



1989-2019 Celebrating 30 years

18 September 2019

Representative Mike Simpson
802 West Bannock, Suite 600
Boise, ID 83703

Dear Representative Simpson:

We want to thank you for recognizing the importance of wild salmon and steelhead to Idaho and its ecology, culture, and economy. We applaud your public statement during the 2019 Andrus Center Environmental Conference that you intend to see salmon runs return to healthy sustainable levels in your lifetime.

Representative Simpson, the Pacific Northwest's fast-changing ecology, energy and freight transportation scenes have ushered all Pacific Northwesterners into a pivotal moment as continuing declines in salmon and steelhead populations in 2019 ring an urgent call for leadership. You have the opportunity to continue to take definitive and courageous action to save these iconic species and, in turn, help save the Pacific Coast's treasured southern resident orcas whose survival depends upon PNW Chinook salmon.

Great Old Broads for Wilderness is a national grassroots organization that educates and inspires activists to preserve and protect wilderness, wild lands and wildlife. Sensing the need for urgency, members of our ten active PNW chapters and our partner organizations are speaking out for salmon, steelhead and orca survival. In particular, we support restoration of a free-flowing and natural ecosystem on the lower Snake River, which scientific research clearly shows would be the surest step toward returning these critically endangered species to sustainable populations.

For decades, eight lower Snake and Columbia river dams and reservoirs have hampered, harmed, and killed—indeed, rendered threatened and endangered—four anadromous fish species. The lack of Snake River Chinook salmon, a primary food source for the Salish Seas' southern resident orcas, has concurrently brought these orcas to the brink of extinction. Scientists state that removal of the four old,

costly, and no longer needed lower Snake dams is the surest, quickest means of enabling species' recoveries. Over 5000 miles of rivers and streams, Pacific Northwest indigenous and nonindigenous lifestyles, and local economies are being negatively affected by these dams.

Salmon, Steelhead, and Orcas

- Wild Snake River salmon populations, primarily chinook, have been reduced from a once annual return of 5–8 million adults to 75,000 in 2017.
- Dam and reservoir passage kills 50% of migrating Snake River juvenile salmon. Delayed mortality kills an additional 30–40%. Adult salmon returning to natal streams are killed by the thousands due to lack of free-flow and lethally warm water temperatures.

Energy and Freight Transportation

- The Lower Snake River dams provide only 4% of the region's power. This power is surplus and not needed by the Bonneville Power Administration to meet contracted customer needs. Furthermore, as you know, the BPA and American taxpayers cannot afford the cost of maintaining these unproductive dams.
- Freight transport on the Lower Snake has been in decline for 20 years. The waterway has been largely abandoned in favor of truck and rail.

Benefits of Dam Removal and a Restored, Resilient Lower Snake River

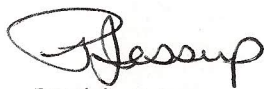
- Enables protection of endangered wild salmon and steelhead facing extinction.
- Saves American taxpayer and Northwest energy consumer dollars.
- Recovers and reinvestigates 15,000 acres of prime riverine habitat.

The Great Old Broads for Wilderness are supporting the efforts of Nimiipuu Protecting the Environment, who are from the Nez Perce tribe, on this issue. Restoring the Lower Snake River will help ensure we meet Treaty obligations to Native American Tribes in the Columbia-Snake Basin.

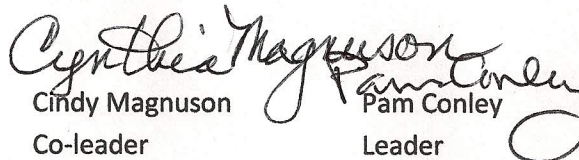
Many issues facing our environment are out of our control; this one is not. We encourage you to continue to work with fellow government officials, scientists, conservationists, and others, to take appropriate actions to return the lower Snake River to natural habitat. Together we can restore healthy populations of salmon, steelhead and orcas, while continuing to develop cleaner energy sources and a better economy for the Pacific Northwest.

Again, we applaud your support of healthy public lands, wildlife and waterways.

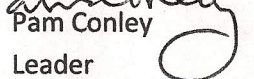
On behalf of our respective members,



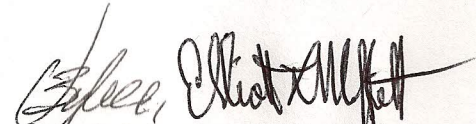
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