the House, and Liz Kabrara on
4 behalf of southeast legislators.

5 So David, if you could come up first,
6 followed by Allen, followed by Liz.

7 MR. DAVID BENTON: Thank you, Mr.
8 Chairman, and Larry, welcome back to Alaska. My name
9 is David I. Benton, Deputy Commissioner for the Alaska
10 Department of Fish and Game. I also serve as Alaska's
11 Pacific Salmon Commissioner and have interacted with
12 Larry in many ways over the course of several years in
13 that.

14 And I am here to read a statement by
15 Governor Knowles. This is I think in response to both
16 papers and to all the agencies.

17 With that, I would like to read the
18 Governor's statement. I think I can do it within the
19 time.

20 First off, I want to welcome the federal
21 agencies responsible for restoring the salmon of the
22 Pacific Northwest to Alaska and thank you for holding
23 hearings in our four southeast communities.

24 The decisions you make have profound
25 effects on Alaska fishing families and all who care

1 about the future of Pacific salmon.

2 Five years ago I testified in Ketchikan on
3 the proposed recovery plan for Snake River salmon. At
4 that time I expressed concerns about the federal
5 government's use of the Endangered Species Act to
6 restrict the Alaska harvest without any measurable
7 gain for Snake River fall Chinook.

8 I also expressed concerns about the misuse
9 of the Endangered Species Act as a political and
10 economic weapon, rather than as a critical tool for
11 making sound biological decisions. These concerns
12 remain today.

13 Since that date five years ago fisheries
14 have continued to be restricted, while salmon in the
15 Columbia River basin have continued to decline. And
16 now after further decreases in harvest and a new
17 abundance-based management regime, put in place by the
18 1999 Pacific Salmon Treaty agreements the federal
19 government is discussing further 50 to 75 percent
20 reductions in ocean fisheries, and we take that to
21 mean southeast Alaska.

22 Further fishing reductions in Alaska are
23 not a viable, science based option. Such reductions
24 alone cannot recover the Snake River fall Chinook, and
25 do absolutely nothing to assist with recovery of the

1 spring summer Chinook. They would, however, deal a
2 death blow to our coastal communities.

3 Also over these same last five years we
4 have been engaged in very controversial negotiations
5 for the Pacific Salmon Treaty to develop the means to
6 protect and restore these stocks.

7 These new agreements include provisions to
8 restore salmon habitat and assure safe passage of
9 salmon to spawning grounds.

10 These groundbreaking provisions of the
11 treaty were what agreed to by the United States and
12 Canada, precisely because of a recognition that
13 fisheries restrictions alone will not recover these
14 species and these stocks of salmon.

15 It is no surprise that many Columbia and
16 Snake River salmon populations are in trouble, and
17 that some are listed as threatened or endangered. The
18 sad truth is that the NMFS now believes Snake River
19 chinook salmon migrating to the sea, are safer in a
20 barge or trucks than they are in the river.

21 If there is a commitment to restore salmon
22 in the rivers, Pacific Northwest, the only viable
23 scientific option is to restore the rivers of the
24 Northwest to natural condition. That is the only way
25 to assure recovery of these stocks and it is the only

1 option that satisfies the requirements of the new
2 Pacific Salmon Treaty agreements on habitat and safe
3 passage.

4 We recognize this is no small challenge for
5 the nation and the Northwest. The Columbia and Snake
6 Rivers have become a virtual killing field for salmon.
7 The NMFS allows federal dams to kill an estimated 62
8 to 99 percent of the juvenile Snake River fall
9 Chinook. Nearly 40 percent of the adult.

10 Oregon biologists estimate the dams are
11 responsible for up to 90 percent of the total
12 mortality. And Alaska biologists note 70 percent of
13 the river miles between the ocean and the spawning
14 grounds for these fish have been converted to
15 reservoirs.

16 Although fishing is not the problem,
17 fishermen have already paid a high price through
18 harvest reductions over the years. The Alaska
19 Department of Fish and Game studies show that between
20 1988 and 1997 before the new treaty took effect,
21 harvest-caused mortality had decreased significantly
22 from about 74 to 22 percent of the adult mortality.
23 The decreases included Alaska's fisheries, Canada,
24 Washington, Oregon coastal fisheries, the Yakima
25 tribal of fisheries the Columbia Basin.

1 Clearly fisheries are doing their part.
2 Now the discussions and the decisions about how to
3 restore salmon runs in the Columbia River Basin have
4 evolved into an argument over conflicting directions.

5 Some argue in favor of breaching the four
6 Lower Snake River dams to help restore natural river
7 conditions. Others propose techno-fixes. I have
8 heard some of those tonight.

9 Scientists in the Pacific Northwest
10 increasingly point to the four Lower Snake River dams
11 as the critical part of the problem and the only
12 lasting solution.

13 If society at large wishes to restore these
14 salmonids to sustainable, fishable levels, a
15 significant portion of the lower Snake River must be
16 returned to a free-flowing condition by breaching the
17 four lower Snake River dams. This is the Oregon
18 association for American Fisheries Society.

19 Our Fish and Game department agrees that
20 this assessment is sound, and so do biologists from
21 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

22 If breaching the dams is unacceptable, then
23 other viable scientifically sound options must be
24 identified and implemented immediately. It is not
25 acceptable to further reduce Alaska's harvest, put the

1 burden on Alaska's fishing families. To do so would
2 be purely cosmetic and punitive to Alaska's fishermen,
3 and avoid an effective solution.

4 I believe it is time for the federal
5 agencies to embrace the common goal of long term
6 recovery. It is time to put aside the convenience of
7 appearing to do something through additional harvest
8 reductions which will only fail in the long run.

9 In closing I want to thank you again for
10 coming here and the Governor wants to express his
11 appreciation to all fishermen here tonight, their
12 families and to Alaska's biologists and fisheries
13 managers for doing an excellent job.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Allan
16 Osterman, followed by Lisa Kabrara, followed by Jim
17 Pound.

18 MR. ALLEN OSTERMAN: Thank you. Yes.
19 I would also like to welcome you to Juneau. I am from
20 Kodiak. We appreciate it very much that you have come
21 here to let us know kind of where you are going, what
22 you are doing.

23 We are very concerned as Alaskans as to
24 what the impact is going to have on us here. You guys
25 do not have an easy task. That is very obvious. It

1 is probably one of the hardest ones that I can
2 imagine, trying to solve both the economic and social
3 problem that's been created and is exacerbating itself
4 on a continuing growing pattern, with just the
5 population growth itself.

6 As has been said, I am Allen Osterman. I
7 am a representative in the State House here in Juneau.
8 I represent the Kodiak Island district. I have been
9 in the House now six years. I have lived all my life
10 on Kodiak.

11 I was a commercial fisherman for a number
12 of years. I am well versed on what goes on in the
13 industry. I have served the last four years on the
14 Pacific Fisheries Legislative Task Force which
15 encompasses California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and
16 we have just invited, and I do believe that British
17 Columbia is going to join us as well.

18 Our group, we get together three times a
19 year, discuss the issues, try to keep ourselves
20 abreast of what's going on, and in the last four years
21 I have heard lots of stuff about the Columbia River
22 Basin and what can be done.

23 And your comments a few minutes ago about
24 spending three billion dollars, I believe. And
25 obviously their comments, particularly the ones in

1 Idaho, three billion dollars for one or two fish, is
2 pretty hard to swallow.

3 The one thing that I am not here to talk
4 about to down on the Columbia River, how many dams to
5 take out. That's your decision, and the kind of
6 things that you have to make those decisions on are
7 based upon scientific information that you have.

8 One thing I want to talk to you about is
9 habitat, and as you have indicated, the real way to
10 solve the problem is to get rid of the dams. The
11 habitat is the number one issue.

12 In Alaska we recognize that. Our
13 management scheme for fisheries is number one, protect
14 the habitat. We do that. We do it well. Our
15 fisheries are very strong. We manage by abundance
16 base. We don't manage by how many river fish come up
17 the river. We have a good system.

18 But the key to it is the habitat. That's
19 my message to you, is if you're going to come up here
20 and take part of our catch, which then also doesn't
21 mean just taking those Canadian fish, it means if we
22 can't fish on the Canadian fish that are out there,
23 that means we don't fish on the other fish that we
24 have already created and we have already grown here
25 and we have got.

1 So that's the economic issue that
2 approaches us up here, is it's not just that we're
3 catching Canadian fish. We have to stop catching our
4 own. And that is very sad for us.

5 Obviously interception happens everywhere.
6 It doesn't matter which fish. We address that all the
7 time on the Cook inlet. The intercept is going to
8 happen, period.

9 The issue that was brought up a little bit
10 ago about what to do about Canada, I have had
11 inter-relations, I have gone to Canada on several
12 different times, meeting with the fisheries minister
13 and stuff in B.C., talking about what they're going to
14 do.

15 Their management system is different than
16 ours. They have problems that we don't have. We
17 don't want their problems. But we don't want to be
18 caught in the middle of the fact that they can't
19 control their own fisheries and then we have to pay
20 the price here in Alaska.

21 Fix the habitat. You should be able to fix
22 your problem.

23 Thank you.

24 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
25 much, Allen.

1 Liz Kabrara, followed by Jim Pound. And
2 after Jim we will start the public testimony, starting
3 with Kris Balliet, and Kris will be followed by Chip
4 Toma.

5 MS. LIZ KABRARA: Good evening. By
6 way of introduction, my name is Liz Kabrara and I work
7 for Representative Bill Hudson who is the
8 representative here in Juneau. He has asked me to
9 read this letter into the record. It is signed by
10 nine legislators representing all of southeast Alaska
11 and Kodiak.

12 We are writing in response to the Federal
13 Caucus's draft report conservation of Columbia Basin
14 fish, otherwise known as the All-H paper.

15 After reviewing the report we are deeply
16 concerned about the proposed harvest restrictions for
17 Alaskan fisheries outlined in alternatives B and D.

18 These alternatives will result in drastic
19 reductions and perhaps the complete elimination of
20 Alaska's sport and commercial king salmon harvest for
21 up to ten years.

22 Over the last 30 years Alaska's troll fleet
23 has reduced its harvest of king salmon. Fishing
24 seasons have been discussed from 160 days to 11 days.

25 In the last ten years alone the total value

1 of the southeast troll fishery for king salmon has
2 dropped from 12.5 million to 3.7 minimum per year.
3 Southeast Alaska's four fishing quotas established as
4 appearance of the state's total Chinook cap.
5 Therefore these fisheries have also been curtailed.

6 Fishing opportunity for resident Alaskans
7 have a negative economic impact. These reductions in
8 quota and fishing time are not implemented in an
9 effort to recover stocks in Alaska. But instead an
10 effort to conserve Columbia basin stocks. Minute
11 effects on southeast Alaska's King, Snake and Columbia
12 stale, we are perplexed by your proposal to request
13 additional harvest restrictions.

14 Fishing mortality rates pale in comparison.
15 In examining Snake river fall Chinook, we find that
16 the National Marine Fishery Services allows the
17 federal dams to kill up to 99 percent of juveniles and
18 up to 30 percent of adults.

19 In all, hydropower is responsible for up to
20 95 percent of human induced mortality, while Alaska's
21 fisheries are responsible for only about one-quarter
22 of 1 percent of total human induced mortality.

23 Lastly we note that in December of 1999 the
24 National Marine Fisheries Service issued a biological
25 opinion affirming that the harvest levels of the

1 Pacific salmon treaty meet the requirements of
2 Endangered Species Act. In other words, Alaska's
3 already meeting its obligations and responsibilities
4 for recovery of endangered salmon in the Columbia
5 Basin.

6 We contend that Alaska's fisheries have not
7 caused the serious decline in the Pacific Northwest
8 and furthermore that our fisheries are not a
9 significant contributor to the current situation.

10 In short, we will not support efforts to
11 further curtail Alaska's king salmon fisheries.

12 This letter is signed by Representative
13 Bill Hudson, Representative Bill Williams,
14 Representative Alan Austerman, Representative Albert
15 Kookesh, Senator Robin Taylor, Senator Jerry Mackie,
16 Senator Kim Elton and Representative Beth Kerttula.

17 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
18 very much, Liz.

19 Jim Pound, followed by Kris Balliert,
20 followed by Chip Thoma.

21 MR. JIM POUND: Thank you for this
22 opportunity to speak. I am Jim Pound, legislator.

23 It seems that every time there is a problem
24 in the lower 48 states, Alaska is supposed to resolve
25 it by taking another cut.

1 When the BPR burger was announced, no one
2 in Washington gave a darn that most Alaskans were
3 concerned. When California, Oregon and Washington
4 climbed in, it became a concern.

5 When the environmental movement demanded
6 more, Washington, D.C. turned their eyes to Alaska to
7 wipe out a forest industry.

8 Now it is fish. The federal caucus wants
9 to save the king salmon population and in the Snake
10 and Columbia Rivers.

11 It is easier to just shut down another
12 industry in Alaska. Logging is all by gone. Mining
13 is gone.

14 Now the southeast Alaska fishing industry
15 has already been cut from 340,000 fish to 106,000
16 fish, just to keep Washington, Oregon and British
17 Columbia and Canada from facing another potential hit.
18 The fishing industry today is worth about 3.7 million
19 dollars annually. It used worth 12.5 million.

20 If the two proposals are approved in this
21 plan, fishing boats, both commercial and charter, will
22 be basically worthless. The plan would be in place
23 for ten years, and would all but eliminate the entire
24 industry in southeast Alaska.

25 We say, enough is enough. We will not

1 stand by and allow our federal government to continue
2 to destroying southeast Alaska just to please the
3 industries and residents of Washington, Oregon,
4 California, and again British Columbia, Canada.

5 We are part of the United States on an
6 equal footing with other states. We are not
7 responsible for their mistakes in the past and should
8 not be required to bail them out now.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
11 much, Jim.

12 Kris Balliet, followed by Chip Thoma,
13 followed by Theodore Merrell.

14 MS. KRIS BALLIET: Hello. My name is
15 Kris Balliet. I am the regional director for the
16 North Pacific office of the Center for Marine
17 Conservation.

18 I am here today for Center for Marine
19 Conservation but I am here today because I am Alaskan.

20 Dam removal alone is predicted to lead to
21 full recovery of the Snake River fall Chinook and
22 steelhead. Increasing habitat by 77 percent and
23 bringing back 20,000 fish. As spring and summer
24 Chinook head for extinction, 3700 miles of high
25 quality habitat in Idaho, lies virtually vacant

1 because salmon aren't surviving round trips through
2 those dams.

3 Governor Tony Knowles had it right when he
4 called the dams a killing field. Those dams don't
5 make sense. Those dams don't make sense for our
6 economy.

7 The options for restoring salmon which
8 don't include dam removal are more costly, will have
9 larger negative impacts on the region and won't work.

10 Harvest cutbacks will hurt real people here
11 in Alaska and won't work to restore Snake River
12 salmon.

13 Center for Marine Conservation has joined
14 with 700 regional and national organizations, and I am
15 going to try to get through a substantial portion of
16 that list, mostly Alaskans, who are endorsing the
17 removing of those four Lower Snake River dams. The
18 Alaska Center for Conservation, Long Line Fishermans
19 Association, Midnight Chapter of Trout Unlimited,
20 Tongass Sport Fishing Association, Alaska Marine
21 Conservation Council, Alaska Trollers, National
22 Wildlife Federation, Trout Unlimited, American Rivers,
23 southeast Alaska Survey Council, Columbia River
24 Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Earth Justice Legal
25 Defense, Federation of Fly Fishers, The Mountaineers,

1 Natural Resources Defense Council, Northwest Ecosystem
2 Alliance, Northwest Sport Fishing Industry
3 Association, Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen
4 Association, Save Our Wild Salmon, Taxpayers for
5 Common Sense, Washington Trollers Association, just to
6 name a partial list.

7 And most importantly, what I would add
8 there, is 500 Alaska fishermen.

9 Those dams don't make sense. We ask you to
10 choose Alternative 4 and breach those dams.

11 Thank you.

12 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thanks a lot,
13 Kris.

14 Chip Thoma, followed by Theodore Merrell,
15 followed by Dick Myren.

16 MR. CHIP THOMA: Thank you. For the
17 record my name is Chip Toma.

18 I agree with everyone here tonight that
19 fishing or overfishing is not the problem.

20 The problem is habitat on the Snake River.
21 The destruction of habitat benefits a very few grain
22 farmers. The issue of power is phony.

23 Despite the 1200 megawatts generated yearly
24 by the Snake River dams, the region has saved way more
25 each year by fuel and energy conservation in the past

1 decade and will save far more when the price of oil
2 goes to \$2.00 a gallon as it likely will.

3 Unfortunately another big problem is
4 politics. With Idaho and Washington lined up against
5 Oregon, and U.S. Senators even from Alaska supporting
6 their colleagues and saying no way to breaching.

7 The dams must come down. It's either Snake
8 River dams or Snake River salmon. And it's up to
9 commercial and sport fishermen in the Northwest to
10 lead the way.

11 Fishermen are the answer to this issue, and
12 not the problem.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
15 much, Jim.

16 Ted Merrell, followed by Dick Myren,
17 followed by Sarah Keeney.

18 MR. TED MERRELL: My name is Ted
19 Merrell, and I advocate removing the four Lower Snake
20 River dams.

21 I am a recreational salmon fisherman and a
22 retired fisherman biologist, a life member of the
23 American Fisheries Society, the largest professional
24 organization of fishery biologists in the world,
25 former President of the Alaska chapter of the American

1 Fisheries Society, former Alaska director of the
2 American Institute of Fishery Biologists, and for 30
3 years employed by the National Marine Fisheries
4 Service, where I was manager for habitat research
5 programs.

6 Before coming to Alaska in 1956 for seven
7 years I was a biologist, research division, of the
8 Oregon State Fish Commission, conducting studies in
9 the effects of the dams on the salmon in the Columbia
10 and Snake Rivers.

11 Results of these studies included an
12 estimate of adult Chinooks killed at Bonneville Dam,
13 which at that time was the only dam on the lower
14 rivers. Documentation of the catch of fall Chinooks
15 on the Indian dip nets fisheries at Celilo Falls which
16 was inundated by the The Dalles Dam in 1959.
17 Estimates of a number of adult salmon migrating and
18 estimates of spawning fall Chinooks in the upper Snake
19 before this race was destroyed by Hells Canyon dam
20 which was built without any fish passage facility
21 also.

22 The discouraging outlook for salmon in the
23 Snake and Columbia system was a factor which strongly
24 influenced my move to Alaska. Commercial salmon
25 fishing was the territory's largest industry and

1 productive spawning and rearing habitat was and still
2 is largely intact.

3 Fishery scientists and fishermen predict
4 that the proliferation of dams would devastate the
5 Columbia River salmon runs. But dam advocates claimed
6 that the benefits would outweigh that.

7 Hatchery fish, and for downstream migrants
8 were supposed to substitute for the free flowing
9 rivers. Predictably these assurances proved false.

10 The four lower Snake dams are regarded by
11 most fishery scientists as the most harmful of the 27
12 mainstem dams on the Columbia and Snake River.
13 Removal of those four dams would restore the lower
14 Snake to a free flowing river instead of a series of
15 shallow slack water pools for downstream migrants
16 become disoriented and are decimated by predators that
17 have proliferated.

18 You have the most telling argument for
19 removal of the four lower Snake dams is a resolution
20 passed by the overwhelming majority of the 3,000
21 members of the western division of American Fisheries
22 Society at their July 13, 1999 meeting. They
23 recommend the removal of the dams as the best single
24 action.

25 Further reductions in support of commercial

1 catches, especially in Alaska, and reliance on
2 expensive failed technical measures will not succeed.
3 A free-flowing Snake River and unobstructed access to
4 spawning and rearing habitat is the only viable
5 solution.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
8 much, Ted.

9 Dick Myren, followed by Sara Keeney,
10 followed by Larry Dupler.

11 And I want to apologize right now for
12 butchering anybody's names throughout the evening. I
13 will do my best here on the names.

14 And also if I could remind folks not to, if
15 you could please not clap at the end of these, it will
16 help us with the recording.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. DICK MYREN: My name is Dick
19 Myren. I am retired.

20 I went to the southern part of California
21 and watched the dam exterminate the king salmon there
22 in 1942. I worked there as a biological aide.

23 And actually that started my, I saw the
24 adults smashing their heads on the dam, and by the
25 middle of the 1940s the 250,000 run of kings were

1 extinct.

2 This question is really, it boils down to
3 morals quite a bit and what sort of society we want.

4 The world is very much less when that run
5 of fish disappear and that marvelous resource
6 disappeared.

7 So I'm in favor of the dam removal and to
8 do something that we as a human species should attempt
9 to do in the age of reckless technology.

10 Thank you very much.

11 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
12 much, Dick.

13 Sarah Keeney, followed by Larry Dupler,
14 followed by Bruce Baker.

15 MS. SARAH KEENEY: My name is Sarah
16 Keeney, and I am here tonight because I am an Alaskan
17 and also because I got my first fishing pole this
18 Christmas and I want to be able to take it out and
19 fish for king salmon for a long tongue time to come.

20 I have been a resident of the Pacific
21 Northwest for the past five years and I understand the
22 great importance of healthy salmon populations to this
23 part of the country.

24 While I realize that this hearing is not
25 solely about breaching Snake River dams, but it is one

1 of the most important and immediate steps we can take
2 to conserve these salmon stocks.

3 Cuts to Alaska harvest levels are not going
4 to fix the severe problems further south. And the
5 science that I have seen supports that.

6 Dam breaching along with an aggressive
7 habitat rehabilitation program in the Columbia River
8 Basin is the only answer.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
11 much, Sarah.

12 Larry Dupler, followed by Bruce Baker,
13 followed Byron Somerville.

14 MR. LARRY DUPLER: Thank you guys for
15 coming up here.

16 I went down to Port Angeles for quite a
17 while before I moved up here to Alaska, and they voted
18 to improve the habitat there to make a substantial
19 increase in the habitat improvement and returning the
20 natural run to its natural state.

21 I see no reason why we can't pursue the
22 same angle on these other four dams and make sure that
23 the rest of the dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers
24 have spillways that are suitable to support salmon
25 returns to the natural spawning grounds which is where

1 they need to be.

2 We need to protect our rights to the fish
3 up here in Alaska, and that can only be done by fixing
4 the habitat that exist in the Columbia River and other
5 river systems in the Northwest.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
8 much, Larry.

9 Bruce Baker, followed by Ron Somerville,
10 followed by Michelle Ridgway.

11 MR. BRUCE BAKER: Welcome to Juneau.
12 My name is Bruce Baker. And my wife and I live here
13 in Juneau. We own property in Washington, and are
14 subject to prevailing electrical generating costs in
15 that state.

16 However, we also depend on the wild king
17 salmon that we catch to help fill our family freezer.
18 And we want to see the Snake River dams breached in
19 order to help save salmon populations.

20 As a retired fish and wildlife man, I at
21 that time specialized in the Alaska Fish and Game, I
22 am all too familiar with the broad range of abuses
23 that humans heap on the salmon.

24 I am also aware of the many biological and
25 economic problems associated with trying to substitute

1 self-sustaining wild salmon stocks with hatchery
2 reared salmon. Healthy wild salmon stocks and a
3 healthy habitat have no match when it comes to low
4 cost sustainability, genetic vigor, freedom from
5 disease, and biological resilience.

6 Alaskans continually remind each other of
7 this fact in the proposal to breach Snake River dams
8 is a strong indication that many people in the Pacific
9 Northwest have also come to this realization.

10 I encourage you to proceed with the
11 breaching of these dams and to do whatever you can to
12 help salmon reestablish themselves as close to
13 historic levels as possible in the Snake River.

14 You and we all have an obligation to future
15 generations to do that.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
18 Larry.

19 Ron Somerville, followed by Michelle
20 Ridgway, followed by Mark Rorick.

21 MR. RON SOMERVILLE: Thank you. My
22 name is Ron Somerville. I am a seven-year resident of
23 Alaska. I grew up in a small fishing village in
24 southeastern. I commercial fish, recreational fish,
25 subsistence fish, and I have worked my way up, 24

1 years in the Department of Fish and Game, thank God as
2 a wildlife biologist, rather than a fishery biologist.

3 But I do want to make a couple points, and
4 I have revised my testimony so much I can hardly read
5 it.

6 I do agree with the Colonel that it's a
7 regional problem. 150 years late, however, in
8 recognizing that.

9 I think what people here are telling me,
10 that the Pacific Northwest traded fish for power and
11 politics. And now I think we're at the phase where we
12 have to face up to the hard decision. I guess all of
13 us to some extent.

14 However, the real quick, and I have
15 attended some of the meetings dealing with the
16 Columbia River in my capacity with the Department, and
17 it's clear that there's that lot of disagreement over
18 the mortality, you know, the projections and modeling.
19 We have all done a lot of modeling, garbage in,
20 sometimes you get garbage out.

21 Probably the first question, however, is
22 asking, is it possible to effect the recovery of the
23 Snake River Chinook and steelhead.

24 There is a valid argument, at least a
25 legitimate one, that recovery is possible. I say that

1 because it may be one of the options you hadn't
2 included in your plans. If a plan is destined to
3 fail, don't take the rest of us down with it.

4 It is irresponsible to adopt a plan which
5 could result from the reductions in our fisheries that
6 you have suggested.

7 I would contend those responsible for the
8 crisis and the benefits should reap the
9 responsibilities here of restoring the stocks. The
10 Northwestern states, as I have said, traded their
11 fisheries for clean power and agriculture.

12 If the Northwest states are unable or
13 unwilling to pay the price of recovery, and if the
14 people are unwilling to do that, it may be in the best
15 interests of the public as a whole to place this issue
16 before Congress and the God squad.

17 I know that's a tough thing for a biologist
18 like myself to say, but maybe that is one of the
19 options we should seriously consider.

20 If extinction is truly inevitable on the
21 Snake River and the public is unwilling to pay the
22 price of recovery, I would say there is only one,
23 recovery is only possible if the dams are eliminated,
24 and I say that without the full benefit of all the
25 data that you have available to you.

1 However, continued assault on our healthy
2 fisheries because the Columbia River fish are
3 incidentally caught is irresponsible.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
6 Ron.

7 Michelle Ridgway, followed by Mark Rorick,
8 followed by Anne Fuller.

9 MS. MICHELLE RIDGWAY: Hello to all
10 of you, and thank you very much for coming to Alaska.

11 My name is Michelle Ridgway. I have lived
12 in southeast Alaska for over 30 years, was raised on
13 the banks of a wild Salmon Creek in Ketchikan.

14 I'm here today representing the Alaska
15 Marine Conservation Council. I am on the board of
16 directors and chair of our habitat committee.

17 And the issue of the day is all about
18 habitat.

19 My Board of Directors has asked me to read
20 to you our resolution regarding the Snake River dams.
21 Resolution of the Alaska Marine Conservation Council
22 supporting partial removal of the four Lower Snake
23 River dams.

24 Whereas the mission of the Marine
25 Conservation Council is to protect the health and

1 diversity of our marine ecosystem,

2 and whereas, habitat protection is the
3 primary objective of MCC,

4 whereas the Snake River system habitat is
5 crucial -- is a crucial part of the Chinook salmon
6 ecosystem,

7 whereas, since 1981 Chinook salmon harvest
8 in southeast Alaska has been reduced to protect the
9 health of salmon runs adversely affected by dams on
10 the Columbia and Snake Rivers,

11 whereas, scientific data indicates
12 southeast Alaska fisheries are responsible for only
13 one-quarter of 1 percent of the total mortality of the
14 Snake River fall Chinook,

15 whereas, scientists estimate up to 95
16 percent of the mortality of threatened Snake River
17 fall Chinook occurs at dams on the Snake and Columbia
18 Rivers,

19 whereas, the diverse membership of the
20 Alaska Marine Conservation Council, which is over 700
21 members statewide, all share a common interest in
22 assuring the long term abundance of wild salmon,

23 and, whereas, the Alaskan Marine
24 Conservation Council joined with the Alaska Governor
25 Tony Knowles in call for a commitment to save passage

1 of salmon to and from their spawning habitat in the
2 rivers of the Pacific Northwest, Canada and Alaska.

3 Therefore, be it resolved that the Alaska
4 Marine Conservation Council in order to protect the
5 wild salmon sport Alaska fishermen -- and support
6 Alaskan fishermen, supports the partial removal of the
7 Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose, and Lower
8 Granite dams on the Snake River.

9 Thank you very much.

10 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
11 very much, Michelle.

12 Mark Rorick, followed by Anne Fuller,
13 followed by Stan Reddekapp.

14 MR. MARK RORICK: My name is Mark
15 Rorick, and I am a 28 years resident of Juneau. And I
16 am with the Juneau group of the Sierra Club. I am
17 here to speak in favor of breaching the four dams in
18 the Lower Snake River.

19 The four Snake River dams were authorized
20 to be built in 1955 during the height of the Cold Wars
21 industrialized at any cost mentality.

22 Their construction was opposed by President
23 Eisenhower, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Oregon
24 and Washington Departments of Fish and Game, the
25 region's native Tribes, and the then multi billion

1 dollar West Coast fishing industry.

2 Their reason, that it would damage the
3 region's salmon runs. There is no doubt that they
4 were right.

5 The dams by creating reservoirs of slack
6 water turned the salmon smolts journey from the
7 spawning grounds to the sea which once took as little
8 as five days into a six week marathon.

9 Whereas they expend energy swimming through
10 as much as 40 miles of slack water, they are preyed
11 upon by other species of fish.

12 And then of course they face the turbine
13 spillways and collection barges.

14 It's not hard to figure out what the
15 problem is here. The Snake River dams are of a type
16 that have no function as flood control, where they
17 provided storage for irrigation, such as at the Ice
18 Harbor reservoir, where water can be taken from the
19 free flowing river.

20 The Snake River's small amount of barge
21 traffic could easily be replaced by road and rail
22 slipping which is in place right beside the river.

23 Economic studies have concluded that the
24 long term benefits of damage removal to the fisheries
25 of the Snake River and its tributaries would generate

1 billions of dollars for the area's local communities.

2 In 1999 the steelhead sports fishery even
3 in its diminished state provided 2,700 jobs and
4 generated 90 million dollars.

5 You can contrast this with the four dams
6 legacy. And so far that has been the extinction of
7 all Coho in Idaho, Oregon and Washington that were
8 dependent on the Snake River's migration corridor, the
9 declaring as threatened or endangered all other
10 species of Snake River salmon, and the Idaho spring
11 summer Chinook runs once the largest of its kind in
12 the world being reduced to 2,400 returning adults.

13 This is the price the nation is paying for
14 5 percent of the region's hydropower. An amount that
15 if lost would add little to consumers bills.

16 The price southeast Alaska's fishermen and
17 communities are being asked to pay could be a
18 devastating 50 to 75 percent cut in the king salmon
19 fishery. A fishery that has already been reduced by
20 40 percent.

21 Recently we have heard from people and
22 politicians opposed to the dam's breaching that the
23 problem for the Snake River salmon lies elsewhere.

24 We have even heard some arguments that play
25 a racist card, blame everything on native treaty

1 rights. Don't believe it. 20 years spent barging
2 smolts past these dams hasn't worked and no matter
3 what other factors are involved these stocks won't
4 recover with the Snake River dams in place.

5 National Marine Fisheries Service's own
6 scientists have told them that the only chance for
7 recovery is removing the dams which are the smolt's
8 biggest source of mortality.

9 They have also said that if the dams are
10 removed, those chances are very good. The agency
11 should listen up and get the job done.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
14 much, Mark.

15 Anne Fuller, followed by Stan Reddekapp,
16 followed by Richard Hellard.

17 MS. ANNE FULLER: My name is Anne
18 Fuller and I am a citizen. I've lived my life in awe
19 of those big silver fish, on the Rogue River, and Good
20 News River, and now here on the inside passage.

21 Your studies don't explain all the ways
22 that the returning fish through the land, the
23 creatures and the people. Our elders tell us that the
24 salmon people knowingly returned those who respect the
25 fish.

1 I'm bewildered by some of the terminology
2 here tonight. Effective extinction threshold, about
3 one fish in one year. Going to take more than one
4 fish. It takes two. And we all want hundreds and
5 thousands, not just a few. Immediate is seven years.
6 I just don't get that one.

7 You know, we know how to drain the marshes,
8 we know how to pave the soft grounds and culvert all
9 the creeks.

10 But Oregon and Washington and British
11 Columbia and California -- I mean, and Alaska,
12 California is already gone, Alaska, don't need to be
13 paved and made pretty.

14 I'm here to tell you to restore the salmon
15 streams, I don't think I have to point out that
16 reservoirs are not habitat for trout and salmon,
17 neither are spillways.

18 So breach the dams, figure out how to
19 follow the laws that say we have clean water and we're
20 protecting endangered species.

21 I know I'm asking a lot. We have to be
22 ready to let the old ways go, to wander around in
23 confusion for a while, who glimpse something new that
24 might be incredible, and then to create that new way.

25 That's what it's going to take, some heroic

1 action on behalf of the salmon.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
4 Ann.

5 Stan Reddekapp, followed by Richard
6 Hellard, followed by Mark Wheeler.

7 MR. STAN REDDEKAPP: Good evening,
8 and welcome. I am Stan Reddekapp. I am a troller.
9 And I am testifying in my own behalf. I have been a
10 troller since 1973 and beyond that I grew up fishing
11 with my dad since 1947.

12 I have seen the runs rise and fall, you
13 know, on those sales, you know. And since the hard
14 ball management came into being, I have seen our
15 Alaska stocks rise to an awesome level.

16 We are in good shape. Statistics prove
17 that.

18 Why is it necessary for Alaska once again
19 to pay the price for someone else's mistakes? Talk
20 about extinction. I think that maybe that's going to
21 have to be one of the choices. If the people down
22 south want their electricity, their irrigation, those
23 things that benefit them, maybe that will have to be
24 the choice.

25 But I would like to see you leave Alaska

1 alone.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
4 very much, Stan.

5 Richard Hellard, followed by Mark Wheeler,
6 followed by Eric Jordan.

7 MR. RICHARD HELLARD: Good evening.
8 My name is Richard Hellard.

9 First of all, I would like to say that I
10 support the Endangered Species Act. I haven't heard
11 that said tonight, and I think that's an important
12 point to make.

13 I'm in favor of doing whatever's necessary
14 to save the Snake River Chinook and to protect all
15 salmon habitat. But I do not believe that we can
16 accomplish this goal by restricting the catch of the
17 Alaskan fishermen. It's also a fallacy to believe
18 that the decline in Snake River Chinook and steelhead
19 can be remedied through trucking and barging of smolt
20 to avoid the dams.

21 It's clear that if we breach the four lower
22 dams, it will provide a significant improvement in
23 survivability.

24 What we need is to muster the political
25 will to take this crucial step. Empowered by this

1 bold move we could begin to take habitat conservation
2 seriously. If this doesn't happen, we will see a
3 continued decline of stocks and the demise of a large
4 part of our fishing industry.

5 Partially removing the four dams will not
6 cause economic disaster. The 5 percent loss in
7 hydroelectric power can be made up by conservation and
8 renewables. This is a worthy goal in any case.

9 Salmon are a crucial part of our way of
10 life in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest.

11 The continuation of this heritage is
12 threatened by logging, mining, dams, and the loss of
13 habitat through development.

14 In order to have salmon we must have
15 healthy rivers. Let's have the courage to correct
16 some of our past errors and take habitat protection
17 seriously.

18 Don't waste any more money on Rude Goldberg
19 solutions that are doomed to failure.

20 Save the Chinook, the Snake River Chinook,
21 by breaching the dams, and then let's work together to
22 protect the other stocks.

23 Thank you.

24 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
25 Richard.

1 Mark Wheeler, followed by Eric Jordan,
2 followed by a ten minute break.

3 MR. MARK Wheeler: Good evening. I
4 thought it was tough to get past all the dams and
5 barges and hooks and nets and various predators out in
6 the sea to get here to Alaska, but then I tried to buy
7 a ticket on Alaska Airlines.

8 My name is Mark Wheeler. And I'm here
9 today testifying on behalf of myself.

10 Alaska's already suffered from construction
11 of dams on the Snake and Columbia Rivers. The early
12 part of the century the community of Port Alexander
13 numbered in the thousands of residents who fished
14 every year for Chinook salmon passing by the southern
15 tip of Paranot Island. That community today is less
16 than a hundred people.

17 Enough is enough. The only real solution
18 as we have heard tonight is breach the dams, protect
19 habitat, leave Alaskan fishermen alone.

20 I would also like to thank our political
21 leader here night, especially the Governor, for taking
22 the brief stance that they have taken tonight, and ask
23 the question, where is our Congressional delegation.

24 I was troubled today, read an article in
25 the paper, in which representative Don Young and

1 Senator frank Maukowski are questioning the wisdom of
2 breaching the dams.

3 Who were they representing? Are they
4 representing the fishermen in Yakutat, Pelican, Sitka,
5 Port Alexander, Craig, Juneau?

6 Are they representing grain farmers down in
7 Idaho? Timber companies in the Pacific Northwest?
8 Lewiston, Idaho? Who are they representing?

9 In closing, please follow the science,
10 breach the dams, protect our habitat, and leave
11 Alaskan fishermen alone.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
14 Mark.

15 Eric Jordan.

16 MR. ERIC JORDAN: My name is Eric
17 Jordan. Welcome to southeast Alaska. As usual, I'm
18 following the salmon (indicating).

19 I am a third generation Alaskan troller.
20 My grandfather fished here, my father fished here, my
21 mother who you will hear from tomorrow has spent a
22 lifetime fishing here, and has a book, Following the
23 Alaskan Dream.

24 I've been a member of many of the groups
25 that have spoken here over the years. But I am here

1 to speak as a troller.

2 The reason we're here is that a huge
3 mistake was made a number of years ago. And that
4 mistake was that we as a people believed that we could
5 substitute hatchery and lakes for the natural rivers
6 and that the salmon would still thrive.

7 My mother and father heard the promises
8 that were made that when we built these dams, not only
9 would we mitigate the problems, but we would enhance
10 the salmon runs with the hatcheries and the dams.

11 That promise has failed. There are
12 treaties that this country has made with the Tribes,
13 and there are commitments that we have as a people, as
14 a nation, to this great species that we share the
15 earth with.

16 And that commitment is that when we learn
17 from our mistakes, we will rectify the situation. You
18 are just small agents in time here. You must look at
19 your job as change agents. We must educate and inform
20 the people, and I'm confident in this country,
21 American people will choose to restore these fish.
22 Not just to the area where these four Lower Snake
23 River dams are, but to the whole range.

24 I stood on the Metoius River, the springs
25 that come out near Sisters, Oregon, this fall, and

1 looked at the sign that described the great salmon
2 runs that used to return there. And imagine what a
3 great species of king salmon that was genetically
4 crafted to travel the hundreds of miles and the
5 thousands of feet in elevation to spawn in those
6 springs.

7 And what a tragedy it is that they no
8 longer share the earth with us.

9 I am dependent on salmon for a living. But
10 it's much more, as I showed you in Sitka yesterday,
11 it's much more than a living. The joy that pursuing
12 these creatures brings to us is incalculable in your
13 economic adjustments.

14 Let's start the march to restore the
15 salmon, people, to their former range in their former
16 abundance.

17 Thank you.

18 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
19 very much, Eric.

20 At this point I'd like to take a ten minute
21 break. You all have been sitting very, very
22 respectfully and patiently for a couple hours now. So
23 let's take a ten minute break. We will come back.

24 And after the break we will hear from Rich
25 Davis, followed by Cliff LaBaugh, followed by Dale

1 Kelley.

2 And for those of you who know what number
3 you were when we signed up, Eric was number 17, and we
4 have 35 people signed up. So thank you all, we will
5 see you in ten minutes.

6 (Short recess).

7 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: We are
8 starting out here with Rich Davis, followed by Cliff
9 LaBaugh, followed by Dale Kelley.

10 MR. RICH DAVIS: Welcome, members of
11 the Federal Caucus. I am Rich Davis, a 35 year
12 resident of Juneau.

13 I serve the 375 member Seafood Producers
14 Cooperative as their delegate to the Board of
15 Directors of United Fishermen of Alaska, the statewide
16 fishermen's organization that I represent to you here
17 tonight.

18 UFA has adopted a resolution intended to
19 reinforce the testimony that you are hearing, that
20 states that our fisheries cannot be even minimally
21 altered without tremendous social and economic
22 consequences, and we will submit this resolution in
23 written form sometime subsequent to this oral
24 testimony.

25 It is immensely important to us that for

1 years we have altered our fisheries to reduce the
2 harvest of Columbia and Snake River king salmon. And
3 we sincerely hope you comprehend how many people in
4 this region rely on king salmon harvest and how much
5 we have already given to assist the conservation of
6 Snake River fall kings.

7 Snake River fall kings are a minute
8 component of our harvest. Our Department of Fish and
9 Game tells us that less than one-half of one-tenth of
10 1 percent of our production is comprised of these
11 fish.

12 We want you to leave Alaska resolved that
13 our fisheries are not the problem and that we serve no
14 useful purpose in any restoration plan.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
17 very much, Rich. Cliff LaBaugh, followed by Dale
18 Kelley, followed by Beth Kerttula.

19 MR. Cliff LaBAUGH: I am Cliff
20 LaBaugh, retired veterinarian, live here in Juneau. I
21 went to college in the '50s at Washington State
22 University, then known as Washington State College.

23 And following is a copy of an E-mail that I
24 recently sent to some of my Palouse buddies, just get
25 even for all of the nasty jokes they have been sending

1 me.

2 When I was a young man the Snake River was
3 white water, Canadian geese nested on the island in
4 the river, salmon runs were healthy, an active
5 railroad ran along the valley river, and rich
6 agricultural lands were located along the banks of the
7 river.

8 Then I became older, wiser and a scientist
9 to Washington State College and studied a series of
10 small dams that were being planned for the Snake
11 River. The major concern at that time was the
12 flooding of the islands. If the dams were built, and
13 the effects on the goose nests, nesting and the
14 predator control.

15 Now I am not a young man, the river is no
16 longer white water, the active railroad is gone, the
17 agricultural land is flooded, the salmon runs are no
18 longer healthy, but the geese are still there.

19 The series of small dams were built on the
20 Lower Snake River and now they are considering
21 breaching the dams to improve the salmon runs.

22 I have lived in Alaska for the past four
23 years, our Governor supports removing the killing
24 fields in the Snake River instead of destroying the
25 Alaska fishing industry.

1 Cliff.

2 Dale Kelley, followed by Beth Kerttula,
3 followed by Joyce Levine.

4 MS. DALE KELLEY: I am Dale Kelley,
5 the Executive Director of the Alaska Trollers
6 Association. Our office is located here in Juneau.

7 With this testimony I submitted a copy of
8 ATA's resolution in support of partial removal of four
9 dams in question on the Snake River.

10 That said, I would like to share with you
11 the broader perspective of the fishermen I represent.

12 The troll fleet is the only fleet in Alaska
13 that has been actively planning for one salmon stock
14 listed under the Endangered Species Act.

15 The problem is it likely doesn't have a
16 thing to do with the recovery of these fish. Every
17 Chinook fisherman in Alaska could cease and desist and
18 you might put 20 more Snake River spawners on the
19 gravel.

20 The fact that anyone is still focusing on
21 restrictions in Alaska is completely absurd.

22 How absurd? Well, for years we tried to
23 find the right sound bite to describe it. Apparently
24 folks didn't get it when we said, meant two additional
25 Snake River spawners. Or that our loss of 13,000 fish

1 helped three-quarters of a salmon return home.

2 So how about this one. Southeast Alaska
3 trollers on average harvest one Snake River spawner
4 every 44 years.

5 Now, I've not yet lived 44 years, and
6 honestly can't tell you if I have caught one.

7 Alaska fishermen are simply the pawns in
8 someone's charade to convenience the public that
9 something is being done to protect salmon in the
10 Columbia River basin.

11 Our fishery has been sliced and diced for
12 20 years. Cutting our harvest further will not help
13 any of the stocks at risk but will decimate a fleet
14 that has been pushed to the brink by a chronic lack of
15 political resolve to restore Northwest salmon runs.

16 Alaska is a fishing state. There really
17 isn't much else to do. There are 33 towns in
18 southeast and only three have road access. About one
19 out of every 30 people works on a troll boat here, and
20 this doesn't account for the process and sport sector.

21 There are over 3,000 troll permit holders,
22 and 85 percent of them reside in our state. In some
23 communities trollers make up 40 percent of the total
24 population, and this is only one fishery.

25 Seafood is the biggest employer and

1 provides roughly 40 percent of the private sector jobs
2 in our region.

3 Alaska fishermen don't really want to medal
4 in Northwest issues, but the policy mistakes made in
5 your region have had great impact on us.

6 If people want to restore salmon runs, the
7 fish need somewhere to spawn and rear. This will take
8 scads of money and lots of patience. You are decades
9 away from a solution.

10 Removing dams is just part of the equation.
11 Development in all of its forms has taken its toll on
12 salmon.

13 What are you willing to give up in the
14 Northwest to rejuvenate salmon? We are told that the
15 four dams on the Snake River are a likely place to
16 start. That above them is near pristine habitat.

17 After all of the options that sounds like
18 the less expensive start. Of course I am way up here
19 in Alaska. Perhaps you can see a better and cheaper
20 solution in your own backyards.

21 Frankly, most important to us Alaskans is
22 that you find those solutions and leave us alone. We
23 are already doing far more up here than is necessary
24 to help. The rest is up to you.

25 Thank you.

1 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
2 much, Dale.

3 Beth Kerttula, followed by Joyce Levine,
4 followed by Hank Porter.

5 Just a reminder for folks that are
6 testifying, there will be two bells. The
7 first bell that you are going to here is that you have
8 one minute left. I know it is disarming when that
9 rings. But just so you have an idea, you've got one
10 minute left, and then the second bell is your end. So
11 thank you very much.

12 MS. BETH KERTTULA: Thank you. My
13 name is Beth Kerttula, and I am aim the representative
14 for downtown Juneau where you are sitting right now.

15 First I want to thank you very much for
16 coming tonight, spending your time with us and with my
17 wonderful, very knowledgeable constituents who I know
18 have spoke eloquently throughout the night.

19 I'm a third generation Alaskan, which is
20 fairly rare among my Alaskans. And what I want to say
21 is, all I really want to ask you is to do the science
22 tonight.

23 We in Alaska sometimes I think that we have
24 been quite naive in sitting back, taking restriction
25 upon restriction on our own fisheries. But when you

1 look at the science here and you look at what has
2 happened in the lower 48 and you look at what the
3 impacts are on us, you really do have to start to
4 question what the reality of the situation is.

5 And for us, for our fishing industry and
6 for a very small population for a very large state, we
7 still are very culturally, you know, committed to the
8 resource. I really hope that you will pay attention
9 to that.

10 I actually feel that you will.

11 So with that, I want to thank you for
12 coming. I want to thank you very much for paying
13 attention to my constituents and for the Alaskans in
14 the room.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
17 much, Beth.

18 Joyce Levine, or is it LeVine, followed by
19 Hank Porter, followed by David Hawes.

20 MS. JOYCE LEVINE: Joyce Levine.
21 Welcome to Juneau. Thank you for being here this
22 evening.

23 For several seasons I worked in the
24 fishing industry in Alaska. As the numbers of the
25 fish decreased more and more limitations and closures

1 were put into effect, thus shortening the time
2 available to catch fish and make a living. It became
3 apparent to me that in order to maintain a comfortable
4 standard of living, I would have to find other work.

5 In the late '70s the king salmon season was
6 approximately 60 days.

7 In 1999 the king salmon season in Alaska
8 was 11 days here in southeast.

9 Alaska fishermen have bent over backwards
10 to be responsible for the salmon. It is now time for
11 others to share the responsibility for the fish.

12 The majority of those that fish in Alaska
13 and others are asking that the federal government
14 breach the four lower dams on the Columbia-Snake River
15 system. Although these dams do provide hydropower for
16 electricity to 5 percent of the region, they have also
17 wiped out 90 percent of the inland western salmon in
18 the last 25 years.

19 Elaborate systems that barges smolt salmon
20 from one side of the dam to the other are not proving
21 fruitful as the fish are dying and the incredible cost
22 to these systems are being passed onto the taxpayers.

23 There is no doubt the number of salmon
24 continue to decrease on the Snake River. From 1990 to
25 1999 a total of 20 Sockeye salmon returned to the

1 system. While there used to be tens of thousands of
2 Chinook in the river system, in 1998 only 306
3 returned. The Idaho spring summer Chinook run once
4 the largest of its kind was down to 2400. In some of
5 the streams, there were no returns at all.

6 Over and over again reports show that the
7 partial dam removal is the best option for salmon
8 recovery and that no other method can match its speed
9 or its result of success.

10 Reports show that partial dam removal has
11 an 80 to 100 percent probability of recovering Snake
12 River spring summer Chinook runs while the present
13 method, fish trucking, continues to show a low chance
14 of recovery.

15 Dam removal is affordable and would benefit
16 greatly businesses in the Northwest and their
17 communities.

18 It seems as though those that benefit the
19 most from maintaining these dams are the profit making
20 power companies and the aluminum plants that run
21 cheaply off the hydropower.

22 The concerns of transportation for farmers
23 in the area could be addressed by investing in
24 railroad and highway infrastructures which would meet
25 their needs and the needs of local citizens.

1 By restoring the salmon runs it would bring
2 72 million dollars in annual direct revenues and over
3 2,100 jobs, including 700 in the rural communities.
4 The direct effects would equal approximately 170
5 million dollars and 5,000 jobs.

6 Our lack of action today will move salmon
7 runs closer and closer to extinction.

8 I ask that you begin action immediately
9 toward the removal of the four lower dams on the
10 Columbia-Snake River which will start to restore a
11 more natural river condition and which will help to
12 restore the spawning.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
15 very much, Joyce.

16 Hank Porter, followed by David Hawes,
17 followed by Paula Terrel.

18 MR. HANK PORTER: Thank you. Members
19 of the panel, I didn't come here tonight with a
20 prepared statement. I didn't even plan on speaking.
21 But I didn't see anyone in the audience from Yakutat,
22 Alaska, and that is from where I from.

23 I commercially fished up there for 30
24 years. And I have witnessed a lot of cutbacks over
25 the years that we have had to take in the name of

1 conservation for the lower 48 states, caused by damage
2 that the dams have done.

3 And I just want to say, Yakutat has six to
4 eight hundred in population. It's on the northern
5 most section of the troll fishery in southeast. And
6 it is the economic backbone of our economy. And the
7 kind of talks, the kind of cuts that you are talking
8 about taking would just be devastating.

9 I don't have to give you a lesson in
10 economics. You know, commercial fishing keeps the
11 cold storage people working, the fishermen themselves,
12 the local stores, the airlines, the restaurants. It
13 just goes on and on.

14 And I just want to say that any cuts would
15 be devastating to us, and I think that we have taken
16 enough cuts already.

17 Thank you.

18 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
19 very much, Hank.

20 David Hawes, followed by Paula Terrel,
21 followed by Albie Morin.

22 MR. DAVID HAWES: Hello, and thank
23 you for pronouncing my name correctly. That is not an
24 easy one.

25 I definitely am at the periphery of this

1 issue. I haven't read all of your material. I just
2 came tonight out of interest, and out of real concern
3 about the importance of removing dams. You read about
4 this in the newspaper. It was hard to pick up the
5 direct link. It was only last week that the local
6 folks have done a good job of playing out just how
7 we're being asked to give up the salmon harvest up
8 here when there's a much bigger problem down south.

9 I grew up in California. You know, I've
10 experienced Alaska now for upwards of 20 years.
11 California, you just lost the habitat. 90 percent of
12 it's gone. There is a number that has a lot of
13 currency about how we lost 90 percent of the ancient
14 growth woods. I think you can have a parallel with
15 habitat. It doesn't have to be 90 percent. But you
16 are past the 50 percent mark.

17 There has been tremendous habitat lost down
18 south.

19 My daughter is at Walla Walla. And it was
20 a lot worse than I thought it would be. Walla Walla
21 has a channelized stream, flood control through the
22 center of the community. The community used to flood.
23 I understand why it's there. I stopped by the side of
24 the road. Driving back to Walla Walla, and this poor
25 little stream that can be supporting juvenile salmon,

1 David.

2 Paula Terrel, followed by Albie Morin,
3 followed by Shirley Perkins.

4 MS. PAULA TERREL: Hi. My name is
5 Paula terrible, and I have been a commercial troller
6 for 22 years with my family. And I had something
7 prepared but everybody has spoken far more eloquently
8 than I can on a lot of this. But there are a couple
9 of things I would like to say.

10 We've heard here about the sacrifices that
11 the trollers and the commercial fishermen and the
12 sports fishermen have taken with cuts over the years,
13 and in our own family we've had sacrifices, we would
14 love to be able to fish all year around or have that
15 as our living, but because of the seasons being so on,
16 and the harvest being so reduced as it is, one or the
17 other of us has been forced to take a stray job so we
18 could continue to fish, which is really what we love
19 to do.

20 So, we have been losers in the sense that
21 we have had sacrifices. And I know, and this is the
22 one thing that I do want to say that I don't think is
23 always said here, is I know that there are people in
24 Eastern Washington and Idaho and Oregon and wherever
25 that are very frightened about losing their

1 lifestyles, their way of life, their economy, and
2 there are probably losers there, there will be winners
3 as well if the dams are breached, and I do support
4 breaching the dams, because I think that's what
5 science says is the best way to approach this.

6 And I know that politics comes into play
7 with this. And I'm asking you, number one, to look at
8 the science and make your judgments and your
9 recommendations based on science.

10 For those people who are going to be
11 negatively impacted, I think the federal government
12 built the dams, it's your responsibility, and I think
13 it's your responsibility to mitigate any of the
14 negative impacts that are done to those people down
15 there, just as it's your responsibility to mitigate
16 the impacts that are being done to us.

17 I don't think any one of us wants to hurt
18 somebody else. And that's all I'm asking.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
21 Paula.

22 Albie Morin, followed by Shirley Perkins,
23 followed by Steve and I think it's either Givert or
24 Gebert.

25 MR. ALBIN MORIN: My name is Albie

1 Morin. I am a resident of Juneau for 20 years,
2 commercial fishermen. I want to thank you for coming.

3 I have learned a lot tonight. Like that
4 each one of these dams that we are talking about only
5 contributes 1 percent to the BPA's grid. And that
6 only one of these new turbines has been implemented
7 out of 200 dams.

8 It seems like we could try to work a little
9 harder on some of this.

10 I would ask that Alaska fishermen, don't
11 ask us to take any more cuts to protect Snake River
12 fall Chinook until you can assure, demonstrate a
13 sincere and conscientious effort at the Corps of the
14 problem.

15 These salmon need habitat. Can you really
16 justify forcing more cuts to protect two fish? Maybe
17 I'm cynical, but I'll be surprised if in the 21st
18 century the Pacific Northwest will trade cheap
19 electricity and irrigation for salmon.

20 In reality, you can't have both. Please
21 prove me wrong. It boggles my mind to think we
22 haven't learned from our past and we would continue to
23 let these salmon and any species go extent.

24 I would ask that Alaska fishermen,
25 commercial and sports, be exempt from any more cuts

1 until you can show us more success at home, and if
2 that didn't work, consider a buy-back program, since
3 we will be extinct also.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you.

6 COL. JIM WADDELL: Thank you. Let me
7 clarify something that I obviously left a bad
8 impression in people's minds. There are 200-plus dams
9 throughout the entire basin.

10 With regard to the turbines, the minimum
11 gap rutter turbines we talked about before, those are
12 only being considered right now for the Corps dams.
13 And that's only four dams on the Lower Columbia. Of
14 those, there are two that are due for rehabs for the
15 turbines. That is Bonneville and The Dalles Dam.

16 That type of technology is being used very,
17 very successfully at another dam on the mainstem,
18 Wanapum, that is owned by one of the Public Utility
19 Districts.

20 But Wanapum is unique in the way that it is
21 configured with relation to the hydro power to the
22 spillway and it's unique for the hydraulics up there
23 and it is unique for the internal configuration.

24 So the real question is whether it will
25 work. We wanted to test that to see if it would work.

1 I just wanted to be clear on that.

2 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thanks for
3 clarifying that.

4 MR. ALBIE MORIN: Could I ask you a
5 question. How long are you going to be testing it
6 before you make a decision?

7 COL. JIM WADDELL: We have got the
8 initial results just came in the other day. And what
9 that showed is it, I think -- I don't remember if it
10 was -- I forget how many total units we are talking
11 about at Bonneville.

12 One of the next steps there, if the test on
13 the one was good, we would go ahead with the plans to
14 put in a second unit there, and consider units up in
15 The Dalles.

16 The answer to your question would be, we
17 test this until we are comfortable that the results we
18 get are worth the investment and the cost of putting
19 in these turbines. And once we are in there. A
20 number of our projects are due to have rehabs here in
21 the next five to ten years. So as they would become
22 due, and you would be replacing the turbines anyway,
23 they would be replaced with this technology.

24 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: So we have
25 Shirley Perkins, who is standing there, followed by

1 Steve, and Karen Glass.

2 MS. SHIRLEY PERKINS: As she said, I
3 am Shirley Perkins, and I am here from the community
4 of Elfin Cove. Elfin Cove is located about 90 miles
5 west of here on Chichago Island at the outer coast in
6 Cross Sound.

7 In the past years there was a large
8 population of fishermen that lived and based out of
9 Elfin Cove. Since the numbers of salmon have been cut
10 to the Alaska fishermen, the numbers of people that
11 are living in Elfin Cove have dwindled considerably.
12 We are now down in numbers to less than 30 rural
13 residents that are in Elfin Cove, and it's in direct
14 response to how many fish are available for people to
15 catch to maintain their livelihood in this rural
16 situation.

17 Any further reduction in the catch rate of
18 salmon is not a feasible option for the people that
19 live in Elfin Cove.

20 We support breaching the four Lower Snake
21 River dams in order to save the fishermen that still
22 exist in Elfin Cove and to save our community.

23 Thank you.

24 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
25 Shirley. Steve Gebert, followed by Karen Glass,

1 followed by Richard Luther.

2 MR. STEVE GEBERT: Hi. Thank you for
3 being here. My name is Steve Gebert. I am chairman
4 of the Juneau Douglas Fish and Game Advisory
5 Commission.

6 This committee is a group of volunteers
7 from the different user groups of the resources of the
8 fishers of the southeast. We are made up of
9 commercial fishermen, sport fishermen, processors,
10 charter guides. We have some very interesting
11 meetings.

12 We talk about issues that affect everybody
13 in our community. And we try to come up with an
14 understanding between all of those. It's rare that we
15 ever agree 100 percent on an issue. We agreed on this
16 issue.

17 Whereas, southeast Alaskan fishermen have
18 implemented conservation measures since the 1970s with
19 restrictions in fishing seasons, bag limit reductions,
20 gear restrictions, limited entry, reduced seasons,
21 area closures, and minimum size limits, the Juneau
22 committee opposes any further quota reductions in the
23 southeastern Alaska Chinook salmon fisheries based on
24 declining Snake River runs.

25 On my own note, speaking strictly for

1 myself, I would like to wind it up a little bit.

2 Anybody who knows me knows that I would much rather go
3 fishing than take the dandelions out of my front yard.

4 Now, my neighbor truly wishes that I would
5 take the dandelions out of my yard because they are
6 growing into his yard.

7 I like to go fishing. So he made it in no
8 uncertain terms that I need to clean up my back yard
9 and front yard.

10 The analogy here is, we have been hurt in
11 southeast since the '70s on fishing. It's that
12 simple. Clean up the back yard. The problems are
13 down there, not here. We have a pristine environment.
14 We have great salmon runs. We have done our share.

15 Thank you very much.

16 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
17 very much, Steve.

18 Karen Glass, followed by Richard Luther,
19 followed by Carl Rosier.

20 MS. KAREN GLASS: Hello. I am Karen
21 Glass. I am a concerned private citizen, an Alaskan.
22 It's great to see you here and all the planning that's
23 going on in having these meetings here in Alaska to
24 restore our salmon.

25 It's wonderful to have an Endangered

1 Species Act. Since man has almost destroyed the
2 Columbia River Basin salmon, it's up to man to restore
3 them.

4 There are 75,000 dams in the United States.
5 500 have been dismantled with great success stories of
6 restoration of native fish and natural habitat.

7 I was born here in Alaska and I grew up in
8 the commercial troll fishery. It is a vitally
9 important way of life in income for many Alaskans.
10 Don't destroy it.

11 I have also sport fished all my life, in
12 Alaska, for many years, I sport fished for Chinook
13 salmon at the mouth of the Columbia River, at Ilwaco.
14 I have steelhead fished in the lower Snake by Walla
15 Walla. I have, when I lived in Idaho for a few years,
16 I sport fished for Chinook at the headquarters of the
17 Salmon River. And these are huge Chinook salmon, and
18 it was amazing to see them and realize how many
19 thousands of miles they had traveled to spawn at the
20 headquarters of the Salmon River which branches off of
21 the Snake River. I've also river rafted on the Salmon
22 River and seen dead salmon floating next to the raft.
23 I have seen salmon jump the falls in Idaho the early
24 '70s. There were many Chinook salmon there then. I
25 have been to Red Fish Lake which was named red fish

1 for the many Sockeye that migrated up the Columbia and
2 the Snake and into the Salmon River to Red Fish Lake.
3 They are gone now. They had one fish return there.

4 Anyway, I support breaching these four
5 dams, using new turbines, do the John Day drawdown, et
6 cetera, et cetera, to restore the salmon and
7 steelhead.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
10 Karen.

11 Richard Luther, followed by Carl Rosier,
12 followed by Tim Volwiler.

13 MR. RICHARD LUTHER: Thank you. My
14 name is Richard Luther. I am a troller, and I am
15 representing myself.

16 I'm really encouraged by the things that I
17 hear here tonight. It makes me think that we really
18 should tear the dams out and leave us alone up here.

19 But I also recognize that hearings are
20 going to be held in other places, in other states, and
21 I think that probably what you're going to hear there
22 is very different than you are going to hear here.

23 What I am speaking for is making the hard
24 decision which is to tear out the dams. But I
25 strongly suspect that that's not going to happen when

1 I look at the dollar numbers that you put up there and
2 read into the paper that our own Congressional
3 delegation is against that.

4 Maybe they've got some other grand plan
5 that they are going to tell us how they are going to
6 save them.

7 If there is an unwillingness to make the
8 hard decision, I hope that you won't make the easy
9 decision, which is to penalize us. We are a large
10 state but we are a small number. And quite often the
11 easy decision seems to be to restrict us more.

12 And I'm hoping that that doesn't happen.

13 So, if there's an unwillingness to breach
14 the dams and restore habitat, which seems to be the
15 only way to really restore the Chinook, I would hope
16 that we do nothing, because anything else that we do
17 is not going to restore the habitat, and it's not
18 going to restore the fish.

19 So, make the hard decision and tear out the
20 dams.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
23 much, Richard.

24 Carl Rosier, followed by Tim Volwiler,
25 followed by Becky Achen.

1 MR. CARL ROSIER: Thank you very
2 much.

3 Good evening, members of the Federal
4 Caucus. My name is Carl Rosier. I am here testifying
5 for myself as an Alaskan resident sport fishermen. I
6 wish to say to each of you, welcome to Juneau, and
7 thank you for the opportunity to testify on this issue
8 of conservation of the Columbia Basin fish.

9 I grew up in the Pacific Northwest during
10 the late '30s, '40s and '50s, declining resources of
11 the Columbia major tributary. To see that great
12 resource beaten down, reduced to the level it is
13 today, is truly a record that no one can be proud of.

14 While I applaud your efforts at beginning
15 restoration of some run segments of the Snake River, I
16 am cautiously optimistic.

17 Every project, however, you must start
18 somewhere. I speak with some authority following 45
19 years of involvement in fishery management here in
20 Alaska when I say you are looking at the very long
21 term, expensive program.

22 Here in Alaska we have had extensive
23 experience with rebuilding Alaska runs. I might add
24 that we have been quite successful. The difference
25 between here and the Snake River is that our habitat

1 was pretty much in place when rebuilding began and we
2 didn't have to recover the habitat before the fish
3 returned.

4 Nevertheless, recovery of our Chinook
5 stocks had been on the order of 20-plus years in
6 places such as Cook inlet here in southeastern Alaska.
7 Thanks to the sacrifice of all users, rebuilding has
8 been successful.

9 Alaska has also refused to accept the
10 construction of large dams on several of our major
11 rivers over the years. Opting instead for protection
12 of the salmon resources and supporting the lifestyles
13 dependent on that resource.

14 Pacific Northwest on the other hand
15 embraced the production of chief hydro producers,
16 water redistribution, fruits and vegetables, and
17 attempted to replace natural salmon runs with the
18 false assumption that hatchery could replace Mother
19 Nature in the maintenance of their salmon resources.

20 Additionally, Alaska has been a willing but
21 firm participant in the development and implementation
22 of U.S. Canada salmon treaty.

23 Alaska has rebuilt its salmon runs. We
24 have looked at our habitat. We have joined in an
25 international agreement.

1 One more trip to the well in Alaska under
2 the Endangered Species Act is one too many. I would
3 not pretend to tell the people of the Pacific
4 Northwest how to solve problems of rebuilding salmon
5 stocks in the Snake River, but the solution does not
6 lie with any further curtailment of Alaska fisheries.

7 The solution must come from the people of
8 the Pacific Northwest and their own back yard.
9 Breaching the dams is part of the complex resolution
10 necessary.

11 I am sure the Alaskans would applaud your
12 efforts. A good resource is more than likely good for
13 the people as well.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
16 Carl.

17 Tim Volwiler, followed by Becky Achten,
18 followed by Joe Emerson.

19 MR. TIM VOLWILER: Thank you. I have
20 been a resident of Washington for 22 years, and Alaska
21 for about 245. So I kind of have been through both
22 states of our Pacific Coast.

23 But in Western Washington, which is a
24 different story than Eastern Washington and Idaho.

25 I do think, though, that when you look at

1 economics, you should really be looking at how much
2 you're getting from just a small percentage of the
3 resource.

4 If you are looking at the Alaskan fishing
5 resource, and it's only such a small percentage of the
6 salmon that's up there in the Snake River, you really
7 should be focusing in Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

8 For example, the main power contracts for
9 aluminum is up for renegotiation in Washington state.
10 These types of decisions where we've got salmon and
11 the environment also affect the dams which is power
12 resources, so that all these things should be related
13 when you look at long-term contracts.

14 In southeast Alaska we have lived through
15 the relic of the 50 year timber guaranteed contracts
16 for pulp.

17 Likewise, you are looking at some long-term
18 contracts from aluminum. And you're looking at
19 long-term dam construction projects with a life of a
20 hundred years.

21 But times have changed. And it's time to
22 move on.

23 The Northwest can do without some of the
24 aluminum plants. The Northwest can do with a little
25 bit higher electric rates. The Northwest can do

1 without some of the irrigated farming that's there.

2 And I think this is where we need to be
3 looking in the future.

4 And also when you are looking at habitat,
5 you need to look at the shopping malls on floodplains,
6 you need to look at habitat restoration and where your
7 infrastructure is going.

8 I think barge navigation could be replaced
9 by rail. It's the most efficient, other than barge.
10 And I think you really need to look at the efforts
11 throughout that area and leave Alaska alone.

12 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thanks a lot,
13 Tim.

14 Becky Achten, followed by Joe Emerson,
15 followed by Greg Petrich.

16 Becky, are you here?

17 Joe Emerson, followed by Greg Petrich,
18 followed by Dick Hoffman.

19 MR. JOE EMERSON: Thank you for the
20 opportunity to state my views here.

21 My name is Joe Emerson. I am a commercial
22 salmon troller. I began my fishing career at age 16
23 working on my father's troller. I now own and operate
24 my own 46 foot troller with my wife and three children
25 as my crew. Our entire family is in commercial

1 fishing. Salmon trolling is 90 percent of our fishing
2 effort.

3 Since I began trolling in 1973 Alaskan
4 commercial subsistence and sports fishermen have made
5 tremendous sacrifices to restore salmon stocks along
6 the Northwest coast.

7 The greatest burden of this conservation
8 effort has been on the commercial troll fleet, the
9 primary harvesters of Chinook.

10 In most cases restrictions in harvest for
11 conservation was accepted willingly by trollers as our
12 future prosperity is so directly linked to the health
13 of these magnificent fish.

14 Our conservation effort has been
15 substantial and the impact on fishing communities
16 throughout southeast Alaska has been staggering.

17 The salmon troll industry is the economic
18 backbone of rural southeast Alaska and a major
19 economic contributor to its cities.

20 I have seen and experienced the extreme
21 hardship and financial failure that fishing families
22 have suffered in order to rebuild Chinook stocks.

23 Our conservation efforts have produced
24 positive results in areas where natural salmon habitat
25 exist.

1 Alaska's Chinook producing rivers have
2 historically high escapements. 95 percent of the
3 Chinook harvested in southeastern Alaska are from
4 hatchery or healthy, naturally spawning stocks. Only
5 8 percent of the Chinook harvested come from stocks
6 that are not rebuilt. This 8 percent spawn in rivers
7 in the lower 48 whose natural habitat has been altered
8 by dams, agricultural and urban sprawl.

9 There is little Alaskans can do to rectify
10 the degradation to the Columbia and Snake River
11 ecosystems.

12 The solution to rebuilding the Snake River
13 Chinook is in the restoration of their natural
14 habitat, not the continued harassment of Alaska
15 fishermen.

16 I support the removal of the four Lower
17 Snake River dams as the best and quickest way to save
18 these salmon from extinction.

19 It is time for the industry and the
20 citizens of the Columbia and Snake River Basin to
21 sacrifice and take the necessary steps to save these
22 salmon.

23 For the last 20 years, these fish have been
24 saved. Unfortunately many of the fish have been
25 ground up in hydro dam turbines so that giant

1 corporations could enjoy continued use of subsidized
2 electricity and water.

3 The management of the Columbia River and
4 its tributary is simply a national disgrace. The
5 interest of megacorporations involved in aluminum
6 production, airplane manufacturing and agribusiness
7 has been protected at the expense of the salmon and
8 the people who depend on them.

9 I urge the U.S. Corps of Engineers to take
10 the necessary steps to remove the four Lower Snake
11 River dams to save Snake River salmon from extinction.

12 I also urge the National Marine Fisheries
13 Service to recognize the past conservation effort of
14 southeast Alaskans and not impose further meaningless
15 restrictions on the people of our region.

16 I further urge National Marine Fisheries
17 Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to take
18 steps to restore natural spawning habitat throughout
19 the entire Pacific Northwest.

20 Thank you.

21 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
22 Joe.

23 Greg, followed by Dick Hoffman, followed by
24 Nicole Cordan.

25 MR. GREG PETRICH: Good evening, and

1 welcome to Alaska. My name is Greg Petrick, and I am
2 going on about my 14th year in the state of Alaska.

3 During my time here I have worked as a
4 commercial -- or as a charter guide for four seasons.
5 I have worked on two trolling outfits over in Sitka.
6 And spent approximately four years working for the
7 Department of Public Safety as a civilian on the State
8 Troopers Fish and Wildlife protection boats.

9 I think probably during that time working
10 with the Troopers I got my closest interactions with
11 the communities, smaller fishing communities in
12 southeast Alaska, and Kodiak, and really got a feel
13 for what goes on and just how important fishing is to
14 the whole character and makeup of those places.

15 When you talk about a dollar value for the
16 fishery in Alaska, I think it's really miniscule
17 compared to what that means to the culture in those
18 towns.

19 And if you have spent much time around
20 those people and watched them at work, you can surely
21 appreciate what a unique culture that is in America
22 and why we need to preserve it in the future.

23 We are talking about a lot more than just
24 dollars here.

25 Over and over we have heard the case

1 tonight about how the Alaska fishery contributes a
2 miniscule amount to the fish that are not reaching
3 their spawning grounds on the Columbia system. That
4 doesn't -- we don't need to repeat that, but I think
5 if one thing's important here, sometime in the future
6 you are going to have to make a decision when the real
7 power politics comes into this situation, what you're
8 going to do, if you're going to do the right thing,
9 you are going to follow science, if you are going to
10 be fair to people who have really not contributed to
11 this situation.

12 During the last decade I have spent a good
13 amount of my time, both as a professor and as a
14 volunteer on various land conservation issues in
15 Alaska, and that's been an eye opener as far as
16 watching power politics at work.

17 And I know when push comes to shove, the
18 spin masters and politicians will continue to hide
19 under the shell and switch every which direction and
20 look for scapegoats, and in this case Alaskans can be
21 set up as easy scapegoats.

22 It's simply not right, and I know that when
23 those decisions are put in front of you, you're going
24 to know it's not right, and I hope you act in the
25 right way.

1 Thank you.

2 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
3 Greg.

4 Dick Hoffman, followed by any Nicole
5 Cordan, followed by Jeff Shelton.

6 MR. DICK HOFFMAN: Good evening,
7 members of the caucus. My name is Dick Hoffman. I am
8 a 21 year resident of Juneau and I have been trolling
9 here for 21 years also. Have been very active in the
10 fishing issues, and such.

11 There has been a lot of good comment made
12 tonight, especially those from the Governor's office,
13 those by Dale Kelley, Carl Rosier, numerous others.

14 I am going to talk a little bit about some
15 of the economic stuff that's been discussed. One
16 issue that I have in the All-H paper is that it talks
17 about comparing the cost of taking the dams out, or --
18 yeah, taking the dams out, the ongoing costs of
19 remediation, are to try to bring these fish back on
20 the Columbia River system.

21 And then it compares that with what the
22 value of the fishing industry is in 1990.

23 And I think it's kind of a pretty bogus
24 comparison.

25 The fishing industry in 1990 has been

1 severely impacted on close onto four decades. Had it
2 progressed without those dams in place, it would have
3 been a much more significant industry in that area. I
4 think that's a concern you should address.

5 On the matter of economics, we hear a lot
6 about the value of the Columbia River Basin to the
7 economy of the Pacific Northwest. It provides
8 federally subsidized freight for the grain traffic
9 through the management of this water system. Those
10 farmers also receive a tremendous amount of irrigation
11 water.

12 And if for some reason the finances don't
13 work out, in the end there's always the federal crop
14 subsidy program that guaranty you will be in business
15 next year.

16 It's not a future offered for fishermen.
17 Nor do fishermen want it. We want to earn our keep.
18 We also want the fish to continue into the future, we
19 want our kids and grand kits to be fishing.

20 Taking the last fish means the end of that
21 industry. We don't want that. In relation to the
22 cost and the economic development there in the
23 Columbia Basin, the cheap power that's provided there
24 is roughly half the national form for the kilowatt
25 hours. And it's expected that hopefully in 10 to 20

1 years when the debt load on the dams are paid down,
2 that rate is going to be down another 50 percent, and
3 we are supposed to continue paying those federal
4 subsidies through our tax dollars to keep up this
5 grain subsidies, transportation subsidies and the
6 clean power in the Pacific Northwest.

7 I think that is inappropriate. Alaska has
8 done all it can to preserve these fish. In fact it's
9 done more than its share.

10 It is time for the Pacific Northwest to
11 address the problems that they have created with the
12 near extinction of these fish and address that on
13 their own ground and do what they need to do, which is
14 breach the dams and the other habitat.

15 Without that, here is no spawning beds.
16 Without spawning beds, these fish will go extinct.

17 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thanks a lot,
18 Dick.

19 Nicole Cordan, followed by Jeff Shelton,
20 and Jeff is the last one signed up, so if there's
21 anyone else out there who wants to speak, let me know
22 now and I will call you up.

23 MS. NICOLE CORDAN: My name is Nicole
24 Cordan I am here representing the Save Our Wild Salmon
25 Coalition and the National Wildlife Federation.

1 Colonel, it's nice to see you here, we
2 missed you in Ketchikan and Sitka.

3 Like you and others, I have been at many of
4 the public hearings, including the one in Lewiston,
5 and I have heard fishermen and conservations and
6 native peoples and lawyers and doctors and economists
7 and teachers and scientifics and parents and
8 grandparents and children all tell you, and sometimes
9 sing to you, the same thing, that we want our salmon
10 back, is that fishermen have paid enough for the
11 salmon declines, and that it's time for you to face
12 this hard decision and to take out four federal dams
13 on the Lower Snake River.

14 Now Alaskans have had the opportunity to
15 add their voice to this debate and they agree. Enough
16 is enough. You've asked us to provide you with
17 additional information to help you make your
18 determinations. And my question for you is, what else
19 do you need?

20 You know that the science tells you that
21 the best chance for recovering the salmon on the Snake
22 River is to remove the dams. You know that fishermen
23 can't do it by themselves. And they are sick of being
24 picked on just because it seems just a little too
25 easy.

1 You know that you don't need anymore
2 information. We have studied this to death, almost to
3 death. And you know that there are no fish friendly
4 turbines. The Brigadier General has said so himself.

5 And techno-fixes at the dams won't recover
6 these fish. You know that the people of the region of
7 the Pacific Northwest and I think here in Alaska as
8 well are prepared to help affected communities with
9 the transitions that will be necessary.

10 And you know from being at the public
11 hearings that the people down south believe that, and
12 are prepared to do what's necessary here to take these
13 dams out and to restore their salmon.

14 And you know that the economics, if you
15 include all the economics, including the cost to
16 fishing and tribal communities and the cost for the
17 Clean Water Act, which actually save money to the
18 region.

19 So, these are all the things you know. And
20 they all point to the same answer. To dam removal and
21 not continuing to break the backs of fishermen.

22 Again, what additional information do you
23 actually need? What we need to know is why you
24 haven't chosen the one alternative that will bring the
25 salmon back, will restore, meet our other legal and

1 moral obligations.

2 It's just not that hard. We can all see
3 it. You should choose Alternative 4 to the Corps'
4 DEIS and, I guess it's Alternative 1 in the NMFS
5 Federal Caucus paper and remove the Lower Snake River
6 dams.

7 Thank you.

8 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
9 Nicole.

10 Jeff Shelton.

11 MR. JEFF SHELTON: If there's really
12 not another name on the list, I suppose the bell's
13 irrelevant.

14 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: I have
15 another name that just got added to the list.

16 MR. JEFF SHELTON: I didn't hear
17 that.

18 My name is Jeff Shelton, I'm -- I really
19 had not intended to speak to you tonight. I have too
20 many opportunities to talk to Larry as it is.

21 On the other hand, there are a couple
22 things that have come up that I thought I needed to
23 respond to.

24 I think, my name first is Jeff Shelton.
25 I've lived in Juneau for 30 years, including some time

1 I fished in Washington, this will be my 40th year
2 fishing commercially. I am also Alaska's alternate
3 commissioner on the fishing commission.

4 I think it is readily apparent what the
5 general view in this community is regarding the dams,
6 and that theme I won't address further, other than to
7 say that I think that there is a relatively straight
8 forward way of getting a measure on what the impact is
9 of the lower four Snake River dams on the Snake River
10 fall Chinook relative to other stocks of Chinook in
11 the system.

12 The Hanford Reach really differs from the
13 Snake River primarily only in the existence of the
14 dams in that habitat, and I think the relative health
15 of that population compared to the Snake River is a
16 pretty straight forward indication of what those dams
17 do to that system.

18 Let me say a couple of things, I guess, in
19 preface, because the theme of the evening that has
20 otherwise been apparent is that it is the opinion
21 around here that in this issue, Alaska really ought to
22 be left alone. It has done its thing.

23 And I don't want to repeat that explicitly,
24 but I think there is a feature of that that needs to
25 be elaborated in the fashion that I haven't heard.

1 Back to a couple particulars that have
2 really bothered me about the manner in which this has
3 evolved tonight. It's a very difficult proposition I
4 think for this public to respond to this caucus
5 presentation, in the sense you have a relatively
6 sophisticated crew here in terms of understanding the
7 way salmon populations work. And it's very difficult
8 to sit down and respond to a generic conceptual kind
9 of set of propositions.

10 You know, there aren't enough particulars
11 here for anybody to sit down and talk about. Nobody
12 is talking about what it means potentially in the
13 Alaskan fishery to have a reduction. And it's very
14 difficult to get hands around enough specifics here to
15 be very confident that we know what we're responding
16 to.

17 I have heard a couple items tonight that do
18 bother me, that the Colonel suggested for example that
19 60 percent of the downstream migrants going through
20 the Snake River dams survive. That's patently untrue.
21 It cannot be. There is undoubtedly some way in which
22 that statistic can be put together in which that is
23 the conclusion. But that is obviously not in the
24 context of the way that kind of analysis ordinarily
25 occurs by fisheries biologists.

1 Were there that kind of survival rate, we
2 would not need to be here.

3 A couple quick points. The first is, and
4 one I have not heard tonight, I think it is
5 inappropriate to suggest that on the one hand
6 everybody who's involved in this issue now needs to
7 make a contribution.

8 The first point to be made is only the
9 fishery really has made a contribution to the solution
10 here thus far.

11 There have been a litany of reductions that
12 is rather apparent. It's even more draconian to the
13 south than it is here, but it is bad enough here,
14 where the Boeing and the Microsoft of this economy
15 remains the fishery. It is devastating to this
16 economy to have further reductions.

17 Secondly, the huge advantages that accrued
18 to the Pacific Northwest through the construction of
19 the basic dams have in very real respect been
20 subsidized by the fisheries here.

21 We do not forget that the loss of all of
22 those stocks above the Hells Canyon Dam or above the
23 Grand Coulee Dam were fundamentally the ones that
24 populated the far north conglomerate.

25 That has simply been subtracted wholesale

1 from this fishery and is effectively a subsidization
2 of that economy by the one that's here and by the only
3 real independent industry that exists here.

4 That is not an irrelevant issue. You
5 cannot come with some degree of arrogance and say
6 that's in the past, we're going to define it as no
7 longer relevant. It is damn relevant, and what is
8 being proposed now is a continuation of that theme.

9 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Jeff, can I
10 ask you as to wrap up, because we do have someone else
11 who wants to speak. Thanks .

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I will give my
13 turn up.

14 MR. JEFF SHELTON: Let me wrap it up.
15 I think it is very, very unfortunate in the way in
16 which these proposals have been laid out.

17 Having spent some time in Washington and
18 Oregon over the course of the last few years,
19 primarily in the treaty context, it has not passed my
20 attention, and I think most others, that the proposal
21 has been made that reducing ocean fisheries can be the
22 functional equivalent of removing the dams.

23 I don't want to get into an argument about
24 whether the dams should or should not be removed. You
25 have heard plenty of that.

1 much.

2 Michael McAlister.

3 MR. MICHAEL McALISTER: My name is
4 Michael McAlister. I am a commercial fisherman here
5 in Alaska. However, I live on the headwaters of the
6 Grande Ronde River in Oregon. And the Grande Ronde
7 River is primarily the Snake River tributary in Oregon
8 that would benefit from the removal of the dams.

9 I have been a life-long resident of Oregon
10 and followed the Columbia River from childhood really
11 through my father's representing the Oregon Department
12 of Fish and Wildlife as a public relations officer and
13 as an outdoor rider in the state.

14 So it's been kind of a -- life long
15 monitoring for me. As a commercial fisherman in
16 Alaska for the last 20 years, I also oppose the
17 further restriction of harvesting by Alaska fishermen
18 for the benefit of Columbia River salmon.

19 As well as being a commercial fisherman, I
20 am a biologist. I work privately on a consulting
21 basis for the timber industry, both federal and state
22 agencies. I know empirically the State of Oregon as
23 well as anybody. I mean, acre by acre, polygon by
24 polygon, delineation by delineation, watershed to
25 watershed.

1 My concern and my appearance here this
2 evening for being able to present to you or offer my
3 concerns is that as an Oregonian, the emphasis at this
4 time for conserving anadromous fisheries is being
5 shifted to the extent that it is to the most
6 irreversibly altered system in the state.

7 The State of Oregon has problems from
8 border to border. Every watershed in the Oregon coast
9 range has its problems. I'm deeply concerned that the
10 public perception has been shifted to where
11 conservation of salmon is synonymous with the upper
12 Columbia and Snake River at this time.

13 If the Endangered Species Act, which I have
14 the highest regard for, is going to be confronted with
15 controversy, it is that absolutely essential that
16 credibility be able to prevail.

17 The designations of critical habitat,
18 recognizing the critical habitats and the scale of
19 degradation of the Columbia River streams, I seriously
20 question the pursuit here. And I don't think that we
21 have seen the best science relative to evaluating the
22 potential for success in removing those dams, and
23 subjecting the public there, here and elsewhere, to
24 funding that as an end relative to the much greater
25 potentials that exist there.

1 There are so many other greater potentials,
2 and I feel like this is really a smoke screen and a
3 diversion to the realities for anadromous fish
4 recoveries in the State of Oregon.

5 I am very concerned about the credibility
6 of this whole thing. And that's really my message,
7 and I really appreciate the opportunity here in
8 Alaska, it's kind of a fluke that I'm here preparing
9 for a fishery, but I really appreciate -- I mean, all
10 the comments. It's kind of hard for me to get up here
11 and say, I don't believe -- I'm not saying, I don't
12 believe in taking out the dams, I mean, I don't have a
13 feeling one way or the other.

14 But I'm just real concerned about the
15 credibility of the analysis up to this point, and the
16 proposals that have been put forward. I am not
17 comfortable with it at all.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thanks a lot,
20 Michael.

21 Richard Gordon, followed by Scott Swanson,
22 followed by LeeAnne Tryon.

23 MR. RICHARD GORDON: Just three
24 points. And I apologize, I haven't been here through
25 most of the hearing. Two of these three points have

1 been hammered out a lot, and my third one was
2 basically just discussed.

3 But in any event, first of all, I've read,
4 correctly or incorrectly, that well under 1 percent is
5 estimated of the Coho runs that go up the Snake could
6 possibly be affected by Alaskan fishermen.

7 If that order of magnitude is anywhere near
8 correct, then I think the government is doing
9 something absolutely insane and idiotic from a
10 biological standpoint, not to mention a political
11 standpoint, by trying to impact Alaskan fishermen.

12 I just don't think it makes biological
13 sense. Since the object hopefully is to restore
14 healthy salmon runs and not ruin economies, it seems
15 government insanity.

16 The second point is in general, if all
17 things balance out, benefit to cost, so to speak, and
18 I am talking not just economics, I am talking biology,
19 then I do support the removal of these dams, and other
20 dams where you can have a realistic chance of
21 restoring a fish run and the impact on the surrounding
22 folks is sufficiently small, or can be obviated, which
23 I have read in this case it can be for most people.

24 And I do support removing the dams. But
25 this would be subject to my third point, and they

1 generality touched on it in a way, but I think it is
2 much more important to put emphasis on the many, many
3 stocks of Pacific Northwest salmonids which are
4 decreasing, but biologists believe to be restorable to
5 a healthy state at some time in the future.

6 I think it also is governed by idiocy, and
7 some of my friends will disagree with me on this, to
8 spend millions of dollars, damn the economy of
9 millions of people, like trying to restoring something
10 that is probably unrestorable, or marginally so.

11 The importance is to work on the ones that
12 are going downhill, that are threatened or are of
13 serious concern, to where you have a reasonable chance
14 by putting in enough money, time and energy to restore
15 them.

16 And this brings up the principle, trying to
17 maintain or restore the greatest diversity of types of
18 aquatic ecosystems in Washington, Oregon and Idaho.
19 Some of them will be of great economic benefit if they
20 are successful, and some less so.

21 But I think having a diversity of aquatic
22 eco types is far more important than spending tens of
23 millions of dollars on a few dying stocks and ignoring
24 everything else.

25 Thank you.

1 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thanks a lot,
2 Richard.

3 Scott Swanson, followed by LeeAnne Tryon.

4 MR. SCOTT SWANSON: Good evening. My
5 name is Scott Swanson, a troller here in southeast.

6 I didn't have anything prepared here except
7 for I just think that, nothing's ever been proved that
8 the troll fleet has ever wiped out an entire run of
9 salmon. I think that, after many decades of trolling
10 and fishing, that the salmon here in Alaska are still
11 viable, and that the state of Alaska has done an
12 excellent job in keeping our fishery going.

13 I think that through the years our fishery
14 has declined, as has been brought out by many people,
15 and that we need to get the stocks rebuilt.

16 Right now I think that the best thing that
17 could probably happen, right now there are millions of
18 tons of snow up in the mountains of Idaho, and if you
19 don't want to take out any dams, at least this spring,
20 at least let some more of the water come through, and
21 maybe some more salmon will get out and survive and
22 make it back.

23 That's all I have to say. Thank you.

24 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Okay. Thanks,
25 Scott.

1 LeeAnne Tryon.

2 MS. LEE ANNE TRYON: Hi. My name is
3 LeeAnne Tryon, and I am a salmon advocate, and I favor
4 taking out the four dams on the Lower Snake River. I
5 didn't come easy to this decision, though.

6 I started out as a scientist. I went to
7 college in Walla Walla, saw the same poor Mill Creek
8 stream that some gentleman talked about earlier that
9 was channelized. Spent four years in the shadow of
10 those four dams, just a stone's throw away. And back
11 then I thought science would solve everything, and if
12 we just solved the science, it would take us where we
13 needed to go, and we would be able to restore fish.

14 I am with a coalition of commercial
15 fishermen, sport fishermen and conservationists that
16 believe that taking out these dams is the best way to
17 save these fish.

18 And I have the dubious distinction of
19 having been all of those things, and as someone said
20 earlier, not everyone in those camps tends to agree
21 with each other on many things, but we do agree on
22 this.

23 And I really urge you to start at the
24 beginning, look at the science, talk to the fisheries
25 management, talk to the commercial fishermen, and talk

1 to the salmon advocates and do what is right and take
2 these dams out.

3 I really appreciate you listening. Thank
4 you.

5 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thanks a lot,
6 LeeAnne.

7 LeeAnne was our last person signed up. So
8 I just wanted to double-check.

9 Is there anybody out here who wanted to
10 speak who hasn't had the opportunity to testify
11 tonight?

12 All right. I want to thank you all very,
13 very much for coming out tonight and sharing your
14 thoughts with these folks on the panel. I want to
15 thank the panel for listening. I thank you all so
16 much for taking time to come down tonight and share
17 with us your thoughts.

18 COL. JIM WADDELL: I want to thank
19 you all for hanging with us for the whole period here.
20 This is the 14th of the 15 of these hearings we have
21 been holding around the region.

22

23 (10:30 p.m.)

24

25

1 STATE OF WASHINGTON)
2) ss.
3 County of Benton)
4

5 I, William J. Bridges, do hereby certify
6 that at the time and place heretofore mentioned in the
7 caption of the foregoing matter, I was a Certified
8 Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public for Washington;
9 that at said time and place I reported in stenotype
10 all testimony adduced and proceedings had in the
11 foregoing matter; that thereafter my notes were
12 reduced to typewriting and that the foregoing
13 transcript consisting of 96 typewritten pages is a
14 true and correct transcript of all such testimony
15 adduced and proceedings had and of the whole thereof.

16 Witness my hand at Kennewick, Washington, on
17 this _____ day of April, 2000.

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William J. Bridges
CSR NO. BRIDGWJ548PO
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My commission expires: 11-1-03