

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 2, 2007

**Put Sound Science and Fiscal Responsibility Back Into Salmon
Recovery: Be an Original Cosponsor of the Salmon Economic
Analysis and Planning Act**

Dear Colleague,

We are writing to ask you to join us as original cosponsors of the Salmon Economic Analysis and Planning Act (SEAPA). We will introduce this legislation soon in an effort to address a long-standing fiscal and environmental crisis: under current policies, the wild salmon of the Snake River and the rest of the Columbia Basin in the Pacific Northwest are headed toward extinction in spite of continued taxpayer and ratepayer expenditures totaling more than \$6 billion over the past 25 years.

In the 1970s, four dams were added to the lower Snake River in Eastern Washington, which in turn initiated a downward spiral toward extinction for several species of salmon. The current federal salmon plan proposes a host of expensive, unproven restoration measures while failing to even consider partial removal of the four lower Snake River dams -- the one action identified by scientists as having the greatest certainty of success. If the federally-funded measures currently in place (which include such actions as trucking young salmon from several hundred miles inland to the Pacific Ocean) fail to work, we must be prepared to carefully consider other viable restoration options, including the possible removal of the four lower Snake River dams.

By undertaking the economic and scientific studies called for in the Salmon Economic Analysis and Planning Act, the federal government will be better prepared to determine the best way to meet its treaty obligations to Native American tribes and its legal obligations under the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act if the current federal salmon plan should fail. This bill is similar to legislation introduced last session, but unlike previous legislation, provides no new authority to the Corps to call for dam removal.

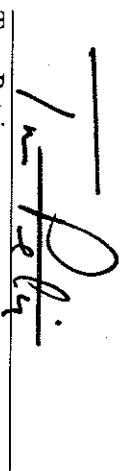
The Salmon Economic Analysis and Planning Act does not endorse, authorize, or make any judgment on lower Snake River dam removal. It calls on the Government Accountability Office and the National Academy of Sciences to review all options for salmon recovery and provide needed information on what should be done to restore salmon runs in a fiscally responsible manner.


Several stocks of Snake River salmon are expected to become extinct in less than 15 years under current policies. A public policy and fiscal train wreck is all but inevitable unless we begin to have a full dialogue on all potential salmon recovery measures, including but not limited to dam removal.


By cosponsoring this bipartisan legislation, you can help ensure that the federal government is prepared to meet its obligations to restore Snake and Columbia River salmon in a cost-effective and well-planned manner. To cosponsor please call Sean Hughes (Rep. McDermott) at 5-3106 or Lindsay Bowers (Rep. Petri) at 5-2476. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Jim McDermott
Member of Congress


Tom Petri
Member of Congress


Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress


Christopher Shays
Member of Congress