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Flood Control Dams Spell
Ruin for Salmon Industry

Chicago, March 16... (SPECIAL) .. "With completion of the flood control project on the Willamette river in Oregon, the Columbia river salmon industry faces well nigh complete ruination," today declared William L. Finley of Portland, noted naturalist and national vice president of the Izaak Walton League, in Chicago to confer with League officials.

"The Chinook salmon runs of the Columbia river represent the most valuable fish resources in America -- perhaps in the world. As a food supply they represent an industry of more than 10 million dollars annually, supporting thousands of families, and this in spite of the fact that the runs have been gradually decreasing on the upper Columbia, where dams, pollution and irrigation ditches have raised so much havoc as to make the industry on that part of the river almost a memory.

"The best remaining spawning area is the tributary, the Willamette, which is apparently doomed to go the same route, all in the name of flood control, in order to obtain federal pork monies, largely at the expense of the more populous states, to the tune of more than 100 million dollars, and/add to the fast growing number of aquatic monstrosities being heaped upon the nation.

"To justify the project on the grounds that it will protect farmers and other land owners along the river from being damaged by flood waters doesn't make sense. The Engineers' study indicated that the largest reported floods on the upper Willamette occurred during December 1861, January 1881 and February 1890 - all during winter months. Floods on the main stream usually occur between November and March, the main flood water below Oregon City being back-water from annual

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freshets on the Columbia and therefore having nothing to do with the upper Willamette. Since floods in the Willamette Valley come during the winter months, how can there be damage to farm crops?

"From time immemorial we know that river bottoms regularly covered with silt make the richest land for agriculture and that on flats covered with rich, sandy loam without effort or expense on his part the farmer produces his largest and finest crop.

"If their honest opinion was asked, the farmers and bona fide land owners of the Willamette Valley did not start this agitation for flood control and do not want it. It is indeed high time that the taxpayers of the nation found out and called a halt."

Mr. Finley will ask for League action on the project at the National Convention to be held at the Congress Hotel, Chicago, March 28, 29 and 30, at which time Secretary of the Interior Ickes is expected to answer some of the League's criticism of governmental policies with particular reference to the disregard for public aquatic resources.

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By O. L. Kaupanger

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