



How the Columbia-Snake Dams Help Climate Change Goals

Two-thirds on the Northwest's clean, renewable hydro power is produced by the federal dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers. This system provides affordable, reliable energy to meet families and businesses basic needs and keeps the region's carbon footprint small, about half that of the rest of the West. The 2008 Federal Biological Opinion is a science-based plan that will continue to put salmon on the road to recovery and also keeps the hydro system viable to support state and national climate change goals. A robust hydro system is critical to backing up existing wind resources and to maximizing new renewable resource development. Destroying four dams on the Snake River, as some have proposed, is an extreme measure that would result in an additional 4.4 million tons of carbon emissions annually.

Clean, renewable hydropower is key to meeting climate change goals

- The hydro system is needed more than ever to bring new wind power in the Northwest online: hydro takes over when intermittent wind is not blowing.
- The region's energy experts agree that new growing power needs cannot be met by energy efficiency and renewable energy alone.
- The hydro system generates emission-free electricity for the businesses and families of the Northwest, fueling factories, powering high tech companies, lighting and heating businesses and homes.

Destroying the Snake River dams will increase carbon emissions and won't help fish

- Destroying the Snake River dams would take out 1,100 megawatts of firm energy and 3,000 megawatts of capacity, undermining national and regional climate change goals.
- The four lower Snake River dams produce enough clean renewable energy to power a city the size of Seattle, and represent 15% of BPA's power supplies.
- Replacing that energy with fossil fuels would cost consumers up to \$550 million annually and add 4.4 million tons of CO₂ to the air.
- The public opposes dam removal with 71% identifying it as an extreme measure to help fish according to a RiverPartners' March 2009 public opinion poll.
- The four Snake River dams produce almost as much energy annually as the Bonneville Power Administration's conservation programs have achieved in 27 years.
- Removing the Snake River dams would affect only four of the thirteen listed salmon runs with highly uncertain biological benefits for the fish.

Northwest RiverPartners is an alliance of farmers, utilities, ports and business that promote the economic and environmental benefits of the Columbia and Snake Rivers and Salmon recovery policies based on sound science.
April 22, 2009