[Your name]

[Your address]

[Your phone #]

[Your email address]

[Date]

President Joseph Biden

Office of the President

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20500

Re: Please Breach the Four Lower Snake River Dams

Dear Mr. President,

I live in the Pacific Northwest. I care about Snake River salmon and steelhead. I do not want them to go extinct, especially on our watch, so I am writing to ask for your help. Salmon are keystone species, essential to the survival of the northwest ecosystem.

Now is the time to breach the four lower Snake River dams. Despite the loud claims of the few who benefit most from the dams, the public supports breaching. The science demands it. Please take action now to breach the dams to allow these life-supporting keystone species to recover.

Recently the federal government is leading the way to breaching, with both statements and studies. In early 2022, your White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and several of your cabinet secretaries met with the tribes of the Columbia River Basin to discuss breaching the four lower Snake River dams. They then issued a press release that acknowledged the following:

* The Columbia River and its tributaries were once among the most productive aquatic ecosystems in the world with an estimated 7.5 to 16 million adult salmon and steelhead returning to Pacific Northwest each year. The fish provided food for over 130 wildlife species, including Orca, bears, and wolves, and sustained the cultures and economies of Tribal Nations since time immemorial. (CEQ*, Columbia River Basin Fisheries: Working Together to Develop a Path Forward*, March 28, 2022.)
* Despite decades of tribal and non-tribal efforts to recover salmon and steelhead runs in the Columbia River Basin, and billions of dollars expended, the fish are not recovering and populations continue to decline. (CEQ, 3/28/22*.*)
* In light of this “[w]e cannot continue business as usual. Doing the right thing for salmon, Tribal Nations, and communities can bring us together. It is time for effective, creative solutions.” (CEQ, 3/28/22.)

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Fisheries Division has provided you with solutions. Based on the best available science, NOAA reports that Snake River salmon and steelhead will not recover unless the four lower Snake River dams are breached. (NOAA Fisheries, *Draft*—*Rebuilding Interior Columbia Basin Salmon and Steelhead*, July 11, 2022.)

* For Snake River stocks, it is essential that the lower Snake River be restored via dam breaching. (*Draft NOAA Report*, p. 12 and fn. 10.)
* Lower Snake River dam breaching, along with other region-wide actions, must begin immediately. “Inaction will result in the catastrophic loss of the majority of Columbia River basin salmon and steelhead stocks.” (*Draft NOAA Report*, p. 18.)
* *[B]reaching the lower Snake River mainstem dams would be transformative*, changing the man-made reservoirs back into a river with functional connected floodplains, natural river velocity, and favorable river morphological conditions. (*Draft NOAA Report*, p. 19.)
* Climate change heightens the importance and necessity of meaningful action. (*Draft NOAA Report*, p. 9.)

NOAA’s final report confirmed its draft report, stating that for Snake River salmon and steelhead stocks, the centerpiece action is restoring the lower Snake River via dam breaching. NOAA Fisheries, (*Final Report*—*Rebuilding Interior Columbia Basin Salmon and Steelhead*, September 30, 2022, p. 17.) According to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, the “centerpiece” is the most important feature of an action.

NOAA emphasized that all of the major actions prescribed in its report must happen quickly and on a large scale. (*Final NOAA Report*, pp. 21-22.)

Mr. President—your decision on breaching the four lower Snake River dams will decide our Pacific Northwest future.

Thank you.

(Sign here)

[Print name here]