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April 26, 2003

Mark Stenberg  
PacifiCorp  
825 NE Multnomah, Suite 1500  
Portland, OR 97232

RE: Whitewater Access Sites and Flow Information  
Merwin Hydropower Project, FERC Project No. 935

Dear Mr. Stenberg:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with myself and members of the Portland boating community on 18 April 2003. We appreciate your commitment to recreational facilities associated with the Merwin Hydropower Project and believe that by continuing to work in cooperation, it will be possible to provide some minor but welcome improvements to whitewater recreational opportunities on Canyon Creek.

After reviewing the alternative take-out sites you presented to us, it does appear that designating the Yale Bridge (Higway 503) as an access point for non-motorized recreation represents the best course of action at this time. In developing the site at the Yale Bridge we support the minimal level of development that has been proposed. The set of stairs will improve safety for those climbing up to the parking area, but otherwise, kayakers need very little if anything in the manner of infrastructure. The most important item requested by the recreational whitewater community is a formal access site with an agreement for the life of the license. We favor a low level of development that can be easily maintained and is not obtrusive to the natural setting.

Alternative sites off Frasier Road on the north side of the reservoir and slightly upstream of the currently-used bridge access would shorten paddling distance only a minimal amount and add significantly to the time required to run the shuttle and hike out. The ideal site would be at the point where Canyon Creek joins Merwin Reservoir along the east (river right) side of the creek, but we understand that there is currently no public vehicle access to this area and that future plans call for a trail to provide non-motorized access along the shores of Yale Reservoir. If public vehicle access to this area is allowed in the future, development of a river access would be a high priority and add considerably to the quality of Canyon Creek as a whitewater run by eliminating the flatwater paddle on Merwin Reservoir. Boats that are specialized to run a technical river like Canyon Creek are not designed for flatwater paddling, and aside from lost whitewater beneath the reservoir, this is currently the most significant impact the Merwin Project has on whitewater recreation on Canyon Creek. In our meeting you indicated that PacifiCorp will conduct preliminary planning for a non-motorized recreation trail that would cross Canyon Creek (utilizing the logging road bridge midway along the run) and continue up along the shores of the Yale Reservoir. In the planning stages of this project we request that PacifiCorp include river access by means of a trail at the point where Canyon Creek joins Merwin Reservoir. Access to the creek at one or two other points along this trail would improve safety by providing designated exit points and could potentially provide paddlers with the opportunity to access

sections of the creek by hiking partway back upstream for a second run. These possibilities should be examined during the planning phase for the trail.

The loss of whitewater opportunities on the mainstem Lewis River has forced paddlers to seek whitewater opportunities on tributaries to the Lewis River. Canyon Creek and the East Fork Lewis River have provided two such opportunities. As mitigation for the Lewis River hydropower projects, we request that PacifiCorp continue efforts and work with appropriate partners to provide internet and toll-free phone line accessible flow information for each of these runs. During our meeting you indicated that PacifiCorp had experienced difficulties in establishing a real-time gauging station on Canyon Creek in the past. We have experience working with utilities in providing real-time flow information for whitewater recreation and are willing to provide assistance as appropriate. Some of our members and volunteers have experience with Campbell data loggers and sensors typically used for gauging stations, along with different communication technologies including meteor burst communication systems that might be appropriate for this site. In addition, we have worked with utilities including PacifiCorp on the Bear River to provide flow information through our web site.

Thank you again for meeting with us. We look forward to working with you in continuing to develop the plan for improvements to recreational opportunities on Canyon Creek.

Sincerely,



Thomas O'Keefe

cc:

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