
HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4020

State of Washington

53rd Legislature

1993 Regular Session

By Representatives Hansen, Chandler and Fuhrman

Read first time 03/03/93. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources & Parks.

1 TO THE HONORABLE BILL CLINTON, 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:

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

8 WHEREAS, In 1988 Congress asked the Secretary of the Interior to
9 study alternative means of protecting the Hanford Reach, that fifty-one
10 mile segment of the Columbia river stretching north from the Tri-Cities
11 in Eastern Washington; and

12 WHEREAS, In June of 1992, the National Park Service issued a draft
13 environmental impact statement the preferred alternative recommendation
14 of which is that Congress designate the Hanford Reach and the
15 surrounding eighty-nine thousand acres north of the Columbia river as
16 a national wild and scenic river and national wildlife refuge; and

17 WHEREAS, Your Memorialists fully recognize the value of the Reach
18 as a spawning habitat for one hundred thousand chinook salmon, a
19 cultural resource of immeasurable importance, an environment for a
20 great diversity of plants and animals, including threatened species,
21 and a recreational destination for salmon and steelhead anglers; and

1 WHEREAS, The United States government took said portion during
2 World War II, when it hurriedly, and without compassion, displaced
3 American farmers from their land to accommodate the government's
4 production of nuclear weaponry; and

5 WHEREAS, The people of the region have maintained, more than mere
6 hope, the expectation that their patriotism would be rewarded, not with
7 permanent federal ownership of this rich farm land following its
8 nuclear-related defense and energy utility, but with its return to
9 private agricultural production; and

10 WHEREAS, In a Memorandum of Agreement dated February 27, 1957,
11 between the Atomic Energy Commission and the Bureau of Reclamation,
12 custody and control of these lands was granted to the Atomic Energy
13 Commission with the provision that if the Atomic Energy commission ever
14 determined that the lands were no longer necessary to its mission,
15 custody would revert to the Bureau of Reclamation directly; and

16 WHEREAS, It is the goal of the people of Washington to enhance and
17 protect wildlife, fish, and archeological sites, and build our
18 infrastructure, while creating jobs in an area of major unemployment.
19 The goal is to also increase our export of renewable natural resources
20 and help guarantee food for our people, forever; and

21 WHEREAS, At current land prices, the sale of fifty thousand to
22 fifty-five thousand acres to private owners could potentially cover the
23 cost of irrigation development, resulting in millions of dollars in
24 capital investment that will produce additional property taxes and
25 income tax revenues. It would leave approximately thirty thousand to
26 forty thousand acres next to the river for wildlife, fish protection,
27 and Indian lands;

28 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that, for all
29 of the above reasons, Congress refrain from passing legislation
30 designating the Hanford Reach area of the Columbia river a national
31 wild and scenic river or a national wildlife refuge and return to
32 private ownership that federally owned prime farm land that may, in
33 balance with water availability and environmental protection, sustain
34 agricultural production.

35 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
36 transmitted to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the United
37 States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the

1 House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of
2 Washington.

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