

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 16, 2007

DON'T GET HOOKED BY THE "SALMON PLANNING ACT"

Dear Republican Colleague:

It has come to our attention that special interest groups are seeking cosponsors for a bill to revive the divisive and drastic proposal of tearing out the federal dams on the lower Snake River. While it seems like a straightforward issue, it is in fact highly complicated and controversial. **We strongly urge you not to sign onto this proposal.**

It is our understanding that a revised version of the so-called "Salmon Planning Act" (H.R. 1615 in the 109th Congress) may be introduced shortly. This bill purports to be in the interest of protecting salmon, but in fact would waste more taxpayer dollars for another round of studies on removing these federal hydropower facilities – an option thoroughly reviewed and rejected by Clinton Administration and the Bush Administration. Only four of the 26 listed salmon species in the Pacific Northwest even pass through the Snake River – yet these dams have long been a favorite target of certain special interest groups that seek support for their agenda outside of the region most impacted by it.

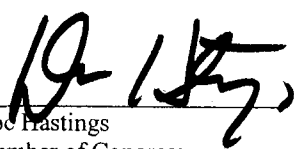
There are numerous salmon runs listed as threatened or endangered in other parts of the Northwest – including the more developed coastal areas and Puget Sound – where there are no hydroprojects to serve as easy scapegoats for fish problems. To single out four dams in a rural agricultural area – as the Salmon Planning Act does – betrays the fact that this is more about a radical environmental agenda than helping regional salmon recovery efforts. The situation facing salmon in the Northwest is complex, and requires a cohesive region-wide recovery effort, including not only the hydrosystem but also harvest activities, hatchery operations, human habitat modifications, and unusually high levels of predation by sea lions and other predators.

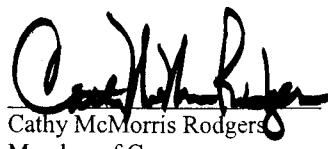
Here are some key facts you should know:

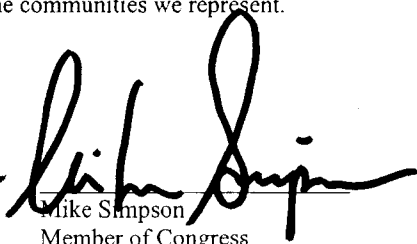
- Salmon returns in the Pacific Northwest have rebounded to record levels in recent years in response to habitat improvements and changing ocean conditions.
- There is no science to support that dam removal or significant increases in flow will translate to increased fish survival.
- Many proponents of dam removal actually seek to ramp up harvest efforts on salmon – before they are allowed to spawn – not protect salmon populations from human impacts. **In fact, salmon may be the only endangered species that can be caught legally and sold commercially.**
- The four lower Snake River dams provide enough emissions-free renewable electricity to power cities the size of Seattle, Baltimore, Cleveland or Oakland. These dams are also part of a cohesive hydrosystem that serves as a battery for the development of wind farms.
- These dams provide environmentally efficient barge transportation for millions of tons of goods from the Upper Midwest and Pacific Northwest to the Asian/Pacific markets. It would take 184,000 more semi-trucks on the highways to make up for the loss of these navigation capabilities.

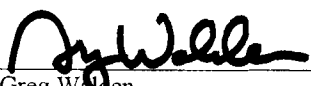
Again, we strongly urge you not to cosponsor the Salmon Planning Act. We would be pleased to speak with you personally about this issue and how important it is to the communities we represent.

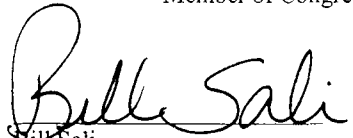
Sincerely,


Doc Hastings
Member of Congress


Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress


Mike Simpson
Member of Congress


Greg Walden
Member of Congress


Bill Sali
Member of Congress