

Douglas P. Fagerness



November 18, 2002

Northwest Power Planning Council
851 SW 6th Ave.
Suite 100
Portland, OR 97204-1348

Northwest Power Planning Council Staff:

I am writing to urge the Northwest Power Planning Council to reject the main stem proposal.

I believe that the proposed main stem amendment is a big step backward. During the salmon migration period now, critically important flow targets are rarely met. This latest proposal would hurt salmon further by siphoning the already insufficient amount of water used to improve salmon conditions in the main stem. Increased reliance on barging and trucking is not scientifically supported for ESA-listed Chinook, steelhead, and sockeye.

The bottom line here is that salmon need water. The Council's proposal to eliminate flow enhancements for salmon in spring and summer is not supported by any scientific evidence that this will help salmon. In fact, the opposite is true. Spilling water over dams provides the safest passage for salmon, and should be enhanced, not reduced. This principle has been continuously reiterated by State and Tribal scientists (see joint Memo from ODFW, WDFW, IDFG, Tribes, and the USFWS in March 2002), and by the Council's own Review Boards. Snake River salmon need spring flows. Three of the four ESA-listed species rely on high spring flows to get to the Pacific safely. The Council's main stem program should help achieve target flows in the Snake River, especially in the springtime; this proposal goes the opposite direction, reducing the likelihood that flows will be achieved.

This proposed amendment will hurt Snake River salmon, and must be rejected.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas P. Fagerness". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.