

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEW

One more unneeded monument to fish

It appears the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may have seen the light. In its preliminary environmental impact statement, the agency has recommended against draining Detroit Lake. The reservoir provides irrigation water for 800 farmers and 6% of Willamette Valley farmland, in addition to providing drinking water for 175,000 Oregonians.

To many who live and work near the North Santiam River, this recommendation comes as a relief. After all, using hundreds of millions of federal tax dollars to intentionally damage the lives and livelihoods of so many people made no sense.

The proposal to drain the lake for up to two years was part of a larger plan to modify



U.S. Army Corps. of Engineers Photo

The Detroit Dam on the North Santiam River near Detroit.

the temperature of the river water to better accommodate natural runs of salmon and steelhead fish that have been listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act.

The plan is to build a concrete water-cooling tower behind the Detroit Dam at a

cost estimated at \$100 million to \$200 million.

When we think of all the things that \$200 million could do these days, we have to wonder about the federal government's priorities — if it has any.

First off, \$200 million could provide \$167,000 to

each of Oregon's 1,200 public schools. Or it would pay for building the new cancer institute at the Oregon Health & Science University — and still have \$10 million left over.

Or here's a thought: The money could be saved. The federal budget is already more than \$700 billion in the red this year.

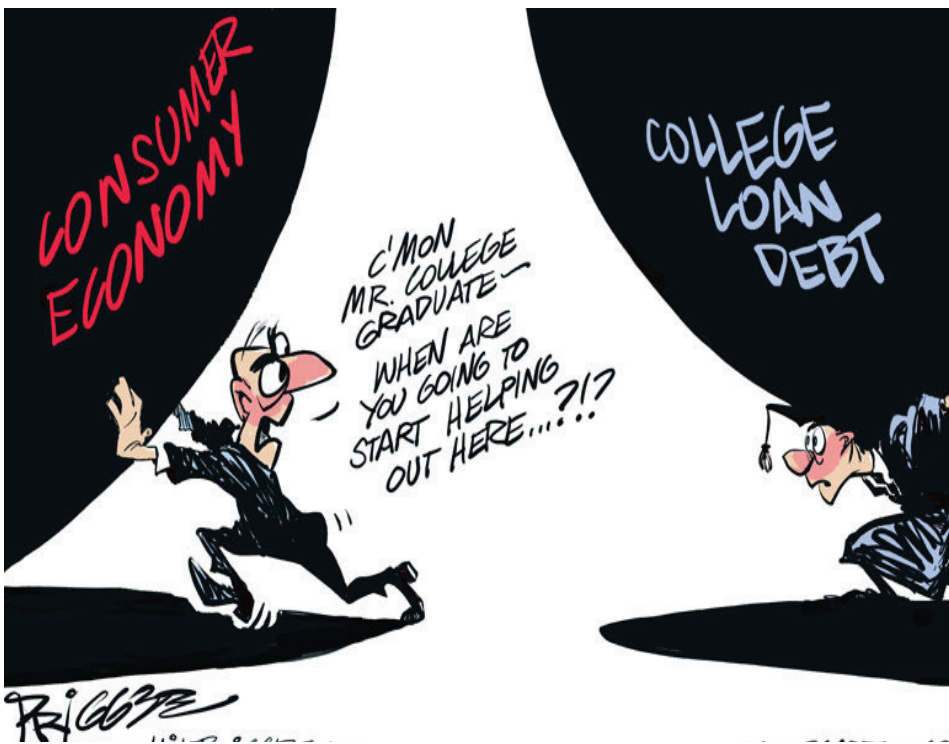
Suffice it say, the concept of spending hundreds of millions of dollars on fish is mind-boggling, particularly when you consider that thousands of hatchery fish already thrive in the river, which Detroit Lake feeds. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife last year counted 5,270 chinook salmon in that river. Nearly 1,000 of them were native run and the rest were from a hatchery. Similarly, there were 775 steelhead

— 185 of them native run. And don't forget about the 312 coho salmon.

That makes us highly skeptical of plans to build a water tower, but alas, under the Endangered Species Act, hatchery fish are invisible. The Corps is only trying to accommodate an ineffective and poorly written law that has cost the federal government — and taxpayers — billions of dollars already in the Northwest for the sake of fish.

The Corps now says it can engineer a way to build the 300-foot-tall tower without draining Detroit Lake. That sounds better, but we have to wonder about the need for a tower at all.

The last thing we want, or need, is a \$200 million monument to fish. We certainly can't afford it.



YOUR VIEWS

Do pedestrians really have the right of way?

What has happened to our laws regarding pedestrians at crosswalks?

So being on foot and being nearly hit or having a driver proceed forward has really made me wonder what testing the drivers took to get their license.

In Oregon we have ORS 811.028: Failure to stop and remain stopped for pedestrian; penalty. (1) The driver of a vehicle commits the offense of failure to stop and remain stopped for a pedestrian if the driver does not stop and remain stopped for a pedestrian when the pedestrian is: (a) Proceeding in accordance with a traffic control device as provided under ORS 814.010 or crossing the roadway in a crosswalk; and (b) In any of the following locations: (A) In the lane in which the driver's vehicle is traveling; (B) In a lane adjacent to the lane in which the driver's vehicle is traveling; (C) In the lane into which the driver's vehicle is turning; (D) In a lane adjacent to the lane into which the driver's vehicle is turning, if the driver is making a turn at an intersection that does not have a traffic control device under which a pedestrian may proceed as provided under ORS 814.010; or (E) Less than six feet from the lane into which the driver's vehicle is turning, if the driver is making a turn at an intersection that has a traffic control device under which a pedestrian may proceed as provided under ORS 814.010.

Oregon pedestrian right-of-way laws are not actually that complex. And the first rule is that, under Oregon law, every intersection constitutes a pedestrian crosswalk, whether or not it is marked or controlled by a traffic device.

A Portland pedestrian attorney will often hear the excuse from drivers that because the pedestrian was in an uncontrolled intersection (no lights, orwalk/don't walk controls), the car should naturally have the right of way. This is most definitely not the case! This explains, however, why nearly 75% of accidents between motor vehicles and pedestrians are caused because the driver failed (or refused) to yield the right of way to the pedestrian. What's more, a staggering 50% of all accidents between vehicles and pedestrians in Oregon occur while the pedestrian is in a crosswalk!

Pedestrians are not by any means totally absolved of responsibility for road safety. Oregon has a long list of statutes regarding pedestrian right of way and drivers' duties of care when out on the roads. They include:

- Obeying the lights at a controlled intersection. If the pedestrian is facing a red light, they do not have any right of way. Similarly, if they are facing a steady yellow light, they may not enter the roadway.

- If the pedestrian is facing a sign that says Don't Walk or Wait, they do not have the right of way. This becomes a bit tricky if the pedestrian has entered a crosswalk when the light says Walk, then changes to Don't Walk or Wait. In those cases, it is the pedestrian's duty to move to a point of safety, like a traffic island or footpath, and wait until they once again have the right of way.

I don't find it as all that much of a shocker because I have even had two local police officers fail to yield as well as proceed to move forward once I have gone past their car.

So do we really have the right of way?

David Chamberlain
Pendleton

OTHER VIEWS

Trump makes America irresponsible again

Donald Trump's plan to impose tariffs on Mexican exports unless our neighbor does something — he hasn't specified what — to stop the flow of asylum-seekers is almost surely illegal: U.S. trade law gives presidents discretion to impose tariffs for a number of reasons, but curbing immigration isn't one of them.

It's also a clear violation of U.S. international agreements. And it will reduce the living standards of most Americans, destroy many jobs in U.S. manufacturing, and hurt farmers.

But let's put all of that to one side and talk about the really bad stuff.

Trump says that "TARIFF is a beautiful word indeed," but the actual history of U.S. tariffs isn't pretty — and not just because tariffs, whatever the tweeter-in-chief says, are in practice taxes on Americans, not foreigners. In fact, it's now a good bet that Trump's tariffs will more than wipe out whatever breaks middle-class Americans got from the 2017 tax cut.

The more important fact is that until the 1930s, tariff policy was a cesspool of corruption and special-interest politics. One of the main purposes of the 1934 Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act, which eventually became the template for the modern world trading system, was to drain that particular swamp by removing the capriciousness of previous tariff policy.

Trump's erratic trade actions, unconstrained by what we used to think were the legal rules, have brought the capriciousness back, and good old-fashioned corruption — if it isn't happening already — won't be far behind.

Beyond that, tariff policy is inextricably linked with the United States' role as a global superpower. Central to that role is the expectation that the U.S. will be both reliable and responsible — that it will honor whatever agreements it makes, and more broadly that it will make policy with an eye to the effects of its actions on the rest of the world.

Trump is throwing all that away. His Mexican tariffs violate both NAFTA, which was supposed to guarantee free movement of goods within North America, and our obligations under the World Trade Organization, which, like U.S. law, permits new tariffs only under certain specified conditions. So America has become a lawless actor in world markets, a tariff-policy rogue state.

But there's more. By deploying tariffs as a bludgeon against whatever he doesn't like, Trump is returning America to the kind of irresponsibility it displayed after World War I — irresponsibility that, while obviously not the sole or even the main cause of the Great Depression, the rise of fascism and the eventual coming of World War II, helped create the environment for these disasters.

It is, I believe, pretty widely known that America turned its back on the world after World War I: refusing to join the League of Nations, slamming the doors shut on most immigration (fortunately a few years after my grandparents got here).

What's less known, I suspect, is that America also took a sharply protectionist turn long before the infamous 1930 Smoot Hawley Act. In early 1921, Congress enacted the Emergency Tariff Act, soon followed by the Fordney-McCumber Tariff of 1922. These actions

more than doubled average tariffs on dutiable imports. Like Trump, the advocates of these tariffs claimed that they would bring prosperity to all Americans.

They didn't. There was indeed a manufacturing boom, driven not by tariffs but by new products like affordable cars and new technologies like the assembly line. Farmers, however, spent the 1920s suffering from low prices for their products and high prices for farm equipment, leading to a surge in foreclosures.

Part of the problem was that U.S. tariffs were met with retaliation; even before the Depression struck, the world was engaged in a gradually escalating trade war. Making things even worse, U.S. tariffs put our World War I allies in an impossible position: We expected them to repay their huge war debts, but our tariffs made it impossible for them to earn the dollars they needed to make those payments.

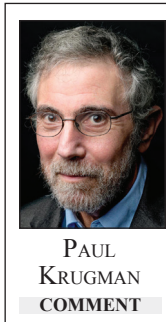
And the trade war/debt nexus created a climate of international distrust and bitterness that contributed to the economic and political crises of the 1930s. This experience had a profound effect on U.S. policy after World War II, which was based on the view that free trade and peace went hand in hand.

So am I saying that Trump is repeating the policy errors America made a century ago? No. This time it's much worse.

After all, while Warren Harding wasn't a very good president, he didn't routinely abrogate international agreements in a fit of pique. While America in the 1920s failed to help build international institutions, it didn't do a Trump and actively try to undermine them. And while U.S. leaders between the wars may have turned a blind eye to the rise of racist dictatorships, they generally didn't praise those dictatorships and compare them favorably to democratic regimes.

There are, however, enough parallels between U.S. tariff policy in the 1920s and Trumpism today for us to have a pretty good picture of what happens when politicians think that tariffs are "beautiful." And it's ugly.

Paul Krugman is a columnist for *The New York Times*.

PAUL KRUGMAN
COMMENT