National Wildlife Federation Report: Less Coal, More Salmon

Local News

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Vancouver, WA - Coal trains that roll through the Columbia Gorge could be the next big threat to endangered salmon a
a new report from the National Wildlife Federation (NWF).

Only one biological assessment of port and rail expansions has been done so far, the study says, and it wasn't good n

With precautions, says Russell Bassett, executive director of the Association of Northwest Steelheaders, these problem

"We have a tendency to wait until it's a conservation imperative - and then, we try to clean up the disaster that has cau

Called "The True Cost of Coal," the report also describes the questionable environmental records of several large companies backing the increased coal shipments. Without more study, Bassett says, the entire Northwest will be backpedaling in its salmon-recovery efforts.

"Tax and ratepayers in Oregon and Washington are literally paying $1 billion a year to recover salmon and steelhead. A lot of time, effort and money is going into recovering these fish species, because they are of such economic and ecosystem importance, and regional icons, to us here."

The Steelheaders' Association released the report jointly with the NWF. It asks that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers launch a comprehensive study of expansion plans for ports and rail lines, and that the National Academy of Sciences do the same for wildlife and marine habitat.

The report is online at nwf.org.