October 11, 2017

Nez Perce Tribe’s Statement in Opposition to H.R. 3144
("A Bill to Provide for operations of the Federal Columbia River Power System pursuant to a certain operation plan for a specified period of time, and for other purposes.")

The Nez Perce Tribe is committed to restoring salmon and steelhead in the mainstem Columbia and lower Snake rivers to healthy, harvestable populations for all citizens of the Northwest and to fairly sharing the conservation burden, consistent with the United States’ 1855 Treaty with the Nez Perce.

The Nez Perce Tribe opposes H.R. 3144 because it attempts to short-circuit the federal judiciary and federal appellate process with respect to providing additional spill to protect fish. The Tribe also opposes H.R. 3144 because it attempts to short-circuit the full consideration of all alternatives to redress the impacts of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) dams on salmon and steelhead – including breaching the four lower Snake River dams.

Congress, in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and in the Endangered Species Act (ESA), established federal decision-making that is grounded in a full and complete analysis of all alternatives in an orderly, methodical and science-based process. Both NEPA and the ESA ensure that all the citizens of this Nation will have a full, accurate, and transparent analysis of the importance of salmon and steelhead to the Pacific Northwest and the Nation, the impact the FCRPS dams have on these iconic species, and the legacy we want to leave our future generations. And, both NEPA and the ESA contain mechanisms so that tradeoffs can be considered, investments in local communities impacted by decisions can be planned, and truly informed decisions can be made. H.R. 3144 runs counter to these foundational principles of sound, consistent and sustainable governance.