[Your name]

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[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,

In the Pacific Northwest we have a problem. Wild Snake River salmon and steelhead runs are disappearing. Historically, these were some of the largest runs in the world. But for the last 50 years, the four lower Snake River dams have been killing the fish.

Salmon that pass through only three or four dams on the mainstem Columbia River are surviving. Yet the Snake River salmon and steelhead that must pass eight dams during their migration to and from the ocean are vanishing.

You can prevent this salmon extinction by breaching the lower Snake River dams. You have a vehicle to make this happen right now in the case filed in Oregon to save the salmon and steelhead from the dams’ impact, in which the federal government is the major defendant. The case is *NWF v. NMFS*. Settlement negotiations are currently underway. You, as head of the government, can agree to settle the case by breaching the dams starting this year. That would likely end the long-running litigation.

NOAA’s newest research establishes that without breaching the four lower Snake River dams, *beginning immediately*, wild Snake River salmon and steelhead will not survive. (NOAA Fisheries, *Draft*—*Rebuilding Interior Columbia Basin Salmon and Steelhead*, July 11, 2022; *Final Report*—*Rebuilding Interior Columbia Basin Salmon and Steelhead*, September 30, 2022.)

Breaching the dams will restore 140 miles of crucial riparian areas from Tri-Cities, Washington to Lewiston, Idaho. Barren reservoirs and riprap navigation channels will be replaced with native vegetation and wildlife. This large riparian area available post-breaching—over 14,000 acres—will be a big boost to the Biden Administration's 30 x 30 Executive Order to protect 30% of public lands and freshwater by 2030.

Perceived benefits from the dams can be replaced contemporaneously with or soon after the dams are breached. Farmers still can irrigate from a free flowing river and they can transport their grain with more flexible rail lines that can go in many directions, not just upriver and downriver.

The energy produced by the lower Snake River dams causes more harm than benefit. They generate the most energy during spring runoff when the energy is not needed. Frequently, this is surplus energy that is sold at a loss. The dams produce the least energy in the hot summer months and cold winter months when the lower Snake River is at its lowest flows. The cold months are when energy in the Pacific Northwest is needed most.

Breaching will free up space on transmission lines for cleaner renewable wind and solar energy currently waiting in the Bonneville Power Administration’s queue. These new renewables produce energy that is better aligned with the timing of energy needs of the Pacific Northwest.

To survive, salmon need a river. Humans have alternatives. Breaching the dams now will put wild Snake River salmon and steelhead on the path to recovery.

Recovering keystone species and ecosystems is especially critical now in the face of climate change. Recovered salmon runs will provide food for more than 130 species of plants and animals, and allow future generations of children and adults to experience a healthier planet and a brighter future.

This can be your Pacific Northwest legacy.

Thank you.

(Sign here)

[Print name here]