



PRESS RELEASE

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New Survey Finds Majority of Pacific Northwest Residents Support Lower Snake River Dams and Hydroelectric Power

Political Efforts by Gov. Inslee and Senator Murray Around Possible Removal of the Lower Snake River Dams Should Be Informed By This New Information

Vancouver, WA, December 21, 2021 - Amid the regional debate over hydropower, [new survey data](#) shows strong majorities of Pacific Northwest residents support hydropower and the carbon-free energy provided by the lower Snake River Dams in Eastern Washington. Conversely, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee recently issued a [policy directive](#) aimed at potentially “replacing the benefits of the four lower Snake River dams”. This directive coincides with an effort by Inslee and US Senator Patty Murray to explore dam breaching.

Such a move runs counter to the nearly 60 percent of regional poll participants who indicated direct support for the use of these hydroelectric dams.

Only 17 percent of participants oppose the dams and 23 percent remain undecided. When asked directly about plans to breach the lower Snake River dams only a minority--29%--said they would support breaching the dams.

The survey, produced by [DHM Research](#), an independent and nonpartisan research firm, was conducted from July 26 to August 3, 2021, and polled a diverse range of 1,200 residents from Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, with a likely margin of error of +/- 2.8% overall and +/- 5.0% when broken down by state. To ensure an inclusive and accurate data pool, the poll targeted residents of all backgrounds and accounted for differences in age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, and geographical location.

The analyzed data reflected that residents are mainly concerned about increased electricity costs, loss of a carbon-free energy source, and the agricultural impacts associated with dam removal.

“Today’s survey results ultimately demonstrate that Pacific Northwest residents understand the integral role hydropower plays in supporting our clean energy grid and fish recovery and our policy leaders should take note,” said Kurt Miller, executive director of Northwest RiverPartners. “With national inflation now hitting a 30-year high and soaring energy prices, affordable access to hydropower is more critical than ever when it comes to achieving our region’s ambitious decarbonization and economic justice goals.”

Other key findings from the survey suggest that support for the lower Snake River Dams is bipartisan and geographically diverse with both metro and rural residents indicating high levels of support.

Overall, the data reflects positive regional attitudes towards the lower Snake River Dams.

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About Northwest RiverPartners

Northwest RiverPartners (NWRP) is a not-for-profit, member-driven organization. We represent not-for-profit, community-owned utilities across Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Nevada. We also proudly represent farmers, ports, and businesses across the region that support clean energy and low-carbon transportation.

NWRP is focused on raising awareness about how the Northwest’s hydropower system betters communities and the natural environment, and we encourage science-based solutions that help hydropower and salmon coexist and thrive. <http://nwriverpartners.org>