

### Judge continues spills to help salmon

(AP) - A federal judge last week ordered the federal government to continue spilling extra water over dams on the lower Snake and lower Columbia rivers to help young salmon and steelhead migrate to the ocean.

The order from U.S. District Judge James Redden in Portland came as a result of his ruling last year that the Bush administration's latest plan for operating the federally owned hydroelectric dams in the Columbia Basin jeopardized the survival of threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead. NOAA Fisheries, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bonneville Power Administration had proposed putting about half the young fish in barges and tank trucks to get them around the dams on the lower Snake and lower Columbia rivers and relying on spill for the other half. That would spread the risks for the salmon and avoid the loss of tens of millions of dollars in electricity revenues.

The judge approved the government's plans for spring and summer spills over the dams, but extended it during both seasons, saying that the scientific justification for barging and trucking the fish was not conclusive.

"We are a long way from solving this problem from bringing back salmon for all the communities and people that depend on them," Earthjustice attorney Todd True, who represents the conservation and fishing groups that won the lawsuit, said in a statement. "But once again, the court has recognized that doing nothing is completely unacceptable."

"The ball is squarely in the federal agencies court to come up with a plan that makes the major changes in dams and dam operations that our region needs. We will see in the coming months if they can meet the challenge."

Bonneville Power Administration spokesman Mike Hansen said the agency that markets power produced by the dams would continue to focus its efforts looking for ways to operate the dams without harming salmon that are agreeable to all interests, including the government, Indian tribes, the fishing industry, and utilities.

BPA will have an estimate in a couple weeks on the cost of the spill ordered by the judge, Hansen said. However, the amount of water spilled over the dams last summer under Redden's orders amounted to \$75 million in lost revenues, accounting for a 2 percent to 3 percent increase in wholesale power rates for BPA customers.

NOAA Fisheries and the Corps of Engineers did not immediately return calls for comment.

Meanwhile, NOAA Fisheries, the Army Corps of Engineers and BPA are appealing Redden's May ruling to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Dams affected by the order are Lower Granite, Little Goose, Lower Monumental and Ice harbor on the lower Snake and McNary, John Day, The Dalles and Bonneville on the lower Columbia. Snake River spring/summer chinook and Snake River steelhead are the species that benefit most from spilling extra water and carrying young fish around dams in the spring. Snake River fall chinook are the species helped most by summer spill and transportation.

### Meth problem focus of gathering

Community members are invited to a community meeting on methamphetamine at the Simnasho Longhouse Jan. 11, from 5 to 10 p.m.

The meeting begins with the Washat at 5 p.m., followed by supper at 5:30 p.m.

Tribal Council Chairman Ron Suppah opens the meeting, followed by an invocation by Lydia Frank.

The meeting includes three main speakers, including Mitzi Allen on Meth as a community issue, Leo

Stewart of the Umatilla Tribal Council on tribal leaders' perspective on the drug, and William Etter from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration on practical solutions.

Attending community members will have opportunity to discuss the problem and possible solutions for an hour following the speakers' time. For more information on the meeting, contact either Char Herkshan or Guy Wallulatum at 553-3205.

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P195/75SR-14	61.92	P205/70SR-15	73.78	P185/60TR-14BW	68.04
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