

Kachess Community Association ♦ Kachess Ridge Maintenance Association ♦ East Kachess Homeowner's Association ♦ Kittitas County Fire District #8 ♦ Alpine Lakes Protection Society ♦ North Cascades Conservation Council ♦ Friends of Bumping Lake ♦ Alliance for the Wild Rockies ♦ Western Lands Project ♦ Western Watersheds Project ♦ Heart of America Northwest ♦ Wise Use Movement ♦ Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs ♦ Endangered Species Coalition ♦ Kootenai Environmental Alliance ♦ Friends of the Clearwater

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
United State Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Note to the Committee Clerk: Please copy all members of the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee and confirm.

RE: S. 1694 Yakima Plan

We have serious concerns about S. 1694, legislation that embraces the full Yakima Basin Plan and FEIS. We ask that the Committee not attach S. 1694 to the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015 as a vehicle for passage.

S. 1694 is a highly controversial bill that would cost \$5 billion to implement, fails economic tests, and includes actions that are damaging to the environment. While we do see merit in certain elements of the Yakima Plan's Phase 1, S. 1694 should be narrowed to address these specific actions that can benefit the watersheds, fisheries, and downstream uses without substantial cost to taxpayers.

On July 7, had we and other opponents of S. 1694 been given the opportunity to testify in your Committee's hearing on the S. 1694, we would have conveyed these concerns to you and other members of your Committee. We encourage the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to fully deliberate on this bill, understand the costs to taxpayers, and the long-term implications for management of the nation's lands and waters.

Our specific concerns about S. 1694 include that this legislation would:

- authorize water projects that have yet to be defined, including without full analysis of costs, determining who pays, and assessing environmental impacts;
- fail to incorporate a state-requested benefit-cost analysis that substantially challenged nearly 80% of the calculated benefits with no meaningful response from the Bureau of Reclamation <http://swwrc.wsu.edu/2014ybip/> ;
- seek to proceed with the Kachess Drought Relief Pumping Plant or Keechelus Reservoir to Kachess Reservoir Conveyance projects with high potential for substantial community and environmental impact, conflicting and indefinite planning, and without a final EIS;
- Exempt the Yakima Work Group from the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) despite a record of the work group consistently excluding and ignoring those who oppose the Yakima Plan in contradiction to the intent of FACA principles;
- accept a flawed Yakima Plan Final Programmatic EIS (FPEIS) that considered only a single alternative rather than looking at affordable options (e.g., mechanisms to share water between senior and junior water right holders, conservation, water markets);
- authorize new irrigation projects including new irrigation dams at Bumping Lake and Lmuma Creek (Wymer Project) that would flood and destroy valuable wildlife habitat; and
- Add a new proposal for two new National Recreation Areas within the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest with 41,000 acres dedicated to off-road vehicle (ORV) – an element added to the Yakima Plan after the close of the public comment on the proposal.

Thousands of Washingtonians wrote letters opposing the Yakima Plan during the public comment period because of costs and environmental damage. While there are elements of this plan that have public interest merit and deserve support, we encourage you to oppose short-circuiting full deliberation on this bill by attaching it to the bipartisan energy bill.

Thank you,

Organizations:

Robert Angrisano, President
Kachess Community Association
2800 Thorndyke Ave W
Seattle, WA 98199

Nick Coluccio, President
Kachess Ridge Maintenance Association
PO Box 93
Easton, WA 98925

Gordon Brandt, President
East Kachess Homeowner's Association
6100 Kachess Dam Road
Easton, WA 98925

Jerry Watts, Commissioner
Kittitas County Fire District #8
PO Box 618
Easton, WA 98925

Karl Forsgaard, President
Alpine Lakes Protection Society
Box 27646
Seattle, WA 98165

Tom Hammond, President
North Cascades Conservation Council
Box 95980
Seattle, WA 98145

Chris Maykut, President
Friends of Bumping Lake
4000 Aurora Ave North, Suite 224
Seattle, WA 98103

Michael Garrity, Executive Director
Alliance for the Wild Rockies
Box 505
Helena, Montana 59624

Janine Blaeloch, Executive Director
Western Lands Project
1314 NE 43rd St.
Seattle, Washington 98105

Ken Cole, Idaho Director
Western Watersheds Project
P.O. Box 2863
Boise, ID 83701

Rep. Gerry Pollet, JD, Executive Director
Heart of America Northwest
444 Northeast Ravenna Boulevard, Suite 406
Seattle, WA 98115

John de Yonge, President
Wise Use Movement
P.O. Box 17804
Seattle, WA 98127

Joan Zuber, President
Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs
44731 South Elk Prairie Road
Mollalla, OR 97038

Brock Evans, President
Endangered Species Coalition
PO Box 65195
Washington DC 20035

Adrienne Cronebaugh, Executive Director
Kootenai Environmental Alliance
PO Box 1598
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83816

Gary Macfarlane, Executive Director
Friends of the Clearwater
Box 9241
Moscow, Idaho 83843