

*Save Our wild Salmon Coalition • Sierra Club • Center for Environmental Law and Policy  
Earth Ministry/Washington Interfaith Power and Light • Columbia Riverkeeper • Earthjustice  
American Whitewater • Idaho Rivers United • Idaho Wildlife Federation  
Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association • Coastal Trollers Association  
Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations • Institute for Fisheries Resources  
Northwest Guides and Anglers Association • Snake River Waterkeeper • Washington Wild  
The Lands Council • Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center • Snohomish County Indivisible*

Melissa Yenko  
P2IP NEPA Lead  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Columbia–Pacific Northwest Region  
1150 N. Curtis Road  
Boise, ID 83706

March 18, 2024

PUBLIC COMMENT: SCOPING FOR PHASE TWO IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR TESTING  
FEASIBILITY OF SALMON REINTRODUCTION IN THE UPPER COLUMBIA BASIN

Dear Melissa Yenko and colleagues,

We write on behalf of millions of people united for the restoration of the Columbia River ecosystem and its fish and wildlife populations. We represent national and Northwest-based conservation, clean energy, faith, fishing, and civic groups, and river and salmon-reliant businesses. Thank you for considering our submission.

We applaud the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Spokane Tribe of Indians, and Upper Columbia United Tribes for their visionary and persistent work to return salmon to the upper Columbia River Basin. We also commend the Biden Administration and federal agencies for providing funding and other support for the next twenty years to advance this important initiative.

We are familiar with the Tribes' *Phase Two Implementation Plan* (P2IP) to study the feasibility of reintroducing Chinook and Sockeye to their historic habitats upstream of Chief Joseph, Grand Coulee, Little Falls, Long Lake and Nine Mile dams. Built without fish passage, these dams resulted in the extirpation of important salmon, steelhead, and Pacific Lamprey runs that had previously sustained tribal communities for many thousands of years. Non-tribal communities have also been impacted negatively by the loss of these aquatic resources. The extirpation of these fish runs has deprived the river and terrestrial ecosystems of important marine-derived nutrients, impacting the food webs of a multitude of plant and animal species in a broad geographic area of the upper Columbia River Basin.

As such, we strongly support the activities proposed by the Project Proponents. We also support the activities proposed by the co-lead federal agencies (Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Bonneville Power Administration), including funding the research, reviewing and issuing the necessary permits, and providing eggs and juvenile and adult salmon from existing hatcheries to support the tribal research projects. We urge the federal co-leads to

act in accordance with their trust and fiduciary obligations to the Tribes to fulfill the goals of the P2IP. We are encouraged to see that relevant legal processes, including this NEPA review, are moving forward so that P2IP activities can begin without delay.

Additionally, we support expanding the federal-tribal partnership in the future to include studies to assess the feasibility of reintroducing Steelhead and Pacific Lamprey into the proposed study area.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the Proposed Action. We stand with the Tribes in our strong commitment to see salmon returned to where they belong in the waters of the Upper Columbia Basin and we encourage you to do all that you can to support this critically important work.

Should you have any questions about our comments or if we can assist in any way, please contact *Save Our wild Salmon Coalition* Executive Director Joseph Bogaard at [joseph@wildsalmon.org](mailto:joseph@wildsalmon.org) // 206-300-1003.

Sincerely,

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