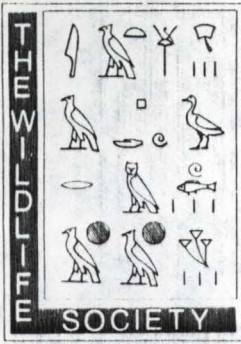


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IDAHO CHAPTER  
**THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**

October 21, 1982

*WE BELIEVE - "NORTHWEST POWER ACT OF 1980" (SECOND <sup>RESPONSE</sup> ~~LETTER~~)*

*Used*

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS  
 SUITE 611  
 7101 WISCONSIN AVE. N.W.  
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20014

Pacific Northwest Electric Power  
 and Conservation Planning Council  
 Suite 200  
 700 S.W. Taylor Street  
 Portland, Oregon 97208

*(Letter sent to Pacific Northwest Power and Conservation Planning Council)*

Honorable Daniel J. Evans and Council Members:

The Idaho Chapter of the Wildlife Society represents 178 professional wildlife biologists residing in Idaho. We support the Draft Fish and Wildlife Program of the Northwest Power Planning Council. We congratulate the Council and its staff for developing a very comprehensive program plan for fish and wildlife. If enacted, the program will provide the means in the Northwest power planning structure to mitigate, protect, and, in some cases, enhance fish and wildlife resources affected by past and future hydroelectric projects.

We have reviewed the testimony of the Idaho Chapter of the American Fisheries Society and are in agreement with their recommendations concerning the fishery resources. In addition, we have the following comments on Sections 700, 800, and 900 of the plan in relation to wildlife resources.

Section 700 Comments:

1. The Chapter agrees with the Council's recommendation for creating a wildlife coordinator position. The complexity of the Columbia River power system requires a coordinator to oversee wildlife planning and mitigation programs that will be administered by a variety of agencies.
2. Historically, loss of wildlife habitat as a result of hydroelectric development in the Columbia River Basin has been poorly mitigated. We are encouraged to see that the Council recognizes this and has proposed remedial actions. Concerning specific areas, we agree with the Council's recommendations for mitigation and enhancement of the Hells Canyon Complex. We also support the need to evaluate the existing projects listed in Item G of Table 6 to determine mitigation needs. We suggest that the Council review this list since it appears that several projects in Idaho have been left off, i.e. Dworshak, C.J. Strike, Upper and Lower Salmon Falls.



Section 800 Comments:

We agree with the Council that a central committee would be of value to coordinate wildlife research and review program implementation. The committee would be especially valuable acting as a clearinghouse for research and development proposals. All too often there is unnecessary duplication of effort due to lack of communication between the various agencies. Many of the mitigation programs associated with hydroelectric development will be state-of-the-art research, i.e. replanting of native riparian vegetation. Therefore, these pilot programs should be carefully monitored and the results made available to the public to aid subsequent mitigation programs.

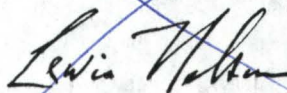
Section 900 Comment:

The Idaho Chapter agrees with the measures proposed by the Council. We would also like to emphasize that in Idaho there are several existing dams that currently have no hydroelectric facilities or have facilities where additional turbines might be added. The environmental impacts associated with upgrading these dams to meet our energy demands are obviously far less than impacts associated with new projects. We suggest that these existing dams be thoroughly studied and be given development priority before major new projects.

We would like the Council to reconsider the list of areas of critical habitat for fish and wildlife. In particular the Council should include the Hells Canyon reach of the Snake River, South Fork of the Snake River, Kootenai River, Big Lost River, Boise River, Owyhee River, and Bruneau River in the list. These rivers are bordered by good quality riparian vegetation. Riparian habitat encompasses only 0.6 percent of the land surface in Idaho and is of critical importance to wildlife, particularly when associated with the desert climate of central and southern Idaho. The riparian habitat in drainages such as the Owyhee, Bruneau, and Big Lost Rivers provides important habitat for migratory birds, upland game birds, furbearers, and big game.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on your Draft Fish and Wildlife Program. We are encouraged by the efforts of the Council to develop a comprehensive plan for fish and wildlife in the Northwest power planning system. Such an effort has been long overdue.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Lewis Nelson  
President, Idaho Chapter  
of the Wildlife Society