



PACIFIC NORTHWEST WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION

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PNWA rejects conclusions of Lower Snake River Dams Benefit Replacement Draft Report

The [Pacific Northwest Waterways Association](#) (PNWA) has reviewed the [Lower Snake River Dams Benefit Replacement Draft Report](#) commissioned by U.S. Senator Patty Murray and Washington Governor Jay Inslee to help determine whether there are reasonable means for replacing the benefits of these federal projects.

The draft report, which was completed by Kramer Consulting and Ross Strategic, is an oversimplification of the impacts of dam breaching and lacks recognition of the inability and improbability of truly replacing their benefits. It underestimates breaching impacts on our Northwest communities and the needs of millions of people who rely on economic, transportation, energy, and other critical benefits provided by this federal system. It provides no conclusive evidence that spending billions of public dollars to remove four run-of-river dams with world-class fish passage would save salmon without crippling the Northwest's economy and ability to fight climate change.

Over the past few months as the report was completed, PNWA voiced concerns regarding both the process and foundational assumptions, in [letters directed to Senator Murray and Governor Inslee](#), as well as to the consulting firms drafting the report. With the release of the report today, PNWA continues to be concerned about a number of baseline assumptions, including that the value of the dams will decline in future and that all losses from dam breaching can be mitigated or compensated.

"There are significant gaps in the report as it relates to understanding the reality of shifting to alternative transportation modes, permitting and developing the infrastructure that would be required, impacts to Northwest and U.S. farmers, and the true ability to meet our regional and national climate goals without the dams in place," said PNWA Executive Director Heather Stebbings. "The report itself recognizes that more analysis needs to be done to fully assess the economic, social and transportation impacts associated with dam breaching. It raises more questions than it answers and does not provide a solid foundation upon which a decision as substantial as this one could be made."

PNWA recognizes the critical importance of salmon recovery in the Columbia River Basin. As our region looks to improve salmon runs, it is imperative to thoroughly assess all the benefits and drawbacks of the various measures being considered to improve conditions for fish. Dam breaching is problematic, not only because of the serious environmental, social, and economic consequences it would unleash on the



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region, but also because breaching the Lower Snake River dams is unlikely to increase salmon returns in any meaningful way. Because of the many biological and sociological variables involved, any decision regarding dam breaching should be apolitical, the product of detailed analytic scrutiny, and grounded in science.

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The Pacific Northwest Waterways Association is a non-profit, non-partisan trade association of ports, businesses, public agencies and individuals who support navigation, energy, trade, and economic development throughout the region. Learn more at www.pnwa.net.