

OROFINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE

REPORT

WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Expressions of approval or opposition has been made by the following organizations on the Clearwater Dams. Comment by you is invited as the other expressions either for or against; as we are not in position to obtain complete information on organizations far removed from the region.

COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES - IRRIGATION DISTRICTS - ETC.

Approving:

Opposed:

Clearwater County
City of Orofino
Idaho County
Village of Kooskia
Village of Elk River
City of Pierce
City of Lewiston
Idaho Flood Control District No. 1 - John Poole, Lorenzo, Idaho
Village of Stites
Village of Kamiah
Idaho Irrigation District No. 36, Idaho - N. V. Sharp
Lewiston Grain Growers Association, Lewiston, Idaho
Inland Water Ways - Lewiston and Walla Walla
North Side Canal - Mr. Welteroth, Jerome

None

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND SIMILAR SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Grangeville Junior Chamber of Commerce
Kamiah Chamber of Commerce
Orofino Chamber of Commerce
Moscow Chamber of Commerce
Grangeville Chamber of Commerce
Lewiston Chamber of Commerce
Kooskia Lions Club and Chamber of Commerce
Pierce Chamber of Commerce
Orofino Lions Club
Idaho Falls Chamber of Commerce
Lewiston Grain Growers, Inc.
Asotin, Washington Chamber of Commerce
Spokane Chamber of Commerce
St. Maries Chamber of Commerce
Kellog Chamber of Commerce
Wallace Chamber of Commerce

RECREATION AND WILDLIFE ORGANIZATIONS

Approving:

Idaho Outdoor Associations
Kamiah-Kooskia Chapter
Idaho Outdoor Association
Crofino Chapter
Idaho Outdoor Association
Weippe-Pierce Chapter
Idaho Outdoor Association
Boise, Idaho
Kooskia Brink and A Half Club
(Tourist and Recreation Organization)
Grangeville Wildlife Association

Opposed:

Coeur d'Alene Wildlife Federation
Bonner County Sportsmen's Ass'n.
Moscow Wildlife Association
Craigmont Rod and Gun Club
Lewis-Clark Wildlife Club,
Lewiston, Idaho
Idaho Wildlife Federation,
Boise, Idaho
Wilderness Society, Coeur d'Alene

LABOR GROUPS, VETERANS AND SIMILAR ORGANIZATIONS

Veterans of Foreign Wars, Crofino, Idaho
American Legion, Pierce, Idaho
American Federation of Labor, Lewiston, Idaho

None

GRANGES

Pomona Grange, Clearwater County
Soil Conservation District, Clearwater County
Pomona Grange, Latah County
Troy Grange, Troy, Idaho
Kamiah Grange, Kamiah, Idaho
State Grange

None

COMMENT:

The geographical disposition of the support and opposition, and the character of the organizations expressing opinions are worthy of note. Absolutely no opposition is voiced anywhere in the State of Idaho by organizations interested in the economic welfare of the Clearwater region or of the State as a whole, and the opposing recreation and wildlife interests are with one exception, located in areas relatively remote from the projects.

It is believed that the opposition received from the fish and wildlife groups stems from two factors:

(1) Practically all of the information disseminated relative to the wildlife, fish and recreation phases of these projects, prior to the holding of the Crofino hearing, was by Mr. Ross Leonard, Director of the Idaho Fish and Game Department. On October 20, 1953, he mailed a memorandum directed to "All Wildlife Federations and Department Personnel" calling attention to the proposed public hearing and to the projects which would be considered, thereat. This communication to Mr. Leonard urged, directly and by implication, opposition to any of the projects being considered. With out any knowledge of the character of the projects, he stated that ". . . The construction of these dams is of primary concern to us. The dams in the upstream area will very definitely affect wintering grounds for big game animals and may interfere with their natural migration" . . . and "the effect upon the sea run of salmon and steelhead will also be very detrimental"

Factual data later presented concerning the Penny Cliffs and Bruce's Eddy project refutes practically all of Mr. Leonard's contentions. However, Mr. Leonard, or others responsible for dissemination of similar erroneous data, have made no effort to correct the understandings furnished by him to the recipients of his memorandum of October 20.

Nearly all of the wildlife groups which oppose the projects are from areas relatively remote from the proposed works and consequently probably have very limited knowledge of the character and scope of the effects of the projects on fish, recreation and wildlife, with the exception of that furnished by Mr. Leonard. All of the recreation and hunting organizations of the project areas, many members of which are dependent for livelihood on hunting and recreation activities, support the projects. It is frequently brought out by them that accomplishment of the projects will augment the possibilities for fishing and recreation.

(2) The opposition from the Northern Idaho Wildlife interests and that of the Idaho Wildlife Federation probably results from opposition of Pend Oreille Lake interests to the Albeni Falls project of the Corps of Engineers, with which opposition you are undoubtedly well acquainted. Spokesmen for the interests affected by the Albeni Falls project have expressed unalterable opposition to any Corps of Engineers projects anywhere, and have stated that they will block any projects of the Corps. It is regrettable that their attitude should constitute a threat to the economic welfare of the Clearwater Region. Those most qualified to know are convinced that in planning the Clearwater projects, the Corps has given full and adequate consideration to local and state economy, fish, wildlife, recreation and all other factors that are important from the local and State viewpoint.

An important consideration in appraising the impact of the reservoirs on big game is comparison of the area that will be inundated by the reservoir pools with the areas of the basins above the pools.

According to the report of the Corps of Engineers, Bruce Eddy reservoir at normal pool level will have an area of 10,800 acres or approximately 17 square miles. Above the Bruce Eddy dam the North Fork of the Clearwater River drains 2,440 square miles. Thus, the total reservoir area will be approximately .7 to 1% of the drainage area above the dam. After deducting river bottom and rock cliffs, the total possible area removed as browse area for elk and deer would be not more than 1/200th of the area above the dam. The Penny Cliffs reservoir at normal pool would have an area of 15,500 acres, approximately 24 square miles, above the Penny Cliffs Dam. The Middle Fork of the Clearwater River drains 3,330 square miles. Again this is approximately .7 to 1% of the area above the dam and deducting the river bottom and rock the maximum possible area removed as elk habitat would be less than 1/200th of the drainage area of the stream above the dam. The above comparisons represent the true and insignificant impact that the projects will have on wildlife population.

Without exception, the local fishermen, who are the only persons having authorizative knowledge of present fishing conditions, consider that the reservoirs formed by the dams will provide much greater opportunities for fishing than do the reaches of the streams which they replace. Also, without exception, the recreation interests of the Clearwater area (who are those primarily concerned) consider that the reservoir pools, maintained as intended

during summer months will constitute immeasurably better recreational facilities that do the reaches of the streams they replace.

Respectfully submitted,

WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE
CROFINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE