

From: Lisa Hansen
Sent: Sunday, November 23, 2003 4:36 PM
To: comments@nwcouncil.org
Subject: Comment on APRE report document 2003-17

Dear NW Power and Conservation Council Staff:

We laud the efforts of all contributors to the APRE draft report. The report was comprehensive, scientific, and balanced. Moreover, the recommendations regarding overhauling the hatchery programs of the Columbia Basin are long overdue. There are not many programs funded with taxpayer money that have been able to keep spending without good productivity data or demonstrable benefit - and we have been paying for these programs for over a century! Increasingly, scientific reports are demonstrating that hatchery fish and operations threaten the recovery of wild fish, including ESA listed stocks. We desperately need better oversight of hatchery effects on wild fish. We also need to identify hatcheries that not cost effective and those with practices that harm wild fish. These hatcheries must clean up their act, avoid harm to listed species, or close altogether. The NW Power and Conservation Council should press hard to see that the recommendations in APRE are implemented and the hatchery operators become accountable to taxpayers as well as the environment. The money saved by closing ineffective hatcheries can be directed toward projects with known benefits to fish such as habitat restoration, removal of fish barriers, and water conservation. Moreover, the Council should see that the reports on hatchery productivity, effects on the environment, and effects on native fish are available for public review and comment. Prompt implementation of the actions put forward in APRE, along with the recent Native Fish Conservation Policy of Oregon, are glimmers of hope for the anadromous fish that we have pushed to the brink of extinction. Perhaps your organization's plan will be part of the cornerstone that helps build a successful reversal of the damage humans have caused to NW fisheries over the past 150 years. Wild fish have survived the ice age and scorching droughts. We must try to identify and remove as many harmful human intrusions as possible and give them a chance to do what they do best - survive.

Thank you for posting a very educational report.

Sincerely,
Lisa Hansen, RN and Keith Hansen, MD