September 16, 2014

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Murray,

On behalf of our hundreds of thousands of members and supporters in the region, we applaud your leadership in bringing Northwest members of Congress together to encourage the Obama Administration to invite Canada into talks to modernize the Columbia River Treaty. We join you in supporting the “Regional Recommendation,” submitted last December to the State Department, and in urging prompt positive action on it by the Administration.

Adding “ecosystem function” as a third formal Treaty purpose will bring broad ecological, economic and community benefit to Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana. In addition, the accelerating effects of climate change on Columbia River Basin waters and people urgently require that ecosystem function become a third purpose, to help assure the health of the Columbia River and its watersheds through the climate-altered decades ahead.

Modernizing the Columbia River Treaty is also broadly supported by religious and indigenous leaders in the Columbia River Basin and in Puget Sound – underscoring the importance of stewardship and righting historic wrongs. Modernizing the Treaty must respect indigenous rights, protect and restore healthy ecosystems with abundant fish and wildlife populations, and provide fish passage to all historical locations. Economics and ethics go hand-in-hand: large and growing parts of the region’s economy depend on healthy waters and lands.

As we await Administration action on the Regional Recommendation, we hope you will support three actions that can be initiated now by the Administration and its agencies that are consistent with the recommendation and will benefit Northwest people.

• Add a third entity (federal agency or Tribal representative) to represent ecosystem concerns to the existing U.S. Entity for Treaty negotiations, management and operations.
• Per the Regional Recommendation, initiate the Flood Risk Policy Review to provide information on how spring and summer flows can be increased for the benefit of salmon, while at the same time ensuring effective flood risk management in the U.S. portion of the Columbia River Basin given likely changes in Treaty operations, climate conditions and the web of other factors relevant to the watershed, its people and ecology. Such a non-decisional review would provide indispensable grounding for decisions the four Northwest states and people face in the coming years and help prepare the region for changed climatic and hydrological conditions in the watershed.

• Begin a long-term initiative to restore salmon and other anadromous fish above now-impassable dams, beginning with the main-stem Columbia, as proposed by the 15 Columbia River Basin Tribes. We agree with the Regional Recommendation that this initiative must be shared between the U.S. and Canada, but the U.S. can begin its part now.

Thank you for considering our views and thank you again for your leadership.

Sincerely,

Greg Haller, Conservation Director
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Portland, OR

Joseph Bogaard, Executive Director
Save Our wild Salmon Coalition
Seattle, WA

John DeVoe, Executive Director
WaterWatch of Oregon
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**Northwest Guides and Anglers Association**  
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Glen Spain, Northwest Regional Director  
**Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Associations**  
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Dale Kelly, Executive Director  
**Alaska Trollers Association**  
Juneau, AK

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**Sound Action**  
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Joseph Patrick Quinn, Conservation Committee Chair  
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Travis Williams  
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Tom France, Senior Director for Western Wildlife Conservation  
**National Wildlife Federation**  
Northern Rockies, Prairies and Pacific Regional Center  
Missoula, MT

Ronni McGlenn, President  
**Washington Wildlife Federation**  
Bellevue, Washington

CC:  
Washington State Governor Jay Inslee  
Oregon State Governor John Kitzhaber  
Idaho State Governor Butch Otter  
Montana Governor Steve Bullock

Columbia River Basin Tribes (via the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission)

Secretary John Kerry, U.S. Department of State  
Secretary Sally Jewell, U.S. Department of the Interior  
Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz, U.S. Department of Energy  
Secretary Penny Pritzker, U.S. Department of Commerce  
Commanding General and Chief of Engineers Lieutenant General Thomas P. Bostick, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Administrator Gina McCarthy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Administrator Elliott Mainzer, Bonneville Power Administration  
Director Shaun Donovan, Office of Management and Budget