

GORDON H. SMITH
OREGON

Gordon Smith

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION
INDIAN AFFAIRS
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3704

March 23, 2004

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RECEIPT DATE: 3.24.4
DUE DATE: 4.7.4

Steven J. Wright
Administrator
Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, OR 97208-3621

D. Robert Lohn
Northwest Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
7600 Sand Point Way, N.E.
Seattle, WA 98115-0070

ASSIGN: **DR-7C**
cc: FO3, DC/Wash, L-7, P-6, PG-5, KE-4,
KEW-4, Cooper-PG-5

Brigadier General William T. Grisoli
Commander and Division Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Northwestern Division
P.O. Box 2870
Portland, OR 97208-2870

Dear Administrator Wright, Administrator Lohn and Brigadier General Grisoli:

I am writing concerning the analysis conducted by the federal agencies of the biological impacts of various options for spill during July and August for the Federal Columbia River Power System. It is my understanding that, for each spill option, the analysis produced estimates of adults lost as a result of reductions in spill and revenue impacts of changes in operations.

According to the analysis, spill during July and August provides limited biological benefit for listed species at a significant cost to Northwest ratepayers and struggling Northwest businesses. The analysis shows that the impact of reducing spill could likely be mitigated – for both listed and non-listed species – at significantly lower cost to the region. As the federal agencies gather more data on the impact and effectiveness of federal actions such as spill, it is important that the agencies be able to test and modify various mitigation and recovery actions through adaptive management.

I know that you have recently received a letter on this issue signed by several Northwest Members of the House of Representatives, and I want you to know that I support the views they expressed. Like my House colleagues, I believe that the agencies' analysis of spill should be tested, beginning this summer, for a sufficient period of time to determine whether the expected cost savings and biological benefits can be achieved. I also share their view that biological impacts on salmon runs from changes in hydrosystem operations should be mitigated.

I realize that you will be making a decision in the near future on summer spill. I would urge you to put forward the proposed mitigation offsets at the time you release your proposal. I would also reiterate my colleagues' concern that you address issues raised by state fish and wildlife agencies. I applaud your decision to put out your proposal for a brief public comment period, and appreciate the presentation that your agencies made to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council earlier this year.

I stand ready to assist you in your efforts to mitigate any reduction in spill. I want to thank you for looking for cost-effective means of recovering salmon. Like you, I remain committed to recovering salmon and to a strong Northwest economy.

Sincerely,



Gordon H. Smith
United States Senate