February 19, 2020

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 40007
Olympia, Washington 98504

Dear Governor Inslee,

We are writing to express appreciation for your leadership in support of new and more effective policies to confront the urgent plight of Southern Resident orcas and Chinook salmon upon which they depend. These two species are emblematic of our state and revered by both tribal and non-tribal people across the Northwest and nation.

The status of the orca and salmon is also telling us our work is far from done. We supported funding for the Lower Snake River Stakeholder Process in the last legislative session and appreciate your office’s hard work on this important initiative. The decisions that we make concerning the lower Snake River and its endangered salmon populations represent an important piece of a larger regional strategy to protect both of these species from extinction. It also gives us an opportunity to address the needs of our communities.

While scientists tell us that restoring the lower Snake is necessary to protect its salmon populations, we recognize the topic is contentious. That’s precisely why we supported funding for the stakeholder process. Hard decisions lie ahead and the best outcomes for our salmon, our orca and our communities will come from honest dialogue, true collaboration, and commitment to shared interests.

The legislature funded the stakeholder process with $750,000 over a two-year period. Though difficult, this necessary discussion offers tremendous potential and opportunity for fishing and farming communities, as well as orca and salmon. We support the work by your office this year to advance this conversation. We encourage your continued leadership after the release of the final report.

This is a unique chance to work with stakeholders and to engage regional policymakers to develop solutions that will recover endangered salmon and orca, while protecting all of our communities in the process.

Again, thank you for your strong leadership. Let us know how we can assist you.
Sincerely,

M.C. Champion
Rep. Mike Chapman
24th Legislative District

Steve Tharinger
Rep. Steve Tharinger
24th Legislative District

Rep. Debra Lekanoff
40th Legislative District

Sen. Kevin Van De Wege
24th Legislative District

Rep. Joe Fitzgibbon
34th Legislative District

Rep. Roger Goodman
45th Legislative District

Sen. Jesse Salomon
32nd Legislative District

Rep. Joe Fitzgibbon
34th Legislative District

Sen. John McCoy
38th Legislative District

Rep. Laurie Dolan
22nd Legislative District

Rep. Debra Lekanoff
40th Legislative District

Rep. Joe Fitzgibbon
34th Legislative District

Rep. Roger Goodman
45th Legislative District

Sen. Patty Kuderer
48th Legislative District

Rep. Laurie Dolan
22nd Legislative District

Rep. Roger Goodman
45th Legislative District

Sen. Patty Kuderer
48th Legislative District

Sen. Mona Das
47th Legislative District

Rep. Christine Kilduff
28th Legislative District

Rep. Eileen Cody
34th Legislative District

Rep. Mia Gregerson
33rd Legislative District

Rep. Christine Kilduff
28th Legislative District

Rep. Gerry Pollet
46th Legislative District

Rep. Strom Peterson
21st Legislative District

Rep. Amy Walen
48th Legislative District

Rep. My-Linh Thai
41st Legislative District

Rep. Cindy Ryu
32nd Legislative District

Sen. Derek Stanford
1st Legislative District

Rep. Javier Valdez
46th Legislative District

Sen. Sam Hunt
22nd Legislative District

Sen. Joe Nguyen
34th Legislative District