



# NEZ PERCE COUNTY

## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

January 31, 2017

US Army Corps of Engineers  
Attn: CRSO EIS, P.O. Box 2870  
Portland, OR 97208-2870

1225 Idaho Street  
P.O. Box 896  
Lewiston, Idaho 83501-0896  
(208) 799-3090  
FAX (208) 799-3149

Re: Comment, Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The Nez Perce County Board of Commissioners would like to take this opportunity to comment on the scope of the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Columbia River System Operations (CRSO). The U.S. National Environment Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires before any "actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment" are taken, that a socioeconomic impact assessment must be completed.

The Board declares our opposition to the breaching of the four Lower Snake River Dams and regular or significant drawdowns of water levels. Either of these options would cause the following negative socio-economic issues for the citizens of Nez Perce County and those located on the Columbia River System:

1. **Transportation:** The loss of commercial navigation would affect the ability for farmers, the timber industry, and others to get their goods to market. Barge transportation is the lowest cost and safest option for transportation of goods. The loss of the Port of Lewiston and Columbia Snake River System would increase the cost of bringing products to market for North Central Idaho, Montana, the Dakotas, and Wyoming. Utilization of more costly, less efficient modes of transportation, such as semis and rail cars affects our ability to compete in the international market. A major portion of the nation's wheat export are shipped overseas via the Columbia Snake River System, which is the largest export gateway on the U.S. west coast.
2. **Employment and Recreation/Tourism:** The Lewis-Clark Valley is recognized as the jet boat capital of the world. Loss of a waterway system for both commercial and private jet boat owners would result in local jet boat companies closing down. This would significantly impact employment in our region as we have one of the largest number of aluminum boat building companies within the United States.

Large cruise boats would be unable to navigate a narrow river channel, resulting in the loss of tourism dollars to the Lewis-Clark Valley, along with Asotin, Portland/Vancouver, The Dalles, Stevenson, and the Tri-Cities.

The greenbelt system, along with local golf courses, draw water from the Snake River to maintain green recreational areas. Dry and barren recreational areas are a deterrence for those wishing to visit or relocate to an area.

3. **Hydropower:** The Columbia-Snake River Hydropower System plays an integral part in keeping energy costs low for our region, which attract businesses and provides for economic development.





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4. **Infrastructure:** The 1992 test drawdown resulted in damage to roadway, railroad embankments, piers, bridges, and boat docks. If the soil is weakened due to low and extreme fluctuating of water levels the support for abutting infrastructure is compromised. The breaching of the dams will have the same effect on the area. This creates a safety issue and an unnecessary tax burden on our citizens.

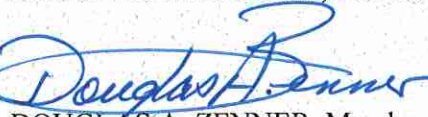
Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

  
ROBERT H. TIPPETT, Chairman

  
DOUGLAS W. HAVENS, Member

  
DOUGLAS A. ZENNER, Member

BoCC/sac