



Friends of Bumping Lake
4000 Aurora Avenue North
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*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,
concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed, it
is the only thing that ever has”*

Margaret Mead

**Testimony of the Friends of Bumping Lake before the Washington Waters House Task Force
Olympia, WA October 5th, 2015 on SB 5628**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity for Friends of Bumping Lake (FOBL) to provide testimony on SB 5628. FOBL is opposed to passage of this bill because it authorizes funding of the highly controversial Yakima Plan, which has been shown to be fiscally irresponsible by the comprehensive, non-partisan analysis by the Water Research Center in Pullman.

The Yakima Plan Workgroup has provided no credible evidence that spending hundreds of millions of dollars on controversial storage projects will benefit the State of Washington, nor return even a fraction of the fish runs that the Yakima Workgroup claims it will. The first storage project in the queue at Lake Kachess returns less than half of the money that needs to be invested in it. The proposed Bumping Lake dam has a 100-year return of 18 cents on the dollar. The Water Research Center concluded that the most cost-effective and beneficial action that could be taken would be to provide fish passage at all existing reservoirs while discontinuing the pursuit of destructive, money-losing storage projects. Even the Yakima Herald ran a story last Friday that questions the economic foundations of the Plan.

The proposed dam at Bumping Lake would inundate almost 1000 acres of magnificent and biodiverse ancient forest which is listed as critical habitat for multiple endangered species. Also destroyed will be a popular USFS campground and a Washington State Sno-Park – both rare commodities that are easily accessible from Yakima and surrounding communities that will likely not be rebuilt if the dam is completed. To be clear: while the Workgroup wants you to believe that a larger reservoir will provide “enhanced recreational opportunities”, in reality everything that is valued and enjoyed at Bumping Lake will be permanently destroyed by a massive dam.

Worst of all, it is well known by the Workgroup that additional storage for irrigation at Bumping Lake will only be utilized in an extreme drought, and can only be used for one season in the case of a multi-year drought. The design capacity of the proposed reservoir is 190,000 acre-feet. Given that 40,000 acre-feet are needed to maintain winter-spring streamflow, in more than half the years the reservoir will not fill completely. In the second and later years of a multi-year drought, the utility for increased surface storage will be reduced to as little as 2% of total basin demand, based on historical extended droughts.

In the rhetorical positioning of the Yakima Plan, the IP implementation committee and Senate staffers have repeatedly stated that the only opposition to the Bumping expansion was from a “few disgruntled cabin owners.” This is blatantly false. Among the many conservation entities opposed to destroying Bumping Lake – 21 of which are listed on the attached sign-on – the Sierra Club is adamantly and actively opposed. Additionally, FOBL has over 700 members, most of whom live on the Eastern side of Washington in Senator Honeyford’s district.

In conclusion, please do not move SB 5628 forward in its current form, and ask that it be rewritten to benefit the whole of the State of Washington, and not the few.

Thank you,

Chris Maykut, President

Friends of Bumping Lake