

1/6/99

Governor Gary Locke
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Governor Gray Davis
State Capitol Building, 1st Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Governor John Kitzhaber
State Capitol Building
Salem, OR 97310

Premier Glen Clark
Office of the Premier
Room 156, West Annex
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia
V8V 1X4 Canada

Re: *Responding to 78 Economists' Call for Better Economic Analysis of Salmon Recovery*

Dear Gentlemen:

We, the undersigned conservation and fishing organizations, write to encourage your substantive response to a September 9th letter signed by seventy-eight economists. We support the economists' determinations that decisions about management of Pacific salmon can markedly influence the region's future economy but that public debate has focused too narrowly on the costs of recovery and has failed to consider the full range of economic consequences, including a range of economic benefits associated with salmon recovery.

We encourage you, as opinion leaders and policymakers, to ensure that the public is shown the whole balance sheet in the course of public policy debates over the impacts of changes in land use management to benefit salmon. We strongly agree that it is time for the states, the federal government, and British Columbia to commit to a full and fair representation of the costs and benefits of salmon recovery and, for that matter, extinction. Anything less prevents meaningful public debate about our future.

The economists are telling us that the public can and should know much more about how the loss or recovery of natural resources affects our economy. By changing the way we look at salmon protection and recovery decisions, what may seem impossible from a cost-only perspective could become imperative when the benefits side of the equation is added in.

An important example of narrow public debate over salmon recovery is playing out over forest practices reform on private lands in the Pacific Northwest. Your Administrations can play an critical role in broadening the discussion beyond its current focus on foregone logging profits to the larger, long-term benefits of protecting and restoring watersheds to sustain salmon. Careful consideration of the full economic picture is also needed to ensure rational decision-making on other issues, including agricultural practices reform, dam removal and water withdrawals.

In sum, public discourse has failed to fully disclose the substantial cost of the status quo—including salmon extinction and the collapse of fishing-dependent communities—and the substantial benefits of recovery, including those which flow from viable sport and commercial fisheries, clean water, recreation and improved quality of life.

We look forward to hearing from you about how your Administrations intend to respond to the economists' proposed framework for full economic analysis of salmon recovery decisions.

Sincerely yours,

Tryg Sletteland, CEO
Pacific Rivers Council

Paul Ketcham, Conservation Director
Audubon Society of Portland

Glen Spain
Institute for Fisheries Resources

Steve Holmer
American Lands

Steve Huddleston, Director
Central Oregon Forest Issue Committee

Ed Owens, Executive Director
Coalition of Coastal Fisheries

Alan Hollingsworth, Vice President
Grays Harbor Gillnetters Association

Liz Hamilton
Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association

Karen Garrison
Natural Resources Defense Council

Bob Freimark
The Wilderness Society

Jeff Curtis, Western Regional Director
Trout Unlimited

Doug Fricke, President
Judy Graham, Executive Director
Washington Trollers Association

Bob Lake, President
Willapa Bay Gillnetters Association

Jill Thompson
Friends of Claquot Sound

Chuck Willer, Executive Director
Coast Range Association

Mary Scurlock, Senior Policy Analyst
Pacific Rivers Council

Geoff Pampush, Executive Director
Oregon Trout

Steven Evans, Conservation Director
Friends of the River

Tim McKay, Executive Director
Northcoast Environmental Center

Tom Weseloh
California Trout

Lisa McShane, Salmon Habitat Campaign Organizer
Northwest Ecosystem Alliance

Bill Marlett
Oregon Natural Desert Association

Peter Morrison
Pacific Biodiversity Institute

George Sexton
Santiam Watershed Guardians

Susan Crampton
Methow Forest Watch

Tanya Baumgart, Chairwoman
Washington Women for Commercial Fishing

Mark Cedergreen, Executive Director
Westport Charterboat Association

Jud Ellinwood, Executive Director
Salmonid Restoration Federation

James Bergdahl
Conservation Biology Center

Sharon Chow
Sierra Club of British Columbia

John Leary, Executive Director
Washington Wilderness Coalition

Paul Engelmeyer, NW Policy Analyst
National Audubon Society

Kelpie Wilson, Executive Director
Siskiyou Project

Reed Benson, Executive Director
WaterWatch

Gary Benson & Dennis VauRosky, Co-Presidents
The Association of Northwest Steelheaders