

THE IDAHO CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

POSITION STATEMENT: RE. LENORE DAM

The Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society wishes to file a statement concerning the proposed Lenore Dam on the Lower Clearwater River.

As the professional wildlife organization in Idaho, we oppose construction of any more dams on the Clearwater River. There are several reasons for our position on Lenore Dam.

The construction of this dam could have a serious effect on the fisheries in the Clearwater River:

1. It would flood out smallmouth bass spawning areas,
2. It could disrupt the Dworshak Fish Hatchery operation by flooding the fish intake and mixing the waters at the mouth of the North Fork with those of the main Clearwater,
3. It will constitute an additional obstruction in the path of migrating steelhead or salmon and would thus serve to increase the already serious mortality caused by dams.

In addition, it has been proved by the Corps' own study of fishing attempts on Ice Harbor Reservoir that migrating salmon and steelhead are extremely difficult to catch in a reservoir situation. With the advent of Lower Granite Dam, this would only leave about a 12-mile stretch of running water from Lenore to the upper end of PFI mill pond for fishermen to fish for steelhead returning to Dworshak Fish Hatchery.

This reach of river is one of the most heavily used by recreationists in Idaho. Studies by the Idaho Fish and Game Department in 1969 showed anglers made up a significant part of this use with about 19,300 using the Lower Clearwater during a seven-month period. An Idaho angler survey conducted by the University of Idaho showed that 56 percent of the anglers in the State preferred to fish in streams or rivers instead of lakes or reservoirs. We cannot afford to lose any more of our running rivers in the State.

As an alternative to the construction of Lenore Dam, the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society recommends that the additional 3 generators not be installed at Dworshak Dam and that the project be operated to prevent the rapid fluctuations which Lenore Dam has been proposed to correct. The Society believes that alternate sources of power can supply the needs of the Northwest.

We strongly recommend that no study funds be appropriated by Congress for a Corps of Engineers feasibility study of Lenore Dam.