The Northwest Guides and Anglers Fisheries Restoration Initiative
To protect, enhance, and promote healthy sportfisheries and the ecosystems they depend on in the Pacific Northwest.

To: DEIS cooperating agencies

Re: DEIS Columbia River System Operations

April 13th, 2020

US Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, Bonneville Power Administration

NW Guides and Anglers Association
P.O. Box 3208
Clackamas, OR 97015

Dear Federal Administrators,

The NW Guides and Anglers Association represents 58 professional fishing guides and charter operations in the Pacific Northwest. Collectively, we prosecute tens of thousands of fishing trips every year in the waters of Oregon, Washington, California and Idaho. Our businesses have suffered immeasurable loss due to the combined crushing blows of lethal water temperatures, unprecedentedly poor ocean conditions and a river that is detrimental to the lifecycle of Pacific salmon. We are truly at a crossroads.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Columbia River Operations. Columbia River Operations are failing fish and compromising the small rural communities in Oregon, Washington and Idaho that rely on sportfishing as a means of making a living. There is no such thing as a full-time fishing guide any longer, as many of us have been full time fishing guides for over two decades.

Once again, our sportfisheries will be directly curtailed with Snake River salmon the most constraining stock of fish that will keep our boats dry-docked for much of 2020. Our businesses will not sustain another season of compromised opportunity.

As we’ve seen with the onslaught of the Coronavirus, our government’s role is to bring people together to find community solutions to deal with the crisis at hand. The federal government as had 2 decades and several federal lawsuits to get it right, but the salmon crisis remains an obstacle to robust rural commerce and propagates an adversarial environment between neighbors in our rural communities. The current DEIS does much the same and most importantly, continues the trajectory of the extinction of wild salmon forever from the Columbia River Basin. This is something we simply cannot accept as a society.

In the case of this DEIS, it’s clear that we need our NW policymakers to foster a process that brings together our region’s stakeholders to have a meaningful discussion and come to a collaborative solution that works for farmers, fishermen and maintains a reliable energy grid for our communities.

Thank you,

Bob Rees, Executive Director
NW Guides and Anglers Association
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