



# Spokane Tribe of Indians

P.O. Box 100 • Wellpinit, WA 99040 • (509) 458-6500

February 11, 2021

## RE: Simpson Proposed Legislation

Dear Tribal Leaders,

The Spokane Tribe of Indians is heartened by Congressman Simpson's courage to recognize the continued flawed approach the Federal Government has used in addressing the negative impacts of the Federal Columbia River Power System to date. This system that has produced immense wealth for the Columbia River Region at the expense of the salmon, steelhead, and lamprey that the Spokane Tribe and many other Tribes in the Columbia River Region relied upon until the construction of Grand Coulee Dam. Although, the proposal headlines with the removal of the four Snake River Dams, Congressman Simpson's concept could speed the implementation of returning salmon, steelhead, and lamprey to the Upper Columbia River.

Addressing the impacts to the Columbia River Region in a holistic way will require the Region and its political leaders to display the same courage, Congressman Simpson has displayed in releasing this proposed framework. Many details will need to be worked through and many hearts and minds won over, however, acknowledging that the system is not working for the entire Region is a big step forward.

The Spokane Tribe of Indians is a federally recognized Indian Tribe and the Tribe's Reservation was established on August 18, 1877. The Tribe's Reservation is located at the confluence of the Columbia and Spokane Rivers above Grand Coulee Dam. The construction of Grand Coulee Dam and the much smaller Little Falls Dam on the Spokane River cut off the Upper Columbia Region from salmon, steelhead and lamprey. The Spokane Tribe along with many others have been working on the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's Phased Approach to reintroducing salmon and steelhead to the Upper Columbia River since 2014. Our collective work can be found at <https://ucut.org/water/fish-passage-and-reintroduction-phase-1-report/>

Salmon and steelhead reintroduction into the historic habitats above Grand Coulee Dam will benefit the entire Region, as our work so far indicates, successful reintroduction can occur without impacts to the current beneficiaries of Grand Coulee Dam: hydropower, flood control and irrigation. Truly a win-win. We encourage all of the Region's political leaders to work together to ensure that any legislation passed will benefit the entire Columbia River Region.

Lemlmtš,

Carol Evans  
Chairwoman  
Spokane Tribe of Indians