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BRIAN BAIRD
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
3RD DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

May 7, 2007

Jeff Smith, President
Smith-Root Inc.
14014 NE Salmon Creek Avenue
Vancouver, WA 98686

2007 005016

Dear Jeff,

I write to extend my strong support to Smith-Root in your effort to secure an Innovative Fish and Wildlife Project grant which is offered through the Northwest Power and Conservation Council Columbia River Fish Basin Fish and Wildlife Program.

The grant program encourages projects that employ technology that has not been used before in Columbia Basin fish and wildlife projects. The program seeks out innovating projects that will improve knowledge, encourage creative thinking and provide an opportunity to test or demonstrate new methods and technologies that directly benefit fish and wildlife in the Columbia Basin. It would seem the grant program and your project would be a good fit.

I support Smith-Root in its efforts to find a non-lethal approach to reduce sea lion predation of endangered Columbia River salmon. I have introduced legislation that allows for lethal removal of the most aggressive sea lions in order to deter predation. In recent years, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has observed that thousands of returning salmon are killed by sea lions in the area around Bonneville Dam. We share a mutual goal in protecting endangered salmon. To that end, the legislation also supports the development of non-lethal measures such as yours.

Smith Root has shown due diligence in developing initial data that demonstrates the potential effectiveness of its electrical barriers in controlling the movement of marine mammals such as seals. The preliminary results suggest that seals may be extremely sensitive to an underwater electric field. that underwater electric barriers have potential for non-lethal deterrence of marine mammals.

I commend you for your innovation in addressing the sea lion predation problem in the Columbia River Basin and I support your in your efforts to secure this grant that will allow you to continue your investigatory work.

Sincerely,

Brian Baird
Member of Congress

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