

To: Interested Parties,

October 5, 2006

The following, along with the attachments, was sent to the Oregonian, Associated Press and other news outlets today. It was written in response to a Portland City Club forum to be held tomorrow featuring former Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and former Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber. Babbitt has long promoted breaching the Snake River dams. Kitzhaber, while Governor, stated at a public forum, "Dam breaching is a no-brainer".

Forum on Dam Breaching Takes a Narrow View of Salmon Recovery

A forum will be held in Portland tomorrow that is being promoted as "restoring salmon through dam breaching". The focus on dam breaching is an overly narrow perspective on salmon and the environment. It ignores 22 of the 26 fish runs from northern California to the Canadian border that are listed as threatened or endangered, but do not pass these dams. It may not even help the four runs that do pass the Snake River dams.

The focus on dam breaching ignores the broader environmental benefits the river system provides. Most know that hydropower has zero air emissions. Many may not know that navigation is the lowest cost, most fuel efficient and cleanest form of transportation. One barge tow, moving 14,000 tons of cargo, keeps 480 trucks off Interstate 84 through the Columbia Gorge. The inland barge system on the Columbia and Snake Rivers moves the equivalent of 350,000 truck loads of cargo each year. It would take 2,400 semi-trucks to fill each 60,000 ton wheat ship that calls in the Columbia River.

The call for breaching dams ignores the tremendous investment this region has made, which has resulted in dramatic increases in juvenile salmon survival through the system. According to NOAA Fisheries, juvenile survival is higher today than it was before the last four dams were built. And, it ignores the record returns of salmon the region has enjoyed over the last five years.

PNWA was formed in 1934 as the Inland Empire Waterways Association. We have been working in support of developing, maintaining and improving the multiple purpose uses of the Columbia Snake River System since. Our members include ports, towboat companies, steamship operators, river grain elevator operators, shippers of cargo including grain growers and forest products manufacturers, irrigation districts and energy providers from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Northern California and Alaska.

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[PNWA "Dam Breaching is Not the Answer"](#)

[PNWA "Columbia Snake River System Navigation" Fact Sheet](#)