

*American Rivers ♦ American Whitewater ♦ Association of Northwest Steelheaders
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers ♦ Center for Biological Diversity ♦ Center for Environmental Law & Policy
Center for Whale Research ♦ Coastal Trollers Association ♦ Columbia Riverkeeper
Earth Ministry/Washington Interfaith Power and Light ♦ Earthjustice
Earth and Climate Action Ministry of East Shore Unitarian Church ♦ Emergency Conservation Committee
Endangered Species Coalition ♦ Fly Fishing International ♦ Friends of the San Juans
Grays Harbor Audubon Society ♦ Greater Hells Canyon Council ♦ Idaho Conservation League ♦ Idaho Rivers United
Idaho Wildlife Federation ♦ Indivisible Bellingham ♦ National Wildlife Federation
Nimiipuu Protecting the Environment ♦ Northeast Oregon Ecosystems
Northwest Guides and Anglers Association ♦ Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association
Northwest Watershed Institute ♦ NW Energy Coalition ♦ Oceana ♦ Olympia Indivisible ♦ Orca Behavior Institute
Orca Conservancy ♦ Orca Network ♦ Oregon Wild ♦ Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations
Save Our wild Salmon Coalition ♦ Seattle Aquarium ♦ Sierra Club ♦ Snake River Waterkeeper
Snohomish County Indivisible ♦ Sound Action ♦ Washington Conservation Action ♦ Washington Green Amendment
Washington Kayak Club ♦ Washington Wild ♦ Washington Wildlife Federation ♦ WaterWatch of Oregon
WildEarth Guardians ♦ Wild Steelhead Coalition ♦ Willamette Riverkeeper ♦ 350 Eugene ♦ 350 Seattle*

October 26, 2023

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator,

As you know, salmon in the Columbia River Basin are in crisis. As federal and Tribal fisheries experts have repeatedly concluded, we are perilously close to losing many populations of this irreplaceable fish.

With your leadership and the leadership of President Biden, we can change this trajectory – if we act with urgency.

Recovering Columbia and Snake River salmon to healthy and abundant levels has been a goal of our organizations for decades. Salmon are critical to the ways of life, economies, and ecosystems of the Pacific Northwest and the steep losses of salmon in the Columbia Basin is unacceptable, especially for the Tribal Nations whose cultures and traditions depend upon these fish. President Biden's recent "Memorandum on Restoring Healthy and Abundant Salmon, Steelhead, and Other Native Fish Populations in the Columbia River Basin" is a critical acknowledgement of the essential role of salmon in our region, and we strongly support the administration's commitment to restore salmon to healthy and abundant levels and to honor our nation's commitments to Northwest Tribes.

There are many factors that have caused the decline of Columbia Basin salmon populations, and we must address all of them to recover the fish to healthy and abundant levels. Critically, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said last year that breaching the four lower Snake River dams is "essential" to prevent extinction of salmon that originate in the Snake River Basin. Restoring this historic river and replacing the energy, agricultural, and transportation services its dams provide is an opportunity to solve problems and make our region stronger and more resilient for decades to come. This kind of comprehensive approach will help us all plan for a brighter future. It's additionally critical, as NOAA has said, to return salmon to the upper

Columbia River and its tributaries, and to increase habitat restoration and other critical mitigation actions across the region.

The President's September 27 memorandum stated "[i]t is time for a sustained national effort to restore healthy and abundant native fish populations in the [Columbia and Snake River] Basin."

We agree. Returning salmon to harvestable abundance is imperative. Time, however, is running out. We need your leadership to support these goals and help hold the relevant agencies – especially the Bonneville Power Administration – accountable to align their operations and policies with the President's Memorandum.

We urge you to support the administration in developing and implementing, with urgency, a comprehensive basin-wide plan to protect and recover Columbia Basin salmon that includes restoring the lower Snake River, providing fish passage, restoring critical habitat, fully mitigating hydro-system impacts, and upholding Tribal treaty rights. You have our strong commitment to work with you in partnership to ensure that salmon will continue to sustain the cultures, communities, economies and biodiversity of the Pacific Northwest for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued leadership to recover salmon and invest in our communities' future health and well-being.

Sincerely,

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