

To The honorable the General Assembly of Virginia
the petition of sundry citizens residing in the counties
of Amherst & Campbell
Respectfully sheweth,

That they have uniformly been accustomed
to derive considerable benefit to themselves & their
families by procuring fish taken in the waters of
James River & its navigable branches —
that in poor families & others whom are a number of
Negroes fish of every description becomes an article
of great utility — That, therefore, the being able
to procure them in abundance, with ease & at a
cheap rate is an object of considerable importance

That the quantity of fish usually taken at the different
fisheries heretofore, was amply sufficient not only
to supply the wants of the slaves & their families
but also, to yield a large surplus towards supporting
the families of their poor neighbours & others —

That within these few years past the numbers of fish have
so greatly diminished above the falls of James River, as
no longer to be an inducement with any one to
purchase a lease or clear out a fishery —

That upon inquiring into the cause of the great
diminution a decline of the fish in the aforesaid
waters, your Petitioners learn & are fully convinced
that it proceeds from the traps, dams & creets
& placed therein; especially among the falls of James
River, extending from near Westham to the City of
Richmond — creating so great an obstacle to their
passage as almost operates an effectual bar to

Their further progress. In consequence whereof your
 Petitioners are obliged to purchase fish, for the use of
 their families, at an extravagant price, in the city of
 Richmond & pay a heavy freight upon their car-
 -riage, to their respective homes. That they received
 with singular satisfaction the attention paid by
 the Legislature to their interests, in this respect, in
 the Act Intituled "An Act to reduce into one the
 "Several acts, concerning Mills, Milldams & other
 "obstructions of watercourses" & flattered themselves
 that it would ^{have} compleatly eradicated the evil of
 which they complain. But on the contrary, so far has
 that act been disregarded, that the number of traps
 have now considerably increased of late & without the
 swifter interposition of the Legislature your Petitioners
 contemplate the period as not very remote when a
 total stop will be put to their paper thro' the aforesaid
 falls. Your Petitioners therefore pray, that such
 alterations may be made in the act aforesaid as
 shall effectually prevent in future the erecting or keeping
 up in the waters of James-River or its navigable bran-
 -ches any traps, dams, ridges, Weirs or other devices
 for the purpose of taking fish or which shall in
 any manner prove as an obstacle to their paper
 in any part of the waters thereof.

Ruben a. Powell

and 40 Petitioners &c

Chas Wells Jr Edmund Tate

Wm Brown

Sam. Potts

William Overstreet

Isaac England

James Givins

Charles Johnson

D. Robertson

Wm

James Goodwin

James Harrison

Wm Harrison

Wm White

Wm Pettyjohn Sr

John Murrell

John Gills

David Cook

Thos Cottrell

John Kingfield

Dudley Callaway

James Finley

John Miller

Thomas Wutt

James Wainwright

John Davis

Wm Davis

Wm Davis Jr

William D. Banks

Mercuth Semtith

Joseph Wilson

Wm Lee

Henry Gathace

William Miles

John H. Taylor

Samuel Martin

Wm

Wm

Wm

Wm

Wm

Arch. Robertson

Wm Pettyjohn Junr

Saml. H. Howay

Harmon Fisher

Ezekiel Davis

John Dabney

Charles Clarke

McLazey Clarke

James Felt

William P. Martin

Harrison Hatch	Richard Whitehead
John Deardur Junr	John Rice
John Fowler	W ^m Martin
Wm Gowen	Ben Arthur
Edmund B. Nowice	Queen Owens
James Gally	Rick Upton
Miles Perry	John Clark
Robt Hawkins	
James Graham	
James Chantler	
Chas Johnson	
Thos Lawson	
John W. H. H. H.	
Gulley Wmsan	
Stephen Robinson	
Moorman Johnson	
Richard W. H. H. H.	
John Hall	
Wm Johnson	
Abraham Johnson	
Thos Johnson	
Wm Griffie	
Wm Johnson	
John Cassey	
Richard Wilson	

Part of sundry Inhabits
travels of Amherst &
Campbell to remove
obstruction to the passage
of Fish in James River