

# Opposition Against Dams on

## Clearwater River Gaining Support

"The fight against the proposed storage dams on the Clearwater river has just begun," stated Frank Cullen, newly-appointed chairman of District No. 1 Wildlife Federation Clearwater Dam Fight committee, Tuesday.

The dams, Cullen declared, would block the river to salmon and steelhead runs and to a large extent spoil forever the winter range of our largest elk herds and deer habitat in our primitive area.

The Coeur d'Alene Wildlife Federation has taken up the fight against the dams. The Boundary County Sportsmen's Association and the Bonner County Sportsmen's Association have joined in the battle; also the Oregon fish and game commission. "So has the District No. 1 Wildlife Federation and the Nez Perce Agency spearheaded by Chief Joseph Black Eagle who demands their rights of a treaty signed by Gov. Isaac Stevens in 1855 be protected," points out Mr. Cullen.

"At no time in our state's history has a power project stirred up the blood of our hunters and fishermen more than today with the Corps of Engineers asking to build dams on the Clearwater river," Mr. Cullen declared.

"As the situation now stands the Corps wants two dams built with a total storage capacity of 3,730,000 acre-feet of water in the reservoirs. One site would be at Bruce's Eddy, two miles above Ahsahka on the north fork of the Clearwater river. It would be 576 feet high and cost \$125 million. The other would be at Penny Cliffs on the middle fork about two miles above Kooskia. It would be 596 feet high and have an estimated cost of \$180 million. These two under present plans would be rock-filled, earth core dams.

"Another site proposed by the Bureau of Reclamation would be located on the Middle Snake river just upstream from the mouth of the Imnaha river to be known as Mountain Sheep dam and to cost \$358 million. Present plans call for a diversion dam on the Salmon river to force the water through a seven and six-tenths mile long tunnel to the Mountain Sheep pool. This would send much of the flow of the Salmon through this 20-foot tunnel into this pool.

"The Snake and Columbia rivers salmon and steelhead runs

already have been dealt serious blows by the construction of other high dams such as Bonneville, and McNary, which has just started making power.

"We are not opposed to Northwest development or to the generation of needed electric power but we do feel that other streams already blocked be developed to their utmost before our primitive area is doomed by construction of these proposed storage dams.

"Those opposing the Engineers plan to emphasize the fact that no artificial means are known to supplant nature's losses of fish when high dams are built. This fact also was admitted by Col. F. S. Tandy at the hearing held in Orofino on Nov. 20 who said 'all precautions as far as possible would be taken to preserve our fish resources'. He also stated at this public hearing that no known adequate system has yet been devised for passing fingerling fish downstream across the dams.

"The hearing just held by the Corps and handled by Chairman A. B. Curtis, head of the Clearwater Timber Protective Association and Mayor of Orofino was handled in such a manner that it brought some confusion from among those opposed to these barriers. Proponents for construction—well schooled and well organized—have not yet won the argument and you might say we have just begun to fight," Mr. Cullen asserted.

"Opposition to this program must be written and forwarded to Col. Tandy, Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army Office of District Engineers, Walla Walla, Dist., Bldg. 602, city-county airport at Walla

Walla before the deadline on Dec. 1, 1953. All persons and all clubs or groups, whether civic, fraternal, sportsmen's groups or others interested in saving our last frontier are urged to file protests at once before this date, as set by the Corps of Engineers," Mr. Cullen concluded.

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