

# Press Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information contact:  
Debbie Bone-Harris, Public Affairs Manager  
509-546-5973 (office) or 509-392-1392 (cell)  
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### **Franklin PUD Strongly Opposes Legislation Introduced to Tear Out Snake River Dams**

Franklin PUD strongly opposes a bill introduced in Congress that would authorize the Corps of Engineers to breach the four lower Snake River dams. On Friday, July 31, 2009 Representatives Jim McDermott (D-WA, 7) and Thomas Petri (R-WI, 6) introduced the Salmon Solutions and Planning Act, a bill that would authorize the Corps of Engineers to breach the four lower Snake River dams. The bill was co-sponsored by 20 House members. Similar bills have been introduced every year and have been rejected by Congress. Franklin PUD urges Congress to also reject this bill.

Dam breaching may do more harm than good. This bill completely ignores the other factors that have contributed to the decline of salmon such as ocean conditions, fishing, and predators. Dam breaching does nothing for the nine ESA-listed Columbia Basin runs that do not pass through the Snake River.

Only a truly comprehensive approach to salmon recovery, addressing all causes of mortality throughout the salmon lifecycle, will lead to sustained recovery of the runs. Only a strategy effectively integrating work in all of the "H's" of salmon policy has a chance to succeed. These "H's" include habitat, the hydropower system, hatcheries, and harvest. The focus in recent years has been in the habitat and hydro part of the equation. Indeed, there has been great progress in fish passage through the hydro system in the last two decades, and new technology continues to improve fish passage every year.

However, despite inclusion in salmon planning documents for many years, serious action on harvest policy is long overdue. And calling for a review of harvest practices does not mean the end of fishing in the Northwest. It may only mean that we get better at prioritizing when and how fishing takes place in order to minimize accidental impacts upon the specific runs of fish we are working so hard to protect.

It is no coincidence that this legislation is being introduced just as the Obama Administration is reviewing the Columbia River Salmon Biological Opinion (BiOp). The BiOp is the product of an unprecedented collaboration among the region's Tribes, states and federal agencies. The BiOp provides more funding, more actions, more certainty, more cooperation, and more promise for ongoing success in rebuilding fish runs than this region has ever seen. Franklin PUD strongly urges the Administration to support the BiOp.

Franklin PUD is a member of Northwest RiverPartners, an alliance of farmers, utilities, ports, and businesses that promote the economic and environmental benefits of the Columbia and Snake Rivers and salmon recovery policies based on science. NWRP has followed the BiOp for the past three years and has seen unprecedented collaboration that has taken place and the science behind the plan. Let's not let three years of work go down the drain.

Climate change and greenhouse gas emissions are in the headlines everywhere. Yet these Congressmen want to take away a baseload resource at a time when clean, renewable energy is needed more than ever. Breaching these dams would force energy production to shift from emission-free hydropower to coal and natural gas as base-load resources. It would force cargo to shift from river barge to rail or truck, resulting in hundreds, even thousands more vehicles on our roads emitting more greenhouse gases.

Congress should not delegate the authority to remove four federal multipurpose dams, eliminate the Congressionally-authorized 14-foot Snake River navigation channel, and wipe out clean, emission-free, renewable hydropower production.

Franklin PUD urges Congress not to act on this bill and strongly opposes the breaching of the Snake River dams.

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