

# PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224  
Portland, Oregon 97201

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Lawrence D. Six

CHAIRMAN  
Robert C. Fletcher

Telephone: (503) 326-6352

April 22, 1996

The Honorable Bruce Babbitt  
Secretary of the Department of Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) has just completed its process of establishing management recommendations for the 1996 ocean salmon fisheries off the coasts of Washington, Oregon and California. Over the past several years, this process has become ever more complex and difficult as we factor in measures to protect many naturally produced salmon stocks which have been greatly diminished, primarily as a result of negative impacts on their vital freshwater spawning, rearing and migration habitats.

Much of the habitat degradation affecting salmon production has resulted from short-sighted and narrowly based development activities of man which have failed to consider the broader and longer-term impacts such development may have on the quality of our environment and its inherent natural productivity. Several of the salmon stocks affected by such action are now listed under the Endangered Species Act and more are likely to follow.

Given this declining situation for many natural stocks, the Council believes it is very timely to seize the opportunity for full restoration of the natural anadromous fish stocks of the Elwha River, Washington. The draft environmental impact statement of the National Park Service regarding Elwha River restoration clearly indicated the potential gains in the production of natural anadromous stocks which could occur with removal of the Elwha and Glines Canyon Dams. In view of the important need for meaningful recovery of natural salmon and steelhead stocks, the Council has passed a resolution (attached) encouraging immediate action toward this worthy goal for the Elwha River.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Fletcher  
Chair

JCC:sjk

Attachment

c: Honorable Mickey Kantor, Acting Secretary of Commerce  
Washington State Congressional Delegation  
Ms. Carol Browner, Environmental Protection Agency  
Kathleen McGinty, White House Staff  
Representative Lynn Kesler  
Representative Jim Buck  
Senator Jim Hargrove  
Mr. Bob Turner, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Habitat Committee

## **RESOLUTION FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE ELWHA RIVER, WASHINGTON**

Whereas, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) was created under the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 with a primary purpose of addressing issues affecting fisheries conducted within federal waters off Washington, Oregon and California; and,

Whereas, this responsibility includes emphasis on fishery habitat protection, restoration and enhancement; and,

Whereas, the National Park Service and other agencies of the Department of the Interior (DOI), with the cooperation of the Lower Elwha Klamath Tribe, other federal agencies and the State of Washington, have conducted extensive environmental, cultural and economic studies to evaluate the potential for full restoration of the Elwha River through the removal of the Elwha and Glines Canyon dams; and,

Whereas, the Council has reviewed these studies and environmental documents and concurs with their conclusion that federal acquisition and removal of the dams is the only cost-effective and beneficial way to fully restore the ecosystem and fisheries of the Elwha River; and,

Whereas, the Council has already provided the DOI its supportive comments on Elwha River restoration in a December 15, 1994 comment letter on the Elwha River Ecosystem Restoration Environmental Impact Statement; and,

Whereas, the completion of the environmental impact process is expected later in 1996 or early in 1997; and,

Whereas, the opportunity to restore as many as ten anadromous stocks, with only the one-time expenditure of funds required for acquisition and removal of the dams and a short-term fisheries restoration program, makes this one of the most cost-effective and best opportunities to dramatically increase wild salmon production in the Pacific Northwest; and,

Whereas, over 80 percent of the Elwha ecosystem is largely pristine and protected in Olympic National Park;

Now therefore, be it resolved that the Council strongly endorses the acquisition and removal of the Elwha and Glines Canyon dams by the federal government at the earliest opportunity.

PFMC  
03/14/96

## RESOLUTION ON WINTER-RUN CHINOOK SALMON HABITAT

Whereas, the National Marine Fisheries Service has called for reducing the 1996 recreational and commercial salmon fishing harvest in order to protect Sacramento River winter-run chinook salmon from extinction; and

Whereas, commercial and recreational fishing has not been the cause of the decline of winter-run salmon; and

Whereas, the suggested fisheries constraints to protect winter-run will cost the recreational and commercial salmon fisheries millions of dollars in lost revenue; and

Whereas, an increase in freshwater outflows from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta into San Francisco Bay is needed to maintain estuarine habitat and reverse the precipitous decline of water quality and fish and wildlife species including the delta smelt (listed as threatened) and winter-run chinook salmon (listed as endangered); and these outflows are now available as part of the three-year 1994 Bay/Delta Accord; and

Whereas, there have been losses of downstream migrating smolts to unscreened water diversions; and

Whereas, on-the-ground habitat restoration efforts to restore winter-run populations need to be intensified; and

Whereas, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has halted the winter-run artificial propagation program at Coleman hatchery for one year to study problems of hybridization and smolt imprintation; and

Whereas, some of the habitat improvement measures already identified are yet to be implemented;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that consistent with its harvest management recommendations to protect winter-run chinook, the Pacific Fishery Management Council requests that:

1. The California State Water Resources Control Board provide sufficient outflows from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to protect winter-run chinook and review the adequacy of the outflows required from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta in its 1995 Water Quality Plan during the tri-annual review of the plan to assure protection of winter-run; and
2. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Reclamation prioritize and expeditiously implement on-the-ground projects to restore winter-run habitat; and
3. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission review the hydropower licenses for the projects on Battle Creek to determine if flow requirements should be modified to protect and restore fish and wildlife of the basin and downstream areas; and
4. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service explore whether winter-run could use Battle Creek as spawning grounds. This determination would need to resolve disease, fish passage, and water quality and temperature issues.

## **RESOLUTION FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE ELWHA RIVER, WASHINGTON**

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