



Confederated Tribes and Bands
of the Yakama Nation

Established by the
Treaty of June 9, 1855

For immediate release:

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YAKAMA NATION APPLAUDS CONGRESSMAN MIKE SIMPSON'S VISION FOR SNAKE RIVER DAM REMOVAL

YAKAMA NATION AGENCY, YAKAMA RESERVATION – On Sunday, January 7, 2021, United States Congressman Mike Simpson of Idaho announced a legislative concept that calls for removing the four lower Snake River Dams, advancing salmon recovery, reimagining the possibilities of alternative energy sources, and investing in the Pacific Northwest's economic future.

“We have reached a tipping point where we must choose between our Treaty-protected salmon and the federal dams, and we choose salmon,” said Yakama Nation Tribal Council Chairman Delano Saluskin. “We applaud Congressman Simpson for taking this important step towards protecting our salmon runs for future generations.”

The Yakama Nation is a sovereign, federally recognized Native Nation pursuant to its inherent sovereignty and the rights reserved in the Treaty of 1855. Since time immemorial, the salmon have faithfully returned to the Columbia River Basin and sustained the native people of this region. In the Treaty, the Yakama Nation reserved its right to fish at all usual and accustomed places.

The federal dams have devastated the Yakama Nation's ability to realize the full benefit of its Treaty-reserved fishing rights. They inundated the Yakama Nation's villages and cultural resources and decimated the salmon, steelhead, and lamprey populations. Restoring abundant fish runs to the Yakama Nation's usual and accustomed fishing places, as guaranteed in the Treaty of 1855, would begin to meet the subsistence, ceremonial, and economic needs of Yakama Members.

As a co-manager of Columbia Basin fisheries resources, the Yakama Nation has dedicated itself to protecting and restoring fish stocks and habitat throughout the Columbia and Snake River Basins. However, federal dams remain the largest impediment to restoring sustainable, abundant fisheries in the Columbia River Basin.

“I urge our Senators and Congressional Representatives to join Congressman Simpson in advocating for legislation to breach the lower Snake River dams, and taking bold action to restore our salmon,” said Chairman Saluskin.

For additional information or comment, please contact Yakama Nation Executive Secretary Athena Sanchez-Yallup at (509) 865-5121, or Lead Attorney Ethan Jones at (509) 834-8005.