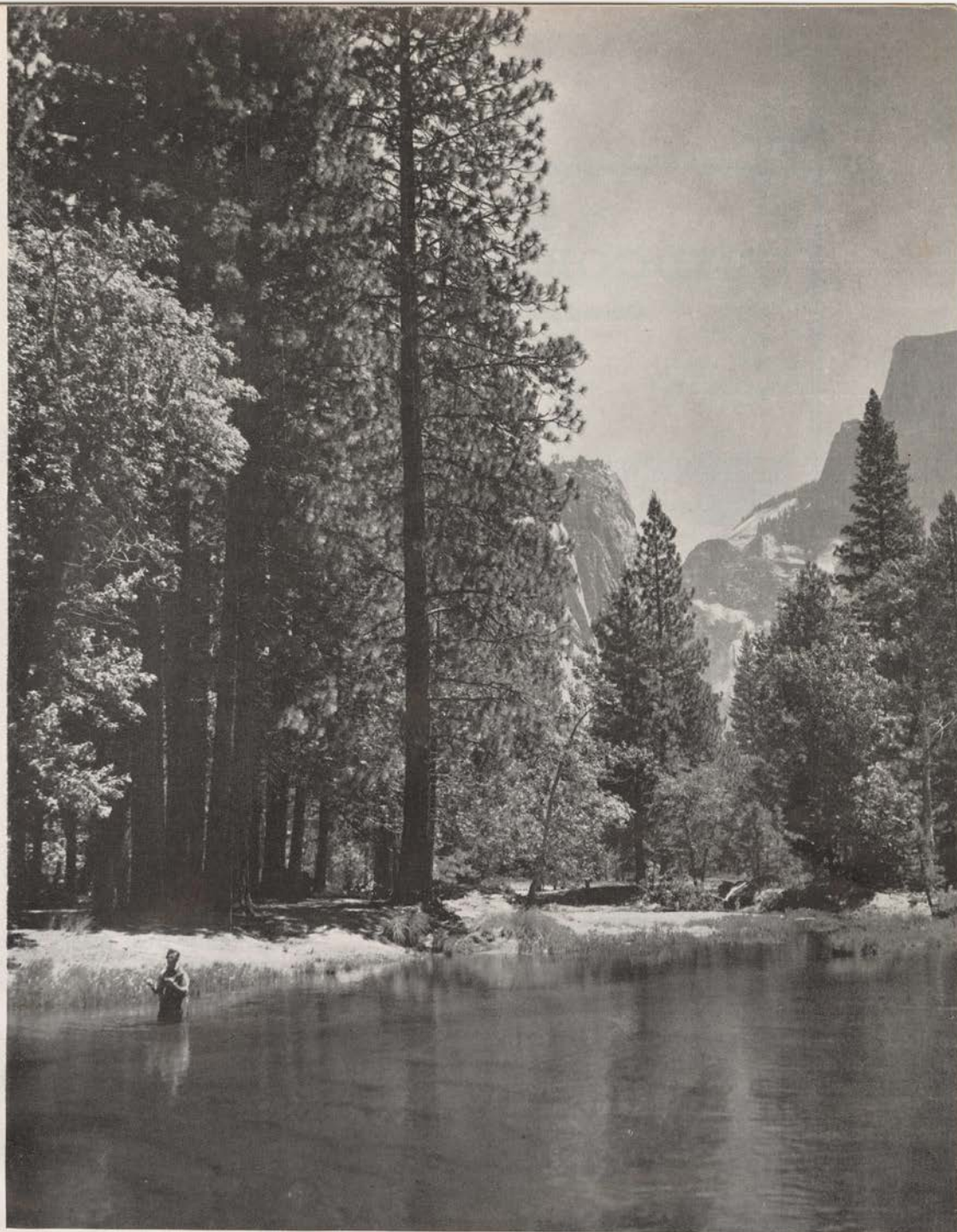


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Outdoor America

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OUTDOOR AMERICA

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Defender of Woods, Waters and Wildlife

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COVER

Merced River, Yosemite National
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FLOOD CONTROL THREATENS SALMON INDUSTRY

"With completion of the flood control project on the Willamette river in Oregon, the Columbia river salmon industry faces well nigh complete ruination." This was the pessimistic outlook for the Pacific coast salmon as expressed by W. L. Finley of Portland, Oregon, in an address before the annual convention of the League.

"The Chinook salmon runs of the Columbia river represent the most valuable fish resources in America—perhaps in the world. As a food supply they represent an industry of more than 10 million dollars annually, supporting thousands of families, and this in spite of the fact that the runs have been gradually decreasing on the upper Columbia, where dams, pollution and irrigation ditches have raised so much havoc as to make the industry on that part of the river almost a memory.

"The best remaining spawning area is the tributary, the Willamette, which is apparently doomed to go the same route, all in the name of flood control, in order to obtain pork monies, largely at the expense of the more populous states, to the tune of more than 100 million dollars, and to add to the fast growing number of aquatic monstrosities being heaped upon the nation.

"To justify the project on the grounds that it will protect farmers and other landowners along the river from being damaged by flood waters doesn't make sense. The Engineers' study indicated that the largest reported floods on the upper Willamette occurred during December 1861, January 1881 and February 1890—all during winter months. Floods on the main stream usually occur between November and March, the main flood water below Oregon City being back water from annual freshets on the Columbia and therefore having nothing to do with the upper Willamette. Since floods in the Willamette Valley come during the winter months, how can there be damage to farm crops?

"From time immemorial we know that river bottoms regularly covered with silt make the richest land for agriculture and that on flats covered with rich, sandy loam, without effort or expense on his part, the farmer produces his largest and finest crop.

"If their honest opinion were asked, the farmers and bona fide landowners of the Willamette Valley did not start this agitation for flood control and do not want it. It is indeed high time that the taxpayers of the nation found out and called a halt."



BE IT RESOLVED

Reiterating its conviction that biological values must be given consideration before flood control and other water projects are approved, the convention expressed itself on the Willamette flood control program as follows:

"WHEREAS, The published report of the Army Engineers states that flood control on the Willamette can be equally handled by levees and bank revetments at a cost of \$33,000,000 or by high dams at a cost of \$62,075,000,

"Therefore be it resolved, That the Izaak Walton League . . . insists that if this flood control project is continued, the levee instead of the dam system shall be adopted to protect the valuable salmon runs . . ."



Similarly the convention expressed opposition to "flood control dams in the Ozark region of Missouri and Arkansas until and unless qualified biologists have opportunity to report on their feasibility and effect on aquatic and biological resources."

In the name of flood control, construction of some 30 dams is authorized for famed Missouri streams, including the wildly beautiful Current river.