

Subject: Dam building as part of marine eco-restoration/recovery.
From: Devin Baker <anjac15@yahoo.com>
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To: Jennifer.Gilden@noaa.gov

Attention Ms. Jennifer Gilden:

This letter concerns improving the effectiveness of marine reserves/protected areas.

I agree that the creation of marine reserves and marine protected areas is a good step towards marine wildlife/ecosystem recovery and protection, but I fear that the creation of these reserves will have limited success if part of these programs does not involve dam removal in the United States and elsewhere.

Numerous biological studies have shown that the acceleration of dam removal in the U.S. would dramatically increase recovery of coastal and river fish stocks including salmon, shad, herring and other fish species that need access to the upper reaches of rivers for spawning. Acceleration of dam removal would also increase the populations of marine life such as dolphins, whales and other species that depend on these ocean/river fish stocks.

Also helpful would be the creation of federal, state and local government programs to buy and remove some of the **2 million** dams in the United States that block river access to Salmon, Shad, Herring and other anadromous, catadromous and diadromous fish species which need to swim up and/or downriver to spawn/lay eggs.

This should be a national priority in the United States.

Many of these dams are not even functional any more because of silt build-up etc. and could be easily removed with enough public awareness and local, state and federal government support.....**there is not public outcry to do this because the public is unaware and uneducated concerning this issue.**

Most Americans are not aware of the dramatic decline in historical populations of anadromous, catadromous and diadromous fish species from their once abundant numbers in the U.S. and worldwide because of dams.

Historical records and eyewitness reports from the 17th and 18th century report that these fish once existed in unbelievably high numbers in the U.S. and rapidly declined with the advent of dam building, although most people during this period did not connect dam building with fish declines.

This lack of understanding and disconnect concerning dams and the decline of fish populations in the U.S. continues to be the case today with the American public.

Some of these fish species include salmon, herring, shad, eels, sturgeon, striped bass, Atlantic whitefish, rainbow smelt and numerous other species which are highly prized commercially.

Dams have led to the destruction and extinction of numerous fish populations on the east and west coast of the United States and worldwide.....without dam removal many wetlands and bay restoration programs will have very limited success.

Dams are also known to block the flow of cool river water out to oceans, seas and lakes and disrupt these eco-systems by altering consistent water temperatures at river mouths, this adversely affects coral reefs and other ocean wildlife that has depended on the cooling effect of rivers for millions of years.....**many rivers no longer reach the sea** because of dams and their accompanying irrigation water diversion programs.

Mega-dam building seems to be increasing worldwide especially in China, India, Brazil, Africa and Southeast Asia with hundreds of mega-dam projects already scheduled, financed and ready to be built in the near future.....this will seriously impact ocean life on a large scale in the coming months and years.....the public needs to know about this issue in order to be proactive and affect positive change.....many of these dams are full-span river dams.

Only one major river in the United States remains undammed.....the 600 mile long Yellowstone River in Yellowstone National Park.....this is a national shame.

We in the United States should make a goal of being world leaders in dam removal and river eco-systems restoration, this will also lead to enormous economic benefits by increasing U.S. fish stocks and water quality dramatically.

<http://e360.yale.edu/content/feature.msp?id=2119>

<http://www.internationalrivers.org/>

<http://www.americanrivers.org/>