



exhibit G
Invited Testimony

Guido Rahr

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March 16, 2018

Chair Finley, Members of the Commission,

This year roughly 360 wild Snake River B run steelhead returned to 2,600 miles of spawning habitat, a new low for this imperiled species. This is far below the escapement objective 10,000 at Lower Granite dam. Dams, predators, the impacts of sport, commercial and tribal fisheries gill net fisheries have driven this amazing fish to the threshold of extinction.

This year you will be faced with decisions on how to manage the declining wild salmonids of the Columbia Basin and balance the many factions fighting essentially over the systems last wild fish. We urge you to err on the side of conservation, and make every decision you can to increase the survival of the remaining wild B run steelhead. At this point, the extinction of this unique race of steelhead is a real possibility.

It would be a tragedy if this extinction happened on "our watch", especially for a race of steelhead that has perhaps the most strenuous migration route of any fish: the headwaters of the Clearwater and Salmon rivers, downstream through the Snake and Columbia river system, across the entire Pacific ocean to rear off the coast of Japan, and then somehow makes it back to Idaho, somehow making through warm water, sea lions, sport fishers, commercial gill nets, then a gauntlet of tribal gillnets above Bonneville, only to fast for four months before spawning.

The Wild Salmon Center supports the proposal being advanced by the Conservation Angler and other groups to establish no fishing "sanctuaries" along the Columbia River. These areas concentrate steelhead during periods of warm water -- closing these areas to all harvest is a critical and timely step to reduce mortality on these threatened stocks of wild steelhead.

Sincerely,

Guido Rahr
President and CEO

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