August 9, 2017

Governor Kate Brown
State Capitol Building
900 Court Street NE, 160
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Governor Brown,

The undersigned fishing and outdoor recreation-based businesses are writing to express our appreciation for your leadership and Oregon’s ongoing commitment to protect and restore abundant, harvestable, self-sustaining populations of salmon and steelhead in the Columbia and Snake rivers and their tributaries. As you know, salmon and steelhead are critical to our state’s identity as well as its economy, ecology and culture.

The success – or the failure - of our businesses is linked tightly to the survival and recovery of our most iconic Northwest fish. For our businesses it’s pretty simple: more fish means more fishing. Salmon abundance leads directly to increased sales, manufacturing, guiding, and resident and non-resident travel, tourism and spending. The condition and status of our salmon populations each year is felt in communities throughout our state – rural and urban, coastal and inland.

We are all very troubled by the salmon returns so far this year. The adult returns to the Columbia-Snake system this spring have substantially underperformed the already low pre-season predictions and caused managers to abruptly close fisheries in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. It remains to be seen how the rest of the season develops and how that will impact our sector’s bottom line.

As business people whose livelihoods depend on healthy fisheries, we are grateful for your leadership as Governor to maintain our state’s long, proud legacy holding accountable the federal agencies in the Northwest charged with protecting our salmon, insisting on a lawful, science-based federal plan, and ultimately, for your and Oregon’s commitment to rebuilding Columbia Basin populations that can support robust, commercially viable fisheries for our state’s fishing culture and economy.

We also appreciate Oregon’s successful request earlier this year in partnership with the Nez Perce Tribe and conservation and fishing allies to the U.S. District Court for additional spill to improve juvenile salmon and steelhead survival. Contrary to the views expressed by some – views the Court fully considered in issuing its injunction order – additional spill will benefit salmon survival. Expanded spill at the federal dams on the lower Columbia and lower Snake rivers during the juvenile migration to the Pacific Ocean in the spring is strongly supported by the scientific community and will be critical in the near-term while our region works together under the
Court’s order to develop a legally valid, scientifically credible and fiscally responsible salmon plan for the long-term.

Thank you again for your leadership to ensure that the federal hydro-system contributes its fair share to protecting threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead populations – and for investing in a positive future for our state and regional recreational fishing culture and economy.

Please contact us if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Liz Hamilton, Executive Director  
*Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association*  
Oregon City, OR

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