

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8026

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Environment, February 5, 1998

Brief Description: Urging Congress to not breach dams.

Sponsors: Senators Loveland, Rasmussen, Prentice, Hale, Prince, Newhouse, Morton, Winsley, Hochstatter, Goings, Zarelli, McCaslin, Sellar and West.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Environment: 2/4/98, 2/5/98 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Joint Memorial No. 8026 be substituted therefor, and the substitute joint memorial do pass.

Signed by Senators Morton, Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Fraser, McAuliffe, Newhouse, Oke and Rasmussen.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: Some species of salmon destined for the Snake River have been listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. Among the options being considered to attempt to restore the salmon and steelhead runs is the breach of dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Washington State Legislature urges Congress and the President to reject any proposal to breach dams and for the federal government to follow through on its commitments to provide funding for effective passageways around the dams for fish.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Reference to commitments made by the federal government to provide for adequate fish passageways at dams is included in the substitute.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: Tests to draw down reservoirs were done to see if survival of downstream migrating salmon and steelhead would be improved. The benefits to fish were inconclusive but there was considerable damage to roads, port facilities, and negative effects to water borne commerce and power production. The federal government made commitments to provide passageways for fish when the dams were built and it should live up to the commitments rather than breach the dams.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Louis Meissner, Farm Bureau, Pasco Chamber.