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[PNWA Website](#) - [About PNWA](#) - [Action Agenda](#) - [PNWA Events](#) - [News](#) - [Contact Us](#)**In This Issue:**[PNWA Interviewed on Aginfo.net](#)[WOTUS implementation delayed](#)[Walla Wall District Commander drafts Op-Ed supporting Snake River dams](#)**PNWA Interviewed on Aginfo.net**

On October 1st, PNWA Executive Director Kristin Meira spoke with [Aginfo.net](#) about the many benefits of the Snake River dams. The interview highlighted the multipurpose system and disputed false claims made by dam breach advocates in advance of their flotilla protest in the Lower Granite pool on October 3rd. The story will be played on 70 regional stations in the Northwest and will help to spread the word about the value the Snake River Dams play in our region.

WOTUS implementation delayed

On Friday, October 9th the Sixth U.S Circuit Court of Appeals blocked implementation of the controversial Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule released in May of this year. The rule was developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the EPA, and expands the definition of WOTUS beyond what the Clean Water Act originally intended. The ruling from the Circuit Court is only a temporary stay, until the Court rules on the matter of jurisdiction in a few weeks. PNWA will provide updates on this process as we receive them.

Walla Wall District Commander drafts Op-Ed supporting Snake River dams

The Tri-Cities Herald recently published an outstanding [guest op-ed by Lt. Colonel Timothy Vail](#), Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Walla Walla District Commander. In the article, LTC Vail applauds the Snake River dams for the energy and trade value they provide to the Pacific Northwest and nation, and highlights the innovative and effective efforts of the Corps to make our regional infrastructure more environmentally and fish friendly. PNWA greatly appreciates our partnership with the Corps of Engineers, and the efforts of LTC Vail and his team to ensure that the public is aware of the many benefits our river system provides.

Lower Snake River dams provide outstanding value to the nation

BY LT. COL. TIMOTHY VAIL

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

As the District Engineer responsible for operating the four federal dams on the lower Snake River, I'd like to bring some clarity to a discussion that, thus far, is long on hyperbole but lacks balance.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operates the four lower Snake River dams, and the best available science and economic analyses clearly show the Snake River dams provide outstanding value to the Nation. Snake River dams deliver clean, renewable hydropower, an efficient marine transportation corridor, and valuable recreation opportunities. They provide these benefits at a very reasonable cost while successfully coexisting with fish and wildlife.

Reliable, Renewable, Flexible, Affordable Power

Snake River dams are able to meet peak power loads using turbines that can be adjusted in seconds. The flexibility of hydropower dams makes it possible to integrate highly-variable wind energy into the power grid. When the wind speed changes, some power source has to be immediately ready to add or reduce power to keep the grid stable; hydropower provides that capability. Coal and nuclear power plants require hours for their power output to be adjusted. If you like wind power, you must acknowledge flexible hydropower is a great partner for wind.

The energy produced by the lower Snake River Dams is also relatively inexpensive. The public spends about \$62 million per year to operate these dams. For the past six years the annual return on this investment was over \$200 million of clean electricity. These dams provide enough energy to power 676,000 homes a year while avoiding the 7,317 kilotons of carbon dioxide emissions a coal plant would produce.

Environmentally Responsible Transportation

About 3.5 million tons of cargo valued at \$1.5 billion passes through Snake River navigation

locks each year. Marine transportation is the most efficient means to move bulk cargo, reducing cost and minimizing greenhouse gas emissions.

Recreation

The lakes created by these dams provide thousands of acres of water and lakeside recreation for 2.8 million visitors each year.

Environmental Sustainability

The lower Snake River dams are equipped with the most advanced fish passage systems in the world. Last year brought some of the highest Fall Chinook, Coho and Sockeye salmon returns to the Lower Snake River since Snake River dam construction began in 1962. On the lower Snake River, Corps scientists and engineers team with our many partners to prove dams and fish can co-exist.

The lower Snake River dams provide outstanding value to the Nation. The Corps of Engineers is committed to ensuring these important national resources are well maintained to serve future generations in an environmentally responsible manner.

Lt. Col. Timothy Vail is Commander of the Walla Walla District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

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