



The Enterprise

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Don't sell out rest of county's citizens

Talk about self-serving! Northwestern Lake cabin owner Mark King's recent letter to the editor (The Enterprise, Sept. 7) was basically a plea to the rest of us Klickitat County citizens to keep on paying through the nose so he and a few other residents can maintain their lake. A "lake?" Well, the term should be qualified, as it is simply a tiny, nearly silted-over reservoir behind ancient Condit Dam. It is well on its way to becoming a bog in the very near future.

For the life of me I cannot understand why Klickitat County has spent so much tax-payer dollars (over \$500,000 in attorney fees) to save this pathetic lake for 48 cabin owners? Could there be a real estate scheme lurking in the background?

King starts out in his letter stating that he and other cabin owners own properties in the vicinity of the lake. This is deliberately misleading. They are not real property owners. They own their cabins only and merely lease the land from PacifiCorp. They would love to own the land, of course, thus he and his influential cronies seem to be willing to stop at nothing to keep the dam in place, including trying to convince the county to condemn it and keep in for itself, a costly and foolhardy notion.

In a letter full of misinformation, I had to chuckle when he said: "Someday, Condit Dam will need to be removed." That's right amigo! It's almost 100 years old, with weeds growing on the face of it and a silted up reservoir behind. PacifiCorp has wisely chosen to take out Condit Dam and end its liability for the project. They have studied the situation intensely and determined that it is no longer profitable and is in fact a liability.

It has agreed to pay all removal, cleanup and restoration costs beginning with planned removal in 2008. If the Klickitat Public Utility District condemns and takes over the dam, then ratepayers will assume this liability and eventually the cost of decommissioning, removal, cleanup and restoration. Yecch . . . what a messy trade for a wild and free-flowing river filled with salmon!

Come on, PUD. Come on, cabin owners. Don't sell out the rest of your county citizens on this boondoggle to save your dying little playground.

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