Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez

1431 Longworth House Office Building

Washington DC 20515

June 2, 2024

Rep. Perez,

As one of your constituents, I am concerned about the depletion of salmon in the Columbia River Basin and our failed attempts at restoring the fish populations.

A recent agreement in December of 2023 halted the litigation for up to five to ten years by the “Six Sovereigns” nations and with NGO plaintiffs in challenging the Trump Administrations’ 2020 salmon recovery plan. In the agreement, the U.S. Government committed to actions aimed at recovery of the threatened and endangered fish stocks.

This agreement is monumental in establishing the government’s obligations to the Tribes and under the Endangered Species Act. Here are some of the exciting highlights:

-Capping BPA and wildlife costs, while transitioning planning and management of those programs to tribal, state, and federal fisheries agencies

-Investing in habitat restoration projects across the Basin

-Investing in hatcheries and hatchery reforms as a necessary supplement to work to restore wild populations

-Funding for studies of reintroduction of salmon above Grand Coulee Dam, and

-A priority effort to control avian and pinniped predation on smolts and adult salmon.

As part of Biden’s 2025 budget, is requested appropriations to initiate the work ahead.

I urge your support for these appropriations. I understand you do not support breaching of the four Lower Snake River Dams currently; however, the Administration does not commit to those actions either. It recognizes that breaching the dams would involve approval from Congress.

The Biden Administration supports a thorough review of the documents underlying the 2020 Trump salmon plan to determine whether they need to be amended. This includes the Final IES, Biological Opinion, and Record of Decision by the end of 2024.

Furthermore, the Administration commits to providing resources to support studies of the feasibility and cost of replacing the energy, transportation, irrigation, and recreation services now provided by the dams. These are studies both Sen. Murray and Gov. Inslee called for in their 2022 recommendations on the future of the LSRD.

In addition, the Administration agrees to commit technical and financial support for the development of Tribal energy projects sufficient to replace the energy output of the dams, if they were to be breached.

As one of your constituents, I hope that you can continue to provide intelligent, science-based evidence on public policy issues. I urge you to support the Administration’s plan to recover wild fish in the Columbia basin.

Sincerely,

Laurie Kerr

BattleGround, Wa