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June 5, 1999

Tom Ferns
U.S. Dept. of Energy
Richland Operations Office
P.O. Box 550
Richland, WA 99352

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Dear Mr. Ferns:

Please count me and my family as being in favor of protecting the entire Hanford Reach as a national wildlife refuge. As you must be aware from the current dispute over land trades in the west, the public does not favor seeing the U.S. government selling our public land for commercial profit by developers. Doc Hastings does not represent the whole population of Washington; he certainly does not represent our thinking.

Public land demands that it be managed in the interests of the general public, and as you must be aware, the public has shown an increasing interest in setting up areas for wildlife and outdoor experience. The Hanford Reach is a unique ecosystem and the public has more to gain in the long run from use of the land as a natural reserve.

I was born and brought up in Seattle and, in spite of what my mailing address suggests, I am a resident and taxpayer in Pend Oreille County, Washington. I have a lifetime experience with the various regions within the state, and I urge you to preserve this Columbia River area for historical, ecological and economic reasons. We have a one-time-only opportunity here to set aside land for future generations which has no equivalent anywhere else in the country; and like other national parks and refuges, it can have a significant role in bringing continuing economic health to Washington.

Sincerely,

Joanne Hirabayashi
Joanne Hirabayashi
316 Bead Lake Road
Priest River, ID 83856