

April 15, 1994

Mr. Rolland A. Schmitten
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
National Marine Fisheries Service - NOAA
1335 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Rollie:

As you know, on April 8, 1994, the Pacific Fishery Management Council adopted the most restrictive ocean salmon fishery season in its 18-year history.

These restrictions will offer marginal but important protection to Columbia River salmon listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). This additional protection will come at high cost to fishers and dependent coastal economies. The attendant human suffering will be for nought unless National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) moves aggressively to address fish passage losses at mainstem Columbia and Snake river dams. These losses long have been acknowledged as the major source of man-caused mortality of Columbia River salmon. The impact of the ocean fisheries pales by comparison.

On March 28, 1994, Federal District Court Judge Malcolm F. Marsh ruled that NMFS action under the ESA:

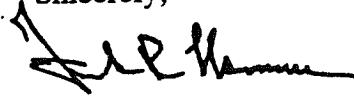
"is seriously, 'significantly,' flawed because it is too heavily geared towards a status quo that has allowed all forms of river activity to proceed in a deficit situation-- that is, relatively small steps, minor improvements and adjustments-- when the situation literally cries out for a major overhaul. Instead of looking for what can be done to protect the species from jeopardy, NMFS and the action agencies have narrowly focussed their attention on what the establishment is capable of handling with minimal disruption."

The Council agrees. We urge NMFS to take prompt, aggressive action to improve mainstem passage conditions. To that end, we strongly recommend NMFS use the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority's Detailed Fishery Operating Plan (DFOP), prepared jointly by the Columbia Basin Indian Tribes and state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, as the framework for action. The DFOP documents the most updated, collective and comprehensive 5-year recommendations for operating the hydrosystem consistent with the goals and objectives of the Power Planning Act of 1980.

Elizabeth Moler
May 8, 1995
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We urge the Commission to thoroughly evaluate comprehensive studies of instream flows and sediment production/transport prior to completion of the draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Cushman Project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank R. Warrens". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "F".

Frank R. Warrens
Chairman

JCC:elw
c: Habitat Steering Group
Northern Habitat Panel