**Will you speak up to save Idaho’s wild salmon?**

“*We who have means and a voice must use them to help those who have neither.”*

 *-- Jennifer Donnelly, These Shallow Graves*

The momentum for “breaching the status quo” has never been stronger. Now it is our job to support and encourage Idaho Congressman Mike Simpson and Governor Brad Little in finding solutions that work for our fish, river communities, and agriculture.

Are you willing to use your voice to help save Idaho’s wild salmon? There are many ways you can do so.

* Write a letter to the editor
* Testify at the Governor’s Salmon Working Group Meeting in Boise on January 17
* Contact your elected officials
* Host a house party for your friends and colleagues

**Write a letter to the editor.**  Letters to the editor are often the “most-read” section of the newspaper. Hearing from a diverse cross-section of the public lets our leaders know that support for saving salmon is widespread.

Idaho’s newspapers include: Idaho Statesman; The Boise Weekly; Idaho Press; Meridian Press; Emmet Messenger-Index; Kuna-Melba News. All have limits on length for letters to the editor, usually ranging from 200-300 words.

For more information on how to contact the above newspapers, visit the Idaho Sierra Club website at www.sierraclub.org/idaho/salmon-steelhead-recovery

* tips on writing a letter to the editor
* word count limits for each newspaper
* content suggestions.

There are dozens of arguments in favor restoring Idaho’s wild salmon; we can help you with content and data for many, allowing you to choose a topic that resonates with you. Or even better yet, draft your own letter based on what is most important to you. Either way, we can provide you with data you might need, as well as offer proof-reading help, if you desire it.

**Testify at the upcoming Governor’s Salmon Working Group meeting.**

When: Friday, January 17th, 2020

Where: Idaho Capitol, Lincoln Auditorium (Garden Level).

It is not difficult to testify, but you should draft your talk (limited to 3 minutes) ahead of time. Sign up outside the auditorium as soon as you arrive to ensure you get a slot. We think you will find the experience very empowering.

If you prefer to write a written comment to the Working Group, use the following link. <https://bit.ly/2SQDdtq>. Or you can google “Office of Species Conservation”, and click the tab that says Governor’s Salmon Workgroup.

 Once completed, the form should be sent to species@osc.idaho.gov. At this time, there is no deadline for submitting comments, but we urge you to act as soon as you are able to do so. Again, we can help with content, data and the like, if you desire help.

**Write to your elected officials.**

U.S. Representative Mike Simpson has been leading the charge among Idaho’s congressional delegation; hearing that you support his efforts is important. But it is also important that we contact ALL four members of our Congressional and Senate delegations, and Governor Brad Little, so that they know support is widespread.

You might also consider contacting your state representative and senator, letting them know you support restoring Idaho’s wild salmon and that you hope they will work with Governor Little to bring about needed change.

**Host a house party.**

Help us spread the message to your circle of friends and colleagues. The Sierra Club welcomes the opportunity to meet with groups to educate them on the salmon issue, and potentially encourage others to join our efforts on behalf of salmon. The party need not be complicated—maybe just a morning coffee, evening dessert or wine and cheese event. Even a book club gathering works. We’ll provide a short and informative overview of the issue and then welcome questions. We’d love your help in broadening our reach among the citizens of Idaho.

Don’t forget: your Sierra Club team is here to help—with ideas, contacts, content, data, proof-reading, etc. Just ask. Visit the Idaho Sierra Club website, or email idaho.chapter@sierraclub.org.

**Context and talking points**

More detailed information can be found at www.sierraclub.org/idaho/salmon-steelhead-recovery

* The time is now. Idaho’s wild salmon are on a path toward extinction.
* After spending more than $16 billion on Columbia/Snake River salmon recovery efforts, Idaho’s salmon and river communities are suffering badly.
* Restoring the lower Snake to a free-flowing river is the best solution (and most likely the only) way to restore Snake River salmon runs. (The four large power-producing dams on the Columbia River would not be impacted.) This is strongly supported by at least three decades of science and a large majority of scientists.
* These four lower Snake River dams are unnecessary. What few services they provide could be maintained by other means. They provide little electricity. They provide no flood control. They provide little irrigation. They are low value, high cost dams.
* The main problem is the dams create a lack of FLOW. Salmon and steelhead need sufficient flow to push the smolts (juveniles) out to sea.
* The dams create slack water reservoirs that are lethally warm to salmon and steelhead and subject the smolts to increased predation.
* Dam removal works. More than 1500 dam removal projects have occurred in this country and they’ve all been deemed successes.
* Keeping these dams means pouring good money after bad.
* The dams are impacting species other than salmon and steelhead. Puget Sound orcas, which feed primarily on Idaho’s wild salmon, are starving to death.
* Let’s find solutions that work for people and fish!

**Will you lend your voice? Idaho’s wild salmon need you!**