
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8010

State of Washington 52nd Legislature 1991 Regular Session

By Senators Metcalf and Conner.

Read first time February 8, 1991. Referred to Committee on Environment & Natural Resources.

1 TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND
2 TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF
5 THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION:

6 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
7 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
8 represent and petition as follows:

9 WHEREAS, The Elwha River wild chinook, especially the spring
10 chinook, were once one of the largest salmon produced by a Washington
11 river, and this salmon's ascent through the steep series of narrow
12 canyons acted as a mechanism for the natural selection of larger fish;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Records indicate one hundred pound fish existed in the
15 river and, at its peak, the Elwha had eight thousand spawning chinook
16 along with sizeable runs of other salmon species; and

1 WHEREAS, State and federal park, fish, and wildlife agencies,
2 environmental organizations, and the Lower Elwha Tribe are united in
3 calling for the removal of the dams and restoration of the salmon runs;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Experts agree that it is possible to remove the dams and
6 restore the fish runs; and

7 WHEREAS, The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has been unable
8 to require sufficient mitigation to restore the historic levels of
9 salmon; and

10 WHEREAS, The first dam on the Lower Elwha is one hundred feet high
11 and was built in 1911 without a fish ladder, and the second dam, the
12 Glines Canyon Dam, is two hundred feet high and was built in 1926 also
13 without a fish ladder the lack of which directly violated an 1890
14 Washington law; and

15 WHEREAS, Hatchery production on the river in no way makes up for
16 the lost fish resource; and

17 WHEREAS, The case for demolition of the dams is supported by the
18 General Accounting Office which conducted an eight-month study
19 concluding that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission did not have
20 the authority to relicense the Glines Canyon Dam because it is within
21 the Olympic National Park's boundaries and such relicensing would
22 require an act of Congress; and

23 WHEREAS, The Elwha Tribe strongly supports the removal of the dams
24 to make the tribe's programs successful; and

25 WHEREAS, The National Fish and Wildlife Service of the United
26 States Department of the Interior supports the removal of the dams; and

27 WHEREAS, The dams create power for only one major user and there is
28 sufficient power available from the Bonneville Power Administration for
29 that user;

1 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the Glines
2 Canyon Dam and the Lower Elwha Dam be removed from the Elwha River and
3 that the full restoration of the anadromous fish runs will be
4 accomplished to benefit sport, commercial, and Indian fisheries; and

5 BE IT RESOLVED, That your Memorialists oppose relicensing of the
6 dams on the Elwha River by any federal agency and further oppose any
7 attempt by Congress to relicense these dams; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
9 transmitted to the Honorable George Bush, President of the United
10 States, each member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the
11 President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of
12 Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of
13 Washington.