

Tom Flint

Founder of Save Our Dams

H.R. 6247

Support of "The Saving Our Dams and New Hydropower Development and Jobs Act"

Aug 14, 2012

Thank you for this opportunity to Testify at this field hearing. I would like to start by letting you know a little about me and how I got here. My family came here in 1955 from Scottsbluff Nebraska to Quincy Washington to farm in the Columbia Irrigation Project that was created by Grand Coulee Dam. I am a fifth generation Farmer and second generation farmer in the Columbia Basin, operating a irrigated diversified family farmer near Ephrata Washington. I am also the tenured Commissioner on the Grant County Public Utility District which has two Hydro projects, Wanapum and Priest Rapids dams on the Columbia River.

As many of you know a few years ago there was a movement to Breach the Dams on the Snake River and as a result of that I started a grass roots Save Our Dams organization to help educate and provide information that was not being presented in the process. With a lot of your help from volunteers we started the Save Our Dams petition and collect over 880,000 signatures in Support of keeping the Snake River Dams. The justification for keeping the dams are as important today as it was a few years ago. as a society we deal with our economy, global warming, irrigated agriculture and renewable energy.

As many of you might recall the Dam Breaching proponents focused a lot of around the salmon Lonesome Larry from Redfish Lake in Idaho. The rational being that the Snake River Dams had destroyed the salmon runs and he was the sole surviving fish. What u did not hear was that the Idaho Department of Fish and Game poisoned Redfish lake in the mid 70's to change it into a pristine Trout fishing lake.and a few Salmon survived the poisoning. To say that the Snake River Dams are completely reasonable for demise of the Salmon run in not entirely correct and has been the catalyst for this issue between fish and dams. Today we know with the use of fish Friendly Technology Loansome Larry is not so lonesome and the fish runs are improving and becoming better and better as time goes on.

As a farmer and Grant County PUD Commissioner today I can tell u we look for win win opportunities for fish and dams today. Grant Pud is a consumer-owned utility that serves rural, predominantly agricultural population. We own and operated significant electric generation assets, all of which are 100 percent renewable. Hydropower, small irrigation canal hydro and wind power comprised our total combined generating capacity of 2,000 megawatts, with the vast majority of capacity coming from our two hydropower projects, Priest Rapids and Wanapum Dams. These valuable renewable resources support reliable electricity delivery, clean air and significant economic benefits for millions of families and businesses throughout the Pacific Northwest.

At our Wanapum Dam, We are installing more efficient fish friendly generating

equipment with environmental enhancement technologies. The Advanced-design Hydropower turbines and generators will boost the projects generation capacity by 12 percent , and has fish passage survival rate of 97 percent which is above our goal of 95 percent. We also built and innovative \$35 million fish slide or fish bypass , which studies show a fish survival rate of 99 percent for steelhead and salmon,

We are committed to maximize renewable hydropower generation and environmental performance goes hand-in-hand at Grant PUD. As challenging as it is to manage both efforts, we operate with the belief that balancing these important outcomes can be compatible and sustainable.

As I conclude I would like to say we with the use of fish friendly technologies, We can have fish and new sustainable hydropower and I and the Commissioners at Grant PUD support H.R. 6247 that Doc Hastings has presented.

Thank You.

Tom Flint