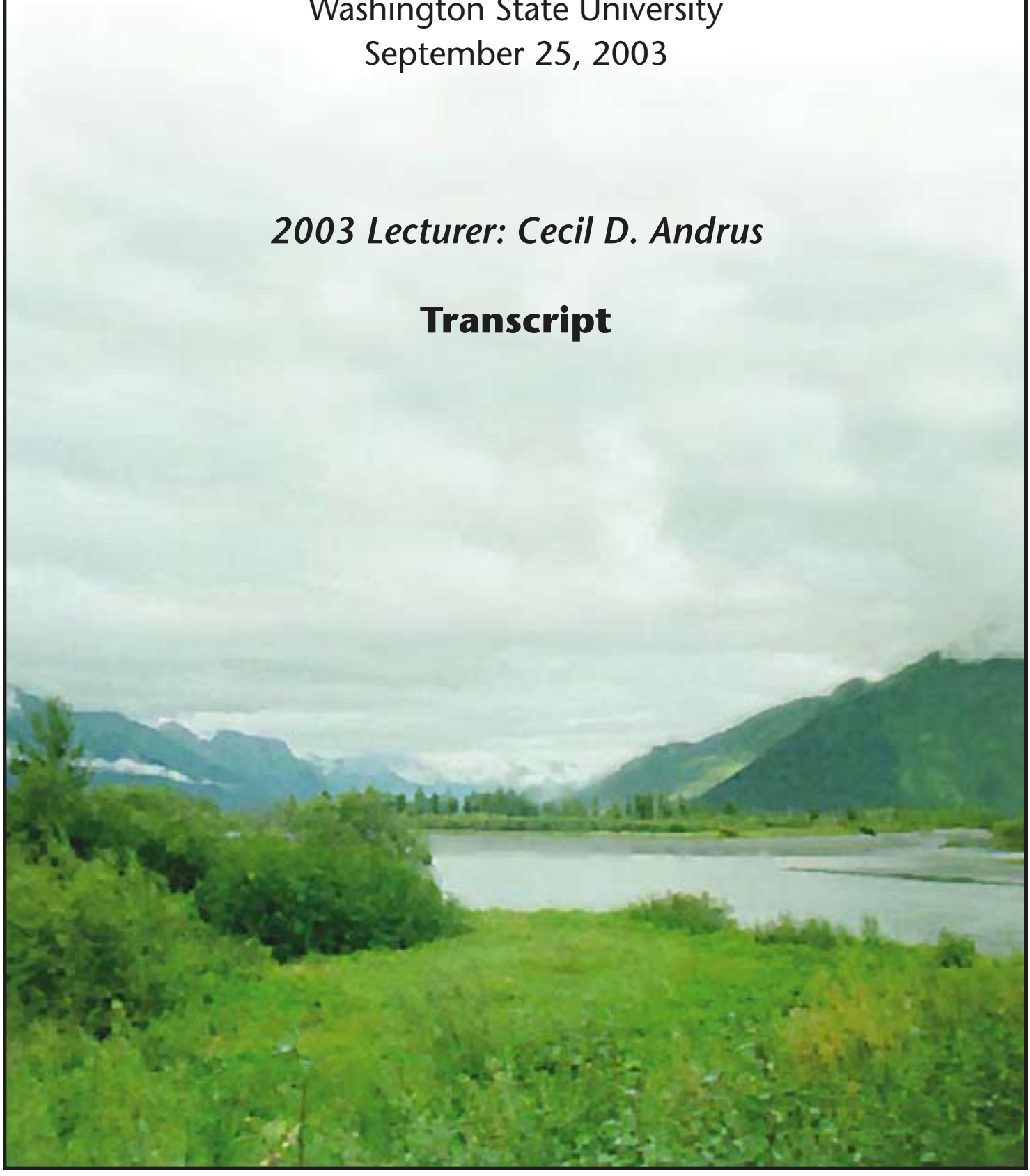
LANE ENVIRONMENTAL LECTURE

Washington State University
September 25, 2003

2003 Lecturer: Cecil D. Andrus

Transcript



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Good evening, everyone. I'm Bill Budd, Chair of the Program in Environmental Science and Regional Science at Washington State University. Welcome to the 2003 Lane Environmental Lecture.

It's now my pleasure to introduce the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Doug Baker, who will introduce our speaker tonight.

DOUG BAKER: Thank you. Cecil Andrus can claim two unprecedented firsts in the history of public service in Idaho. On November 6, 1990, he became the first person in the history of Idaho to be elected Governor four different times: 1970, 1974, 1986, and 1990. This is quite an achievement. When he retired from public service — I should say elected service — he was the senior governor in the United States in length of service. Governor Andrus's other unique political distinction is that he was the first Idahoan to serve in a presidential cabinet. He resigned as Governor in 1977 to become Secretary of Interior in the Carter Administration.

In his four-year tenure as Secretary, he played a pivotal role in developing a common-sense approach to offshore oil leasing, and his leadership was instrumental in resolving the bitter dispute over Alaskan Wilderness Lands and in piloting the Alaska Lands legislation through Congress.

During his service in public office, he was a consistent advocate for an adequately-funded, high quality educational system, something that we need again today in this state as well as Idaho. Beginning in 1987, he engineered the economic revitalization to the point that the state led the nation in new manufacturing jobs, economic growth, and increases in average per capita income.

During his years in public service, he championed protection of wild and scenic rivers and the passage of the official land use planning laws. He helped engineer a comprehensive agreement between industry and conservation groups to assure the protection of Idaho's water quality.

Andrus is the leader of the fight to save the salmon in the Pacific Northwest from extinction. Like most Idahoans, though, he loves the outdoors, and he hunts and fishes whenever he can.

Following his retirement from public service in January of 1995, he founded and now directs the Andrus Center for Public Policy at Boise State University. He has held a number of conferences there since then, featuring national directors of major federal land agencies — the Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Fish & Wildlife Services. He also held a conference with five current or former governors, a symposium entitled *Policy After Politics,* for an evaluation of the federal land policy by those in the front lines with experience in implementing it.

It's quite a career, and we are very happy to have you here. I'd like you all to welcome our distinguished guest from Idaho, Cecil Andrus.

CECIL ANDRUS: Thank you very much. I appreciate that welcome, those kind words, that lengthy introduction. My mother would have been pleased and would probably have believed most of it. Thank you, Doug. Thank you for providing my young assistant. She has been very helpful. You know, once you leave elective office, all of a sudden, you turn around, and there is nobody there as staff. This young woman has been staff to me tonight, and I appreciate it.

One of my colleagues back east who was used to all of the trappings of public life, said, "When I really knew that I wasn't Governor any more, I got up the next morning after the election, went out, got in the back seat of my car, and it didn't move."

I do thank you for being here this evening and welcoming me. It's been thirty years since I've spoken on the WSU campus. That proves that you people are forgiving, but you're sure slow in giving me the opportunity to come back.

It's great to be in this part of the world. The fall is my favorite time of the year. It's the time when the colors start to change, the evenings get cool, and there's a little frost in the morning. The bull elk are doing what all bull elk do this time of the year, the fishing is better, chukar season opened in Idaho last Saturday, and when you add all those things up, there's not a better place in the world than this part that we live in.

The key to it is to make sure that when we get through living in it and using it, we have something to hand off to our children and grandchildren. I have a 12-year-old grandson that has just qualified through the gun safety program, and Grandpa went to all of those meetings, sat there through gun safety, and now we hunt together. In Idaho, we have a special weekend coming up during which only junior hunters aged 12 to 14 can hunt. The fathers and grandfathers have to sit back in the blind, away from the decoys, and he will have an opportunity to enjoy that learning process.

Ladies and gentlemen, before we get into the meat of the subject this evening, I'd like to express my appreciation to Bill and Jean Lane, who endowed this lecture series. Bill Lane was the publisher of *Sunset* magazine. Bill and Jean have been friends of mine since I was Secretary of the Department of the Interior, and we had environmental concerns. He was always very helpful though he belonged to a different political party than I do — can't remember the name of it — but he was always ready to help when it came to an educational or an environmental issue.

As a matter of fact, *Sunset* magazine, which many of you have enjoyed over the years, ran a special section on Alaska while we were trying to close the minds of members of Congress and shift them in our direction. It was very helpful and very timely. I'm sure it was accidental, but the timing was absolutely perfect.

Bill Lane and Jean are superb individuals. Yes, Bill made a ton of money, lives the good life, but he also shares what he has earned through efforts like this endowment that you enjoy at Washington State University. This is not the only university or place in America on which they have left their mark. Bill served as Ambassador to Australia, and he was always very helpful to me before that time. I have visited in his home there in California many times.

He doesn't walk out and take credit for everything he does. I didn't even know that this lecture series existed until the good doctor called me and said, "Well, would you come up and speak?" I said, "Hunting season is starting. When is it?" But we were able to work it out. So I ask you, Dr. Budd, to express my appreciation to Ambassador Lane because I have known and respected him for a long time.

Now ladies and gentlemen, the subject for the comments I'm going to share with you tonight is that yes, there are threatening clouds over our environment. And I believe they exist today more strongly than they have for a long, long time. But before we get down to the current problems as I see them, let's take a quick look back at how we got here. Then we'll get into where we're headed, as I see it. Then we'll touch on a couple of issues if we have time. Alaska is one, and we'll use the map behind me on the wall.

It started out as a strong environmental issue when we created the Alaska Lands bill, but up in that far corner, there are 19 million acres, the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, a unique place and a unique environment in the world. We'll touch on that. If any of you are still awake by that time, we're going to have some questions and answers and talk about anything you want to talk about, but I will have you out of here in a timely fashion.

How did we get here? 225 years ago, we decided to declare our independence and to build a strong nation. We set out to do that, and we have been very successful in doing it — at great cost to the environment. We didn't know what the word meant, and we didn't care. We wanted to make the western movement be productive economically and in any other way. We needed incentives for the people to move to the west.

We needed an enticement, so what did we use as currency to get the people to go west? We used our resources: our land, our water, our minerals, our timber, grass — you name it. We gave it away to get them to move. The land rush, the Homestead Act followed by the Dust Bowl finally, the Mining Law of 1872, the Desert Entry, and a lot of other give-away programs were enticements for people to move to the west and develop this part of the world.

Then we gave the railroads every other section of land along the rail routes if they would create a rail connection from coast to coast. We've done all these things. We charged headlong into the westward movement, we fouled the air, we cut the timber, we denuded the grass and the lands, and we polluted the water. But it was no big deal because when we did that, all we had to do was look over the next horizon, and there was an unlimited supply of resources lying there before us. So we would move on.

This went on for more than 100 years, and then we ran right into the Pacific Ocean. Whoops. We looked back over our shoulder, and said, "Yup, we sure did all those things." But we accomplished what we set out to do and that was to build a strong nation. Thank goodness the vastness of this country is so great that we had the opportunity to look at some of the areas that we had leapfrogged over, like our state of Idaho. It was one of those areas where people were headed for Oregon or the coast, and they went through us and around us, but a lot of it was left for us to use for other purposes.

Then we started protecting remnants: a little of this, a special waterway over here, a river over there, or a piece of it, until we got to Alaska, and we'll talk about that.

It's interesting to note. In 1872, we started the National Park Service. We set aside and created Yellowstone National Park. What a great thing we did there. It was 1872, the same year we passed the Mining Law of 1872 which gave away a thousand times as much land as we protected in that act. I'm not saying that act is wrong, but I am saying that it should be amended. There shouldn't be fee title; it should be a temporary use of the land. That's another issue that we may get into.

We continued our caring and our concern, and then along came World War I and World War II, and once again, we were forced to charge into the extraction

industries to fuel and fund the world wars. So environmental concerns took a step back at that time.

The enlightenment came about in the decade of the 1960s and 70s. That's when we created some of the protected areas we think of. The Environmental Protection Act was passed in the 1970s. The Wilderness Act was passed in 1964. Then came EPA, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Wild and Scenic Rivers. The BLM Organic Act was passed in 1976.

In 1978, Congress looked at the science that was presented to them and they concluded that PCBs are, in fact, responsible for cancerous conditions. A carcinogenic determination was made at that point in time: 1978, 25 years ago. In August of 1977, the strip mine bill was passed; the Alaska Lands Bill and others were passed at that time as well.

So we have proceeded to protect some of these areas. Now many times, the implementation and regulations have not been as some of us would have liked. Interpretations by the courts have ruled sometimes in our favor, sometimes against us. Now, in Washington, D.C., the party in power is in the process of dismantling the gains we made over these years. In my opinion, there are threatening clouds over the environment of this country.

George W. Bush came into Washington promising to establish a new tone. He said he was going to unite people, bring them together. What has happened on the issues of the environment is that the Administration has taken it so far to the extremes that we have no national agreement on many of the critical issues. There doesn't seem to be any desire to continue the protection that we started.

Time and time again, this Administration has precipitated a fight over — you name it — the Alaska Lands Act, for one; the Alaska National Wildlife Range that I pointed to a moment ago; global warming; abandonment of the Kyoto Conference Accords; the Clean Air policy; salmon recovery in the Pacific Northwest. They even picked a fight over the de-watering of the Everglades in Florida, which put them at cross purposes with the President's brother.

Some quick examples of what has happened. The 1978 act on PCBs, which I mentioned a moment ago. PCBs were determined by science and the Congress to be a probable cause of cancer. Contaminated property had to be cleaned up before the title could be transferred to another owner. In other words, you have the responsibility to clean it up.

On August 14th of this year, the EPA General Counsel, whose name was Bob Fabricant, issued a memorandum to his agency. He was the General Counsel, head lawyer, big stick in EPA, and he said, "The ban was an unnecessary barrier to development." He directed the staff to see that this ban was removed. He issued that order to the staff. Let me tell you how concerned he was. He resigned the very same day he issued the memorandum to his staff, saying owners could transfer property without cleaning it up because the restrictions were determined to be an impediment to transfer of properties.

If you remember the acronym EPA? The middle letter stands for "protection." Environmental Protection Agency. That has been ignored totally.

The President and some of his crew visited the Edison Plant in Monroe, Michigan earlier this fall. That particular plant is one that has a grandfather clause to continue to function after the Clean Air Act was passed if, in fact, they would progressively clean up their emission standards. They pump out about 100,000 tons of sulfur dioxide per year into the atmosphere, another 46,000 tons of

nitrogen oxide, 810 pounds of mercury, and another 17 million tons of carbon dioxide. The Administration went up there and said that, under the "Clear Skies New Source Review Rules," they didn't have to clean up.

In 1999, the then - head of EPA did a very strange and unusual thing. They filed suit against eight of these power plants, saying that they were not conforming. They were coming into conformity; they had worked out provisions for them to meet the necessary cleanup. Then when Governor Whitman became head of EPA, she went before the Congress and said, "If I were the lawyer for any of these coal-fired power plants, I would not enter into an agreement to clean up." Of the eight they filed suit against, four of them were negotiating in the final phases. They walked away from the table, and the other four did not even come up to bat. It was a situation where they didn't have to, they knew there would be no enforcement, so they didn't.

The list goes on and on. I could give you a hundred examples, but the point is this: In a great many of the areas, it's not a mystery as to what needs to be done. There is some controversy, and there is some cost to the solutions, but the science always dictates what's the best thing to do. What any Administration ought to do is to call in the best science, pay attention to it, apply a vision of what is in the best interest in the long term of America and her citizens, and be prepared to tell your friends — whether they are oil companies, coal companies, or whoever — that they can't always have it their way. Then provide the leadership to bring it about.

Let me give you just three specifics, what I think this Administration — and it would apply to any Administration — can do now. The three things are: First, give the new EPA appointee, Governor Mike Leavitt of Utah, his head. Let him run the agency. I know Mike Leavitt. He's a reasonable, intelligent man. Maybe his environmental record isn't on the same par as some of the others, but he knows what's right, and he knows what has to be done. Let him run EPA. Don't let Carl Rove make all the decisions.

To show you how they put him in a box. They announced his appointment, and then they did the relaxation on the EPA rules after he had been nominated. He's up before Congress right now, trying to justify it. That's not the way it's supposed to be done. That's the first thing they should do: let the man head the agency.

Second, while the rest of the world remains flabbergasted about our adventure in Iraq and while we have lost virtually all the support we enjoyed right after September 11th, we could begin to rebuild the support in a different fashion by calling right now for new efforts to combat global warming. Remember, we walked away from the Kyoto Conference, which brought it to a halt. At that point in time, most of the world was prepared to help us in that regard. We know what has to be done. We ought to do it.

Third, energy is the great issue of the 21st Century. We're consuming more and more of the world's total supply, and the developing world cannot develop any faster without a different or larger energy source. This means a major effort to develop hydrogen as a fuel source. That means more development of a safer source of nuclear energy, but that can only happen with a major commitment to controlling the fuel cycle, in other words, safe handling and disposal of the waste products. That has to come first before the development can occur.

Let me throw in a fourth one for good measure. I hope I live long enough to see it. I hope to see an Administration recommit to the notion that protecting the environment and keeping the air and water clean for our children is not a partisan issue. Let us

develop a bi-partisan effort in this regard. Those four things would put us back on the right track.

Let me touch upon a couple of items that are closer to home here in this part of America. First is Alaska. The Alaska Lands Bill passed in 1980. I was the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, and it fell into my area of responsibility to be the champion of it in the Congress to get it passed. It was not an easy task.

If you look at the outline of Alaska behind me here, you'll see that from the southeast all the way up, there are 354 million acres that you see up there on shore. There are untold millions of acres immediately offshore with little inlets that are hard to determine. When we passed the Alaska Lands Bill — remember 354 million acres on the map behind me — we protected 103 million acres of the 354 in national parks, refuges, wilderness, national forests, and fish and wildlife refuges. We protected that 19 million acres right up there. This is Canada over here. That 19 million is the range, home to the Porcupine caribou herd, which is the largest free-roaming herd of mammals in North America. They come from this area in Canada and this part of Alaska, and they migrate northerly in the spring. Their calving takes place about up in here on the plain.

Right about where the red dot is now, there is a little native village called Kaktovik. Right now there an energy bill before Congress — they've tried before, and they are trying again — to go in there and bring about oil production on the range. Think for a minute, ladies and gentlemen. If you come around North America, this is the only area that has not really felt the industrial footprint of man. Come across to Point Thompson, and there is Prudhoe Bay. Then you come across to Nome, and all the way around, down to the Aleutians. Then all the way down Canada, Puget Sound, the coast of Washington, Oregon, California, Mexico — that's the only place that hasn't felt the impact of man. It's a place that is so fragile that it takes 100 square miles for a brown grizzly bear to forage. It takes fifty years to grow a tree, a tree we would call a bush.

It is the only place we still have the musk ox. Now, is there energy there? Yes. How much? Debatable. At Prudhoe, they discovered 8 billion barrels of hydrocarbon, oil. But that 8 billion barrels is in vertical horizon levels, so it's basically one area where they extracted. It comes down to Valdez with the pipeline; then it's shipped out. There are 23 trillion cubic feet of natural gas that has been reinjected into those wells up there. We use about 21 trillion cubic feet of natural gas a year. So it's a year's supply, but it's available if we had the transportation for it. They can't use the same line that you have the crude in right now.

Point Thompson is that point right there. That is not in the Range. It's an area where there is known hydrocarbon potential. If you look at this side, it's an area they call Krupa Lake, under the state of Alaska's control, and there are hydrocarbons there. Expensive to get out but not nearly as expensive as it would be from the range.

If we have to have those hydrocarbons, if we can't find them any other place in this world, let ANWAR be the last hydrocarbons we extract. It is a place where finally you have to say, "It would be best left the way God created it in the first place. Having been there, I can submit to you that is one of those areas that falls into that category.

Do you know that there is an area that's very close, one with hydrocarbons that are easy to extract, a known supply, large supply. It's off the coast of Santa Barbara, California. Guess what? They don't want those ugly old oil platforms ruining their view. But they want to go up into Alaska and extract it because it would be out of sight.

Is it worth it? If they could find a way

to get it out, there is anywhere from three to seven billion barrels, but it is spread all over the nineteen million acres in pools — here and there. It would be a very expensive and time-consuming situation, but it's a situation where we, the citizens of American have to say no, we're not going to open up that area.

Congress passed the law once and said it would be protected. Now there is an attempt to change that. Some of us have to be concerned about that.

Let me touch quickly on one other issue, closer to home, one that has divided the area. It has to do with salmon on the Lower Snake River and the Snake River dams. There is an argument as to whether the dams should be breached and done away with or whether they should stay. Do we just wash our hands and say we should ignore what the courts have said about the native Americans' rights for certain levels of harvest?

If you would ask me what is best for the salmon, I would have to say that it would be best if the dams weren't there and we had a free-flowing river. But the dams *are* there. When we, the white man, came to this country, there were about 16 million adult salmon per year, coming in the mouth of the Columbia River. Eight million went upstream in the Columbia; the other eight million funneled over into the Snake, the Clearwater, the Salmon, and the other tributaries in the interior of the country. That has dwindled down to where the fall run of Chinook is extinct. When the spring and summer runs had better numbers this year, people said, "Oh, gee whiz, isn't this great? We're winning that battle."

Baloney. Let me tell you why the numbers are better. Mother Nature gave us, two or three years ago, a pretty good snow pack in the hills. When that runoff came, it created a flush to take the smolt to the Pacific Ocean. That is why we are getting more adults back now. I would say to you that until this is resolved, we will not enjoy those salmon runs unless we get an abundance of snow back.

Now should the dams be removed? Is that the answer? I think not. I think you have to be very practical. You have to recognize that it would take an act of Congress in order to remove those dams, and I submit to you that's not going to happen. I don't care what my environmental friends say — and I have the awards at one time or another from most environmental organizations in America. But, in my opinion, you're not going to take the dams out. But if you spend another five or six years fighting, pointing fingers, and trying to do it, you're going to see all the species become extinct.

It would be better to move toward a way to simulate the free-flowing streams. There are about 82,000 CFS [cubic feet per second] flowing into the pool area in the spring when it runs off. When you had a free flowing stream, that was the flush. A lot of people say those little critters swim out to the Pacific Ocean. They don't swim out to the Pacific Ocean. Their noses are pointed upstream all the time. It's the flush that pushes them out. At 82,000 CFS, that's moving about 11 feet per second. It used to take anywhere from eight to 13 days to take a smolt, a juvenile salmon, from the headwaters in Idaho to the Pacific Ocean. Now for the few that survive, it takes as much as a month or forty days. The problems that come — predation, disease, scale knock-off, banging them into metal barges — it's just not in the cards.

But take a large pool, slack water. That 11 feet per second, when it hits slack water, becomes one or less than one foot per second. They lose the velocity pushing them out to the ocean. Then they start swimming around, the predators move in, and they are depleted.

If we would lower the level, reduce the

width, and pump 82,000 CFS into a smaller body of water, you probably won't get 11 feet per second out of it, but you're going to get something in the neighborhood of — pick a number — I'll let Dr. Ford tell me. He's not the speaker tonight, but he does a lot of work on this.

Let's say it was seven feet per second. You could simulate the other way and retrofit the dams so they go over the dams, not through the barges. My suspicion would be that we would get somewhere between 65 and 70% of what we're getting the other way.

Are they going to do that? No, they are probably going to continue to fight, point fingers, blame, and not bring the people to the table, and I'll continue to go to British Columbia and Alaska for salmon fishing.

Let me just remind you what Robert Frost once wrote: "We should not have to care so much, you and I." I submit to you that we do have to care. If we don't care, nothing will happen. We have to take the bull by the horns, tell our members of Congress what we expect, what we want, and what the scientists say will work and what will not work. I've been very pleased to have the opportunity to work within the state of Alaska, the state of Idaho, and through western America to improve the environmental quality that we have. We've made some gains, but too much is going downhill.

I remain hopeful that we'll be able to pass on to our children and our grandchildren the same opportunity that we've had. Perhaps hope is too mild a word. Maybe it takes stronger word. I would say that it is our *obligation* to see that we pass this on. You people are a big part of it, the people on the faculty here, the people who are students here, the people in the public who care — all of you have a voice. If you don't use it, you'll see these problems continue the way they have. For those who enjoy the quality of life we have in the western United States, you'll see it disappear.

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

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