

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

February 25, 1993 Hearing Room D 4:00 p.m. Tapes 16 - 17

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rep. Ray Baum, Chair Rep. Marilyn Dell Rep. Sam Dominy
Rep. Bill Fisher Rep. Tim Josi Rep. Dennis Luke Rep. Bill Markham Rep.
Chuck Norris Rep. Bob Repine Rep. Liz VanLeeuwen

MEMBER EXCUSED: Rep. Carl Hosticka, Vice-Chair Rep. Nancy Peterson

VISITING MEMBER: Rep. Dave McTeague

STAFF PRESENT: Kathryn Van Natta, Committee Administrator
Catherine Fitch, Committee Administrator Karen McCormac, Committee Clerk

MEASURES CONSIDERED: Informational Meeting - Presentation on
"Management and Environment Factors Responsible for the Decline and
Lack of Recovery of

Oregon's Wild Anadromous Salmonids"

WITNESSES: RAY WILKERSON, Oregon Forest Industries Council
DR. VIC KACZYNSKI, Consultant to Oregon Forest

Industries Council KELLY CONOVER, Weyerhaeuser

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These minutes contain materials which paraphrase and/or summarize
statements made during this session. Only text enclosed in
quotation marks report a speaker's exact words. For complete contents
of the proceedings, please refer to the tapes. [--- Unable To Translate
Graphic ---]

TAPE 16, SIDE A

005 CHAIR BAUM: Calls the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. Opens
Informational Meeting on "Management and Environment Factors

Responsible for the Decline and Lack of Recovery of Oregon's Wild

Anadromous Salmonids." Notes that The Ways and Means Subcommittee on
Natural Resources has

recently had a similar presentation. 017 RAY WILKERSON, Oregon Forest
Industries Council: The Forest Industry has been singled out as a
major cause of the decline in fisheries.

Because of this, we contracted with Dr. Vic Kaczynski and Dr. John
Palmisano to do this independent survey based on the existing data.

053 REP. MARKHAM: Did the Oregon Department of Forestry also see
your results?

056 WILKERSON: Yes.

059 DR. VIC KACZYNSKI: Our study began in November 1992 (EXHIBIT A). In 1985, I was project manager for the U.S. Department of Interior's study of the decline of the salmon in the Klamath and Trinity Basins in

northern California, and developed their rehabilitation plan.

Defines "wild" fish as fish which spawn naturally in the wild. The Sockeye Salmon has been listed as endangered, and Spring and Summer Chinook are also in danger. This is our first hint that major problems are occurring in the river and in the ocean. We have over-harvested wild fish and under-harvested hatchery fish, which has resulted in the virtual extinction of the native gene pool and replacement by hatchery hybrids.

186 REP. NORRIS: Was the decline partly due to El Nino after 1985?

195 KACZYNSKI: Yes.

198 REP. McTEAGUE: What is the significance of not making that escapement goal for this many years? What is the Pacific Fisheries Management

Council going to do in the future in light of these numbers and new information on ODFW's survey techniques?

206 KACZYNSKI: Unfortunately, they may completely restrict commercial fishing for Coho Salmon this fall, and may also put severe restrictions on sport fishing.

Since the protection of marine mammals began in 1973, their numbers have increased six to twelve percent per year. There are strong implications that marine mammals are a serious predator of salmon and steelhead. In 1980, less than one-half of one percent of the salmon and steelhead going up Bonneville Dam had seal bites. In 1990, about fifty percent of the Chinook at Ice Harbor Dam had seal bites or scratches. These injuries may not kill the fish, but may weaken them and make them more vulnerable to disease.

278 REP. NORRIS: There was a memorial in 1991 to address that issue. We may repeat that this session.

284 CHAIR BAUM: That is SB 7, sponsored by Sen. Bradbury.

290 REP. LUKE: What are natural predators of marine mammals?

292 KACZYNSKI: Killer whales. There is recent evidence in California that sea lions are starving due to surplus population.

315 Areas once used by chinook and salmon have been cut off due to flood control and hydroelectric projects. The Snake River Fall Chinook

decline is directly related to the hydroelectric dams built in the 1960s and 1970s. New upstream fish ladders have made it easier for fish to

move upstream, but there is still a three percent loss per ladder as fish move upstream. However, there is an additional fifty percent unexplained loss, which might be explained by sea lion bites.

373 Another problem is perhaps due to water speed and predator fish. The faster the water, the less mortality. Fourteen percent of smolt

mortality may be associated with predator fish in the reservoirs.

443 Explains effects of current water usage, including diversions for industry, drinking water and agriculture. The flood plain reaches of

our rivers have been simplified, resulting in the elimination of spawning and rearing areas for salmon and steelhead.

TAPE 17, SIDE A

000 KACZYNSKI: Continues testimony regarding water diversions.

067 The highest timber harvest in Oregon was in 1952. Beginning in 1972 when the Forest Practices Act and Stream Protection Act went into

effect, there was a dramatic downturn in forest operations. We concluded that the impact of forestry has changed significantly in the last five or six years.

Discusses the effects of the loss of estuary habitat, which is critical for salmon and steelhead. The food base in these estuaries has changed

from vegetation in marshes and swamps to algae. 113 CHAIR BAUM: What has caused this?

114 KACZYNSKI: Roads, railroads, navigational improvements and 100-year flood dikes. One of our recommendations is to reconnect the wetland

habitat to the river. The Endangered Species Act Recovery Team has estimated that we must improve juvenile survival five hundred percent for smolts which use the Columbia River, or we will not be successful in

saving the Snake River Salmon. I have suggested something radical: purchasing the lower Columbia River and coastal floodplain and estuary lands. By law in Oregon and Washington, those wetlands behind the dikes cannot be developed, nor are they good for grazing or agriculture. Those lands should be inexpensive and could be purchased and hydraulically reconnected with the river.

170 Several factors have led to the decline of fisheries. It is no longer valid to say that it has been caused only by hydroelectric or

over-fishing or logging or agriculture. All factors have interacted and also continue to restrict recovery.

199 Suggests agriculture take an active role in stream protection. They need help to achieve fish screening protection at water diversion

points. Encourages the Agriculture Subcommittee to work with irrigation and conservation methods in the field to increase in-stream water for

salmonids. 205 Recommends that the forestry industry improve stream protection measures to encourage salmonid habitat restoration.

210 Municipal and industrial entities should give more priority to toxics control of stream-based water quality management systems. Perhaps the

recent drought will help to encourage water conservation.

215 The mining industry should continue to restrict aggregate extraction from all anadromous salmonid streams where appropriate. Dredge, fill

and flood control could further prevent estuary flood plain loss.

227 REP LUKE: In the past, pheasants were released from hatcheries which weakened the species so it could not survive in the wild. Is this what

has happened to the salmon?

232 KACZYNSKI: There is not a lot of evidence to support that. It is good to use local stocks as the brood stock in the hatchery and return the

smolts to the stream of origin to protect genetic integrity. Most hatcheries are beginning to recognize the advantages of using local stock.

263 REP. McTEAGUE: The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is slow, resistant to change, and is not getting support from legislative

decision-makers and budget committees to fund the development of local brood stock.

281 CHAIR BAUM: We have had this debate in the Ways and Means Committee. We are now faced with closing some hatcheries. How are hatchery fish

introduced into the wild? Do you load them into trucks and deliver them up and down the coast, as they did with fish raised in Alsea?

291 KACZYNSKI: It was not a good idea to dump hatchery fish up and down the coast, because local genes become diluted from any local adaptations

which have occurred. For example, in the Rogue Basin, many small tributaries dry up in the summer. Many of those fish adapted by migrating downstream where there was more water. Hatchery strays hybridizing with local fish lose the genetic information to migrate early, resulting in a high mortality rate.

324 REP. MARKHAM: Do you have an opinion on Weyerhaeuser's fish farm in Springfield and Newport and why that did not work out?

327 KACZYNSKI: That is an excellent example of a hatchery gene pool locally adapting over time. ODFW never gave them appropriate coho stock, and

these stocks had a low survival rate. However, that survival rate improves gradually over time.

367 REP FISHER: What happened to those fish when the project shut down?

369 KELLY CONOVER, Weyerhaeuser: The facility was held open until all the subsequent adult stock returned and were harvested.

372 CHAIR BAUM: Closes Informational Meeting.

390 REP. REPINE: Introduces Land Use Public Hearings Summary matrix compiled from past land-use meetings (EXHIBIT B).

TAPE 16, SIDE B

019 REP VanLEEUEWEN: Announces that state and congressional bills substituting "sound verifiable science" for "best available science"

will be heard during the February 26 meeting.

041 CHAIR BAUM: Adjourns meeting at 5:16 p.m.

Submitted by:

Reviewed by:

Karen McCormac
Administrator

Kathryn Van Natta Assistant

EXHIBIT LOG:

A - Informational Materials from Technical Report - Dr. Vic
Kaczynski - 31 pages B - Land Use Public Hearings Summary - Staff -
10 pages