Columbia Snake River System

Kristin Meira, Executive Director
Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA)
Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA) is:

- Non-profit trade association that advocates for federal policies & funding in support of regional economic development
- Over 135 members in WA, OR, and ID:
  - Public ports
  - Agriculture & forest products producers
  - Utilities
  - Towboaters & steamship operators
  - Pilots
  - Union labor
Columbia Basin Update

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Snake River

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On the Horizon: Columbia River Treaty
The Northwest in the early 1900’s
Protect from flooding

Vanport Flood – June 15, 1948
Get goods to market
Rural electrification
Our future was built ...
While other regions struggle to replace polluting power plants...

...We have the nation’s cleanest energy, with less than half the carbon emissions of the rest of the country
High value irrigated crops
Safe and efficient cargo transport
Third largest grain export gateway in the world

WHEAT
#1 in U.S. exports

SOYBEANS
#2 in U.S. exports

The West Coast destination for grain
MINERAL BULKS
#1 on West Coast

AUTO IMPORTS & EXPORTS
Major West Coast gateway

WOOD EXPORTS
#1 on West Coast
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On the Horizon: Columbia River Treaty
Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS)  
A History of Litigation

- 13 fish runs listed under ESA
- BiOps in 1995, 2000, 2005 - all remanded
- May 2008 – new collaborative BiOp released
- May 2010 - Supplemental BiOp w/AMIP released
- August 2011 - Judge Redden orders remand
Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) Biological Opinion ("The BiOp")

- Jan. 2014 – Supplemental BiOp released - supported by Obama administration, three states, seven Tribes, many stakeholders
- Growing focus on collaboration to help salmon, rather than litigation
- Supported by three states – Washington, Idaho, Montana
- Supported by seven tribal partners
- Supported by navigation, utility, and irrigation stakeholders
Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) Biological Opinion ("The BiOp")
Remand and Spill Ruling

- May 2016 – Judge Simon orders remand
- September 2016 - new NEPA process underway … www.crso.info

* * * *

- 2017 – Judge Simon rules in favor of plaintiffs for injunctive relief: spill
- 2017 – Spill modeling in Vicksburg – PNWA members present
- 2018 – Judge Simon issues spill ruling
- 2018 – Feds lose appeal of Simon spill ruling; increased spill begins
- 2018 – H.R.3144 passes House
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On the Horizon: Columbia River Treaty
Regional Effort to Improve Habitat

Tributary and estuary habitat projects benefit salmon and steelhead

The Columbia River Basin habitat program is among the largest and most comprehensive programs in the nation. The BiOp identifies specific habitat quality improvement targets for 58 populations of salmon and steelhead focused on alleviating key limiting factors and improving abundance. Habitat projects are implemented in the estuary and tributaries throughout the Columbia Basin. BiOp and non-BiOp habitat projects depicted here are underway in areas where ESA-listed fish covered by the BiOp originate.
Major Investments in Fish Passage

Combined with refined spill operations, the installation of surface passage has reduced the percentage of fish that go through powerhouses (i.e. turbines), decreased fish travel time through the system and increased overall fish survival.

Overall Dam Passage Survival

Shown are the dates of surface passage installation and overall dam passage survival test results (2010-2014) for yearling chinook, steelhead and subyearling chinook where available. The performance standard targets are 96 percent for yearling chinook and steelhead, and 93 percent for subyearling chinook.
We’re Making Progress

Mid-Columbia River Steelhead

Upper Columbia River Steelhead

Upper Columbia River Spring Chinook

Snake River Steelhead

Snake River Fall Chinook

Snake River Spring/Summer Chinook

Snake River Sockeye

* Makings show whole population group

www.salmonrecovery.gov
Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force

- NOAA Fisheries has ESA recovery plans, fisheries management plans, and mitigation plans. States and tribes also have management responsibilities and plans. Without common, shared goals, it is harder to achieve any of them.

- 2012 Situational Assessment by Ruckleshaus Center and Oregon Consensus found the need for more coherent, integrated, and efficient means of addressing the complexities of salmon recovery. It also called for NOAA Fisheries to convene regional effort to develop common, long-term goals for salmon and steelhead, including both sovereigns and stakeholders.

- CBP Task Force established in Fall 2016 and began January 2017

- 28 members from states, tribes and stakeholders
Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force

- Goals that address both conservation and harvest/fishing aspirations.
- Goals that are understandable and consider various users of Columbia Basin resources.
- Better coordination, more effective use of resources, and alignment of strategic priorities.
- Quantitative adult abundance goals for both listed and non-listed stocks.
- Enhanced relationships, trust and knowledge

*** Draft goals now available for review ***
Columbia River Basin Restoration Act

- Columbia River Basin is only major is the only major EPA designated “large aquatic ecosystem” to receive no funding for toxics

- Toxic pollutants, including mercury, DDT and PCBs, have been detected in the Columbia ecosystem, and have significant health, safety and economic impacts

- CRBRA creates a voluntary grant program in EPA; authorized at $50M in WIIN 2016, with more specific language in Senate WRDA 2018

- Example of diverse stakeholders working together to achieve legislative success and attract program funding to our region
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Snake River

On the Horizon: Columbia River Treaty
Columbia River Jetties
MAJOR REHAB – ON SCHEDULE

- Help maintain depth & orientation of the navigation channel
- Provide protection for ships entering and leaving the river
Columbia River Channel Deepening
COMPLETED

- 20 year project
- Completed November 2010
- 110 mile channel deepened to 43’
- 6K tons added capacity per ship
- $1-2M worth of cargo added per ship call

RESULT:
Over $1B in new investment
Columbia River – routine maintenance dredging

- Annual appropriated activity – four dredges
- Draft restrictions from 2011 to 2015
- 40’ draft restriction = $22M direct economic impact per year
- Cargo left on the dock, disruptions to supply chain
Columbia Snake River Locks Major Repairs – 2010/11 COMPLETED

- Congress and each Administration has recognized the value of our inland system, including the Snake
- New gates at 3 locks, major repairs at 3 others in one closure
- Ensures safe operation
Columbia Snake River Locks Major Repairs – 2016/17

- Components and systems installed at six of the eight locks
- 14 weeks
- December 2016 – March 2017
Snake River – routine maintenance dredging

- Channel was dredged in 1999, 2006
- History of litigation … navigation intervenes
- January 2015: injunction denied
- February 2015: dredging completed
- February 2016: Corps plan upheld
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Snake River

On the Horizon: Columbia River Treaty
Snake River serves many purposes
# Snake River dams comparison

Elwha Dam  | Glines Canyon Dam  | Condit Dam
--- | --- | ---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dam Type</th>
<th>Removed Dams</th>
<th>Snake River Dams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Elwha</td>
<td>Glines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Power Generation (capacity)</td>
<td>19MW</td>
<td>6MW</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transmission Stability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Power Peaking/Emergency Outage Recovery</td>
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<td>Commerce/Navigation</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salmon Passage</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind Integration</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nearly 10% of all U.S. wheat exports move through the Snake River dams.
4,361,000 tons of cargo moved on the Snake River in 2014 by barge

- 302 4-barge tows
  - or -
- 43,610 rail cars
  - or -
- 167,000 semi-trucks
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Snake River

On the Horizon: Columbia River Treaty
Columbia River Treaty

- US-Canada Treaty ratified in 1964 for:
  - Coordinate flood control
  - Optimize hydroelectric generation

- Constructed four dams
  - Duncan – 1967 – Canada
  - Arrow/Keenleyside – 1968 – Canada
  - Mica – 1973 – Canada
  - Libby – 1975 – U.S.

- Cost sharing

- Shared energy benefits

- Framework for cooperation

- Some flexibility, with “notes” exchanged
Columbia River Treaty

- New concerns since 1964:
  - Ecosystem health/fish access
  - Costs – Canadian Entitlement
  - Predictability – flood control

- December 2013 regional recommendation

- Ten year “notice”
  - Opened September 2014, for 2024
  - Neither country has issued notice yet
Formal negotiations between the two countries began in May 2018 in Washington DC.

Second round of talks were held last week in British Columbia.

PNWA engaging with U.S. State Dept. and Corps of Engineers.
Opportunities to Stay Informed

Website: www.pnwa.net

Nor’wester newsletter

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