

IN THE SENATE

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 108

BY AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

A JOINT MEMORIAL

1  
2 TO THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES IN CON-  
3 GRESS ASSEMBLED AND TO THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION REPRESENTING THE  
4 STATE OF IDAHO IN THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

5 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and the House of Representatives of  
6 the State of Idaho assembled in the Second Regular Session of the Sixty-fifth  
7 Idaho Legislature, do hereby respectfully represent that:

8 WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Idaho recognizes the Columbia-  
9 Snake River System as part of the United States Marine Highway network; and

10 WHEREAS, the Columbia-Snake River System and its tributaries, col-  
11 lectively and in its entirety, is a multiuse system providing navigation,  
12 transportation, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, hydropower gener-  
13 ation, flood control, and irrigation to the citizens and industry of the  
14 Pacific Northwest; and

15 WHEREAS, the Columbia-Snake River System and its tributaries, func-  
16 tioning collectively and in its entirety, provide a vital contribution to  
17 the state's economic well-being and to the quality of life of our citizens;  
18 and

19 WHEREAS, the State of Idaho reasserts and confirms sovereign control  
20 over all water resources within the state; and

21 WHEREAS, the decline of anadromous fish is due to many factors, includ-  
22 ing increased predation, unfavorable ocean conditions, and harvest; and

23 WHEREAS, due to the efforts of northwest families, farmers, ranchers,  
24 organizations, and businesses investing billions of dollars in fish passage  
25 and habitat improvements, there is a 97.5 percent average survival for ju-  
26 venile Chinook and 99.5 percent average survival for juvenile steelhead mi-  
27 grating downstream through the lower Snake River dams; and

28 WHEREAS, due to the efforts of the state, Nez Perce Tribe, and Idaho wa-  
29 ter users in entering into the 2004 Snake River Water Rights Agreement, up to  
30 487,000 acre feet of Idaho's water is used for flow augmentation for salmon  
31 and steelhead in the lower Snake and Columbia Rivers, with water being re-  
32 leased through a willing buyer, willing seller arrangement. The 2004 agree-  
33 ment provides protections to Idaho water users in the form of a 30-year bio-  
34 logical opinion and provides economic benefits to water users participating  
35 in the flow augmentation program; and

36 WHEREAS, agricultural and industrial applications of water have a legal  
37 priority within the state; and

38 WHEREAS, the Port of Lewiston, Idaho's only seaport, is part of the col-  
39 lective Columbia-Snake River System and is an asset to the State of Idaho and  
40 an asset to the Inland Northwest region, providing global competitiveness  
41 and connectivity for regional products, economic development investment,  
42 and multimodal transportation; and

1           WHEREAS, the Columbia-Snake River System acts as a top wheat export  
2 gateway in the United States, with approximately 10 percent of all United  
3 States wheat exports barged through the four dams on the Snake River and  
4 about 50 percent of all Idaho-grown wheat barged from Lewiston to Portland  
5 and then onto export markets around the world; and

6           WHEREAS, barging is the most fuel-efficient, environmentally friendly  
7 mode of transportation; and

8           WHEREAS, hydropower is the most efficient, environmentally favorable  
9 form of electrical generation, producing 1,000 megawatts of carbon-free,  
10 renewable energy annually, and 3,000 megawatts for peak power emergencies;  
11 and

12           WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Idaho believes that any actions  
13 to degrade the functionality, in whole or in part, to remove or breach dams on  
14 the Columbia-Snake River System or its tributaries, or to take water from the  
15 state for anadromous fish enhancement efforts would inflict on the citizenry  
16 of the state a loss in economic and trade opportunities, a loss of recharge  
17 waters for the state's aquifers, a loss of navigation and transportation,  
18 an increased risk of floods, an increase in electrical rates, a shortfall  
19 in power generation, a loss of recreational opportunities, and a threatened  
20 quality of life for Idaho citizens.

21           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the Second Regular Ses-  
22 sion of the Sixty-fifth Idaho Legislature, the Senate and the House of Rep-  
23 resentatives concurring therein, that Idaho opposes the removal or breach-  
24 ing of the dams on the Columbia-Snake River System and its tributaries, has  
25 sovereignty of its water resources, prohibits contributions of water from  
26 Idaho's reservoirs for flow augmentation except those expressly authorized  
27 by state law, contends that efforts for further recovery of anadromous fish  
28 must be based on sound science, and supports maintenance and multiple-use  
29 benefits of the Columbia-Snake River System. Additionally, the Idaho Leg-  
30 islatre recognizes and supports the international competitiveness, mul-  
31 timodal transportation, and economic development benefits provided by the  
32 Port of Lewiston.

33           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate be, and she is  
34 hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of this Memorial to the  
35 President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of  
36 Congress and to the congressional delegation representing the State of Idaho  
37 in the Congress of the United States.