

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 27, 2009

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

The recovery of Pacific salmon is one of our nation's greatest endangered species challenges. It is an issue of great importance to not only the Pacific Northwest, but the entire nation.

As members of Congress who care deeply about the survival and recovery of the salmon, we ask for your serious engagement in this issue. We welcome your willingness to meet this challenge head-on by inviting sound science and common-sense economics to guide successful federal salmon policies. We stand ready to work with you and those within your administration to make this a reality.

Making the most of this opportunity to protect and restore wild salmon will require a commitment to carefully consider all scientifically credible and economically viable salmon restoration measures, which may include, but is not limited to, the partial removal of four dams on the lower Snake River. Such measures deserve the same rigorous and open-minded consideration as other proposed hatchery, hydro, harvest, and habitat reforms under discussion—thereby allowing federal salmon management decisions to be guided by the best available science.

To date, more than \$8 billion in U.S. taxpayer and Northwest ratepayer money has been spent on salmon recovery efforts, and some Snake River salmon runs are still facing extinction within the next dozen years. We have a fiscal and moral responsibility to move away from the failed measures of the past and toward durable solutions for the future. A federal court will soon determine the fate of the current Biological Opinion for the Columbia and Snake Rivers. Regardless of the outcome of that litigation, we feel the multi-faceted challenge of salmon recovery should be further addressed through constructive and inclusive dialogue that results in recovery of the species and benefits to local communities and federal taxpayers. We think that many of these issues are beyond the scope of the current Biological Opinion and merit further discussion.

The Columbia Basin was once the world's most productive salmon watershed, with as many as 30 million fish returning to spawn there each year. While it's unlikely that we will witness those kinds of pre-settlement numbers again, we can bring these imperiled fish back to abundance by following the best science and economics. Doing so has the potential to create tens of thousands of jobs and generate billions of dollars for communities throughout the West and across the nation. We look forward to working with you and your administration to identify and implement common-sense solutions that protect salmon, save taxpayer dollars, and reinvest in American jobs and infrastructure.

Sincerely,



Alina & Watson

Jan Ann

Faleomavaega

Allie S. Hastings

Melvin White

Levold Walker

Bart Loda

Carolyn C. Kipatuck

Shelley Kerley

Joy Mi Ny

Rosal. Delanno

Ruth Welch

Dennis J. Kueinich

R. Stangel

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Carolyn B. Maloney

Donald M. Payne

Patrick J. Kennedy

Pat Z

Pete Stank

Malcolm Brown

Zoe Lef

John Lewis

Johnnie Lier

Brad Eller

Paul Brown

Leis Capps

Betty McEllen

Michael D. Michael

Niki Bonges

Ma Shoo

Donna F. Edwards

Blue Kim

June K. Costello

Jan Tan

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Clare E. Cullen

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Jim Moran

Elijah E. Turnings

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José V. Gutierrez

Nydia M. Velazquez

Barbara Lee

Tammy Baldwin

Maureen Rindge

Eleanor Holmes Norton

David Bonior

John F. Timoney

Howard L. Berman

George Miller

Dwight Worsley

Ellen Tauscher

Chris Chabot

John Conyers

B. B. Fisher

Raul M. Grijalva

Lucretia Perri

Linda J. Sanchez

T. K. H.

Mazie Hirono

Hon. A. Wehrman

Heala Jackson

Paul Stokes

Tim Ryan

cc: The Honorable Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior
The Honorable Gary Locke, Secretary of Commerce
The Honorable Stephen Chu, Secretary of Energy
The Honorable Nancy Sutley, Chairwoman of the Council on Environmental Quality
The Honorable Lisa Jackson, United States Environmental Protection Agency Administrator