

CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON
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July 15, 2005

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
173 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Murray:

I am writing to express my appreciation for the work the delegation has done to secure federal funding for salmon recovery efforts in Washington State. I assure you the state, tribes, and local communities are using this funding effectively and that progress is being made. I am concerned, however, with a provision included in the Senate Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill for FY 2006 that directs the Bonneville Power Administration not to fund the Fish Passage Center (Center) in FY 2006.

While efforts on this issue to date have been constructive by deflecting what otherwise would have been a bill provision into report language, I remain concerned about how this language would affect the Center. The Center was designed to play a constructive role in the often-heated discussions over management of the Columbia River by providing useful data and analysis on salmon recovery. As the debate has intensified, so have views over the Center's role and the manner in which it fulfills its function. Nonetheless, it performs a vital role that no other regional participant does, as explained in detail by a letter sent you earlier by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

At the direction of the four governors, Washington State has been collaborating with the states of Idaho, Montana and Oregon on Columbia River salmon recovery. We have engaged the federal government and others in these complex issues, and I believe that we can make real progress. We still have far to go, however, and reaching successful resolution will depend largely upon our continued ability to work together. To that end, eliminating this funding direction would remove a contentious issue and allow us to focus on finding effective solutions to salmon recovery.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine O. Gregoire".

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor

