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sector to get the lines up and running so we can move more electricity.

And we've been dealing with the shortage of hydropower. As you know, you've got an issue in the Klamath Basin, and we've been trying to come up with reasonable policy so that people can farm the land and fish can live at the same time.

But Congress needs to act. I don't know if you know this or not, but for many years the reliability of electricity in America depended on companies observing voluntary standards to prevent blackouts. I don't think those standards ought to be voluntary. I think they ought to be mandatory. And if there's not reliability backup for electricity, there ought to be a serious consequence for somebody who misuses the public trust. And Congress needs to have that in the law.

We ought to authorize the Federal Government to step in as last resort to put up new power lines where it best serves the national interest. We ought to make investment—new investment in a transmission of electricity easier to make. We've got some old laws that were passed a long time ago that make it harder for people to invest in new electricity lines, new transmission lines. That doesn't make any sense. If we've got a problem, let's deal with it.

The law that passed out of the House of Representatives deals with it. I'm confident—and the Senate passed a bill—in other words, out of the two bodies, they need to get together. I talked to Pete Domenici, the Senator from New Mexico. I talked to Billy Tauzin, the chairman from Louisiana. They both agreed on what I've just described to you as necessary in a new bill, so that we can say we solved the problem; we're modernizing our electricity system so the people of America don't have their lives disrupted like what happened during the rolling blackout that took place last week. So we're going to get us a good energy bill. We need an energy bill, an energy strategy, and we need the will to implement it.

Let me conclude by telling you that I'm incredibly proud of our country. You know, we've been through a lot. We've been through a recession. You're still in it here in Oregon. We had these people attack us because of what we stand for. We love freedom in America, and we're not going to change. We stood tall and strong. We're a determined country, to not only protect ourselves; we're determined as well to protect ourselves by spreading freedom throughout the world. We know that free societies will be peaceful societies. We believe in America that freedom is not America's gift to the world; it is God's gift to every single human being on the face of the Earth.

We've been through some tough times, and these tough times came to the right nation. Our values are strong. Our people are courageous and strong and compassionate. I love being the President of the greatest nation on the face of the Earth.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:23 p.m. at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Ted Kulongoski of Oregon; Mayors Alan Unger of Redmond, Oran Teater of Bend, Richard Allen of Madras, Stephen Uffelman of Prineville, and David Elliott of Sisters, OR; Garland Brunoe, tribal council chairman, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs; Bill Anthony, Sisters District Ranger, Deschutes National Forest; and Minister of Natural Resources Herb Dhaliwal of Canada.

Remarks at Ice Harbor Lock and Dam in Burbank, Washington

August 22, 2003

Thank you all very much. I appreciate you coming out to say hello. Thank you. Be seated, please. Thanks for coming out to say hello. It's a little different view from the views we have in Crawford. [*Laughter*] The temperature is a little cooler, too, I want you to know.

But thanks for coming. It's such an honor to be here at the Ice Harbor Lock and Dam. I found it interesting that another Texan came to dedicate the dam. Vice President Lyndon Johnson dedicated this unbelievable facility in 1962. He said it's ''an asset of astounding importance to the region and to America.'' He was right in 1962, and when I tell you it's an asset of astounding importance to this region of America in 2003, I'm right as well.

We just had a great tour, seeing this facility and its technological wonders. This work has added to the strength of your State, and it's added to the prosperity of the people. It's really important that we remember that when we're talking about national assets. After all, people's money built this facility, and we want the facility to help the people. The facility has been a crucial part of the past in this region, and I'm here to tell you it's going to be a crucial part of the future as well.

I was pleased to see the incredible care that goes into protecting the salmon that journey up the river. It's an important message to send to people, it seems like to me, that a flourishing salmon population is a vital part of the vibrancy of this incredibly beautiful part of our country. I appreciate the commitment that we are making as a country and that you're making as a community for salmon restoration. What I saw was and what you know firsthand is that we can have good, clean hydroelectric power and salmon restoration going on at the same time. And that's what I want to spend some time talking about. We have a responsibility to work together to make sure the human condition is strong and to make sure that the salmon flourish. And we'll meet that challenge.

I thank Gale Norton for her leadership. She is the Secretary of the Department of the Interior. She is a lady from the West. She understands land management. She knows what I know, that the folks who live closest to the land are those that care most about the land. And we appreciate that attitude.

I'm traveling in some pretty darn good company too, when it comes to the congressional delegation. Old Doc Hastings has made a pretty good hand—[*applause*]. He informed me first thing, before he even said hello, that he was a grandfather again today. So congratulations, Doc. I wouldn't take too much credit for it, Doc, if I were you. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate so very much traveling with George Nethercutt as well. Both Doc and George are always telling me about how important eastern Washington is. Every time I talk to them, they're reminding me not only that the folks here are just fine, fine, down-to-earth, hard-working people, but our Nation is blessed to have the resources that are coming from this part of your beautiful State.

The western part of your State is beautiful as well, and it's well represented—parts of it are well represented by my close friend Jennifer Dunn. I'm glad you're here, Jennifer.

The Acting Secretary of the Army, Les Brownlee, is with us today. I appreciate you coming, Les. Thank you for being here. We've got a lot of folks from the Corps of Engineers that are with us, people who are making this dam work, and I want to thank them for their service to our country. I appreciate so very much the National Marine Fisheries Service, through the Commerce Department, the representatives that are here as well.

I thank all the mayors that have come out, the State and local officials. I like to tease the mayors and tell them they've got a pretty darn tough job. After all, if the pothole isn't filled, they're going to hear from somebody firsthand at the coffee shop. [*Laughter*] That doesn't happen to the President much. [*Laughter*] I thank the mayors for coming. Just keep the garbage picked up. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate so much the tribal chiefs that are here with us today, distinguished leaders that are here to make sure that the heritage of the salmon is protected and honored and revered, Chief Burke and Black Wolf, Sockeye, Sailor. I'm honored you all are here, and thank you for coming as well, for taking time.

One of the things I've learned about Washington, DC, there's a lot of experts on the environment there. [*Laughter*] At least they think they are. They're constantly trying to tell people what to do. My judgment is, they—those who think they know what they're doing in Washington, DC, ought to come out and visit with the folks that are actually protecting the environment, people such as yourself. I have been to your State enough to know that the people of this great State are never very far away from some of nature's most beautiful sights. And the people who appreciate those beautiful sights the most are those who live close to the sights. They understand best of all what it means to be a good steward of land and water.

The Washington way of life depends and always will depend on the wise protection of the natural environment. It's been a part of your past; it's going to be an important part of the future of this State and our country, for that matter. And a vital part of the natural environment is the Pacific salmon.

Lewis and Clark, as Doc was—made sure to point it out, where Lewis and Clark stayed—where he thought they stayed. [*Laughter*] But he did say that they stayed in this part of the world a long time. I can see why. The weather's nice, and the scenery is beautiful. But think about what it was like when those rivers in 1805-timeframe were just full of salmon. It must have been an unbelievable sight for them, particularly if they were hungry. [*Laughter*]

Today, there are a lot fewer salmon in the waters. And the mission has got to be to fight the decline. The mission has got to be to make sure that we understand that without the salmon in the Columbia and Snake Rivers, that this would be a huge loss to this part of the world. That's part of what the focus of my short discussion is today, is to let you know that we understand in this administration that we want to work with the local folks to revitalize the salmon runs.

The good news is that salmon runs are up. And that's really positive. And we just need to make sure we keep that momentum. I want to talk about some ways we're going to do it. Gale mentioned one thing is that we can spend that money in Washington, and we're writing a pretty good-size check in '04. It helps keep the commitment about what I said when I ran for President. I said, look, we are concerned about the fish. We're also concerned about the citizens of Washington State who depend upon the dams for electricity and the water to water their land so we can have the crops necessary to eat in America.

But the economy of this part of the world has relied upon the steady supply of hydropower. And we've got an energy problem in America. We don't need to be breaching any dams that are producing electricity. And we won't. Part of a national energy policy has got to make sure that we increase supply and maintain supply. And I saw the six generators that are able to capture a steady flow of water that produces that power that enables people to live. We want the salmon to live; we want the quality of life in this part of the world to be strong as well.

You know something, I talk about people closest to the land care about the land more than most. Every day is Earth Day if you're a farmer. Farmers depend upon the quality of the land and the quality of the water. And I understand that. And I understand that this dam and the dams along this river have a got a lot to do with the ability for people to farm the land.

You know, one of the great things about our national security is that we don't have to worry about food from some other country. We produce enough to eat here in America, and that's good for our national security. I can't say the same for energy, by the way. We're reliant upon foreign sources of energy. That is a problem for national security. We're not reliant upon foreign sources of food, and that's important. This dam helps us become—so that we don't get reliant upon foreign sources of food.

Our farmers depend upon the dams on this river. People who run the barges need the dams. The dams accommodate—in other words, commerce happens, people can make a living, people have food on the table so they can feed their families. At the same time, the salmon are getting more plentiful. And it's a positive story, and it's a story we've got to continue to make sure this stays positive.

We have shown the world that we can have good quality of life and, at the same time, save salmon. And that's exactly what this administration will continue to do. I understand we can't do it alone, but we can help. We can make a difference. As Gale mentioned, the budgets are increasing. We're helping on technology. I just saw some technology that enables the young salmon and steelhead to pass through the dam near the surface of the dam at lower speeds and lower pressures. That will help the young salmon runs. The technology is employed at the Lower Granite Dam. It will be installed soon here at Ice Harbor. In other words, the Federal Government is doing its part by gathering the technologies that will make the salmon runs stronger and better over time.

I bet in '62 there wasn't that much concern about salmon runs, when Vice President Lyndon Johnson was here. I haven't reviewed his entire speech; I don't know how much time he spent talking about technologies necessary to save salmon. But in 2003, we can say we're developing good, strong technologies to save salmon. We're getting better at it. And that's what—[*applause*].

And I appreciate so much the hard work of the Federal employees that are doing what we pay them to do. I also know my friend Donnie Evans, who is the Secretary of Commerce, has got conservation plans that are now being developed and implemented in Chelan and Douglas County public utility districts. It's a good, creative use of Federal money, it seems like to me, to create these conservation plans and habitat restoration programs, to be smart about how we develop the strategies necessary to encourage salmon runs to increase. The plan will minimize the impact of dams, improving fish-bypass systems and hatchery programs. And we'll continue to work to fund local habitat restoration programs. In other words, there's a lot going on. But the truth of the matter is, in order to make this strategy work, we're going to have to work with the local folks. That's the reality of the situation.

I know that—I saw some of the irrigation systems, spray systems—they look pretty darn modern to me. I suspect some of the oldtime farmers here will tell you that there's been a lot of technological advancement when it comes to conservation of water. The more water our farmers conserve by using efficient sprinkler systems, obviously the less operating costs they have. But also it helps the salmon. And so for the farmers who are here, I want to thank you for doing your part not only feeding America but being good stewards of the water you use.

There's a group called Fish First. I met a fellow named Gary Loomis. And I appreciate Gary coming today. Gary is a guy who cares about restoring salmon runs, salmon habitat. So he and a group of volunteers have come together to work on the salmon projects around the State of Washington. They're installing culverts to accommodate the fish. They're creating side channels and ponds. They're getting their money through private donations. There's a lot of people who care about salmon runs, and they ought to be helping by contributing money. And they're using volunteers and some public grants.

As I understand that Gary Loomis' group is going to add another 4,900 foot of stream channel, mainly through volunteer work. And I appreciate what you're doing, Gary. I want to—why don't you stand up and give people a chance to look at you and let you know the—[*applause*]. I want to thank you for what you're doing. This will give me a chance to tell the people of the great State of Washington and Oregon that if you're interested in salmon runs, if you want to do your part about conserving this great legacy, volunteer with groups like Gary Loomis' group.

There's a lot of good conservation groups that have a good commonsense view about making sure that the quality of human life is strong and the quality of fish life is vibrant and healthy as well. Volunteer help makes a difference.

I appreciate the positive attitude that people have here in this part of the world, the can-do attitude: ''Here is a problem; let's go solve it together.'' And that's what we're here to confirm. It makes a—it's a lot better than what happens a lot of times when it comes to conservation issues. And that is, people just file lawsuit after lawsuit after lawsuit, just kind of tie everything up in endless litigation, and nothing gets better.

We've got that issue, by the way, with our forests. I was in Oregon yesterday, saw the devastating forest fires that are taking place. It's just sad to see national assets just go up in tremendous flames because we have not done a good job of thinning out our forests and protecting our forests. And a lot of the reason why is because people just file lawsuits, and we get stuck in the court, and nothing happens. The forests don't benefit. People in the communities close to the forest are—have their lives endangered because of the kindling that has piled up. We need to cut through all this business and get solving the national problems.

And so the good news about what's happening here is it looks like you've been able to bypass all the endless litigation, come up

with solutions to the problem so that the people can say, you know, ''Job well done.'' Generations—future generations can say these folks had a chance and they responded.

And I want to thank you for what you do to make sure that this part of the world is as vibrant and healthy, the heritage of the salmon remains strong. There's no doubt in my mind you will accomplish the objective, no doubt in my mind we will help. We want to be helpers, not hinderers, coming out of Washington, DC.

You know, the amazing thing about this country is when we put our mind to something, we can do a lot. We can do a lot. My mind is still focused on protecting America, by the way. We're going to hunt the terrorists down wherever they are and bring them to justice. And we're making progress. See, in America we know that freedom—free countries will be peaceful countries. We also know that freedom is not America's gift to the world; it is the Almighty's gift to every human being.

Abroad, this great Nation will lead the world to more peaceful times. We'll promote freedom. We worry about the human condition when people are enslaved by tyranny. And at home, we'll protect our assets. We'll conserve our beautiful environment, and at the same time, we'll work to make sure that people can make a living, that people can work hard, put money on the table; they can do their duty as a mom or a dad for—to feed their families.

Listen, America is a fabulous country, fabulous not only because of the values we hold dear but fabulous because of the nature of the people, who are the American people.

Thank you for coming. May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:17 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gary Loomis, president, Fish First.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Economic Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters in Seattle, Washington

August 22, 2003

The President. It's a pleasure to be here in beautiful Seattle. I just met with members of the congressional delegation and also members of the business community, both large and small businesses, to talk about the fact that this economy here in Washington State is not as strong as it should be.

I'm fully aware that the unemployment numbers here are some of the highest in the country, and that's of concern. This is a resource-based State with a significant high-tech component. Both of those sectors have been hit very hard by the economic downturn. And so we talked about ways to stimulate growth.

The first thing I talked about was the fact that the tax plan that the Congress passed and I signed, the most recent tax plan, is now kicking in. People are getting their child tax credits, which will be positive. It will be positive for the people of this State. People are getting more money back, and the more money they have, the more money they'll have to spend. And that's good news.

I talked about trade policy which will help the high-tech industry here in the State of Washington. We talked about the Healthy Forests Initiative, which is a commonsense plan to make sure that we save our forests before they get destroyed by catastrophic fire.

Yesterday I choppered over the fire in Oregon and saw the effects of a backward forest policy, a policy that has allowed for undergrowth to develop and provide the kindling necessary for explosive fires. I saw some interesting signs—said, ''Save our mature large trees.'' I agree. I also saw the fires destroy the mature stands of large trees. It's unbelievable how powerful these fires raged throughout. And we've got to do something about it. A healthy forests initiative will help protect the resources of a resource-based economy.

I talked today—we talked today about energy. The good folks in the State of Washington, or the capital—people who spend money on capital investment know that we need to have an energy policy. Today I talked about something that made eminent sense to me, and that is when you've got good, clean sources of energy like hydropower, you don't destroy those sources, particularly with the Nation short of energy. And so we had a very good discussion about ways to create