



PRESS STATEMENT

July 19, 2022
Vancouver, WA

Labor Leaders Across the PNW Support Keeping the Dams on the Lower Snake River

From Pierce County to Idaho, union members back clean, affordable hydroelectricity

Vancouver, Washington—July 19, 2022—This summer, a growing movement of labor leaders and the organizations they represent took a stand to endorse clean, affordable hydroelectricity. Multiple labor leaders and organizations from around the region submitted letters of support for the lower Snake River dams to the Murray-Inslee process.

Many of these labor organizations took votes on formal resolutions of support, as well. This effort builds on Labor's nearly 100 years of supporting public hydropower and comes on the heels of multiple studies released this month that outline the high costs and negative social and environmental consequences of removing the lower Snake River dams.

A [study by the Biden Administration's Bonneville Power Administration \(BPA\) conducted by E3](#) verifies previous analyses and conclusions by Northwest RiverPartners, including the recently released [study by Energy GPS](#). The E3 and Energy GPS studies demonstrate that, given existing technologies, there is currently no viable way to remove the LSRD without burning more fossil fuels or jeopardizing grid reliability. The BPA commissioned E3 study also states that Snake River dam removal could cost ratepayers as much as \$75B just to replace their electricity generation capacity.

The Idaho AFL-CIO takes this issue so seriously that it passed a resolution with amendments that no future candidates will be endorsed by the Idaho AFL-CIO if they are in favor of breaching dams.

"The sun sets, the wind stops blowing, and our demand for power does not care. Without dispatchable energy like clean hydropower, solar and wind are not viable. Take away the dams and you take away power we need and the foundation our future green jobs depend on." - Shannon Stull's letter, Business Manager / Secretary-Treasurer, LiUNA Local 335, Vancouver, WA.

"Due to the challenges and delays in the current permitting process, my members are expressing concern whether Washington State is still committed to build. How can anyone say 'the power from these dams can be replaced' when there are no plans to do so? Washington needs more power plants slated to be built now, including carbon-free Nuclear, Pumped-Hydro Storage, and Green Hydrogen, and we need strong leadership to make it happen." - Jeffery Owen's letter, Business Manager, UA Local 32, Renton, WA.

"With the need to swiftly add 100GW of power to the 64GW that took a century to build, we need strong leadership and action now to build more while keeping what we have in hydroelectric generation. Removal of the four, zero-carbon, clean hydropower plants on the Lower Snake River would be a major setback in our efforts to keep Washington moving forward." - Mark Riker's letter, Executive Secretary, WSBCTC.

Riker also had an [opinion editorial published in the Everett Herald](#). Here is an excerpt:

"Removal of these dams would set us back in our fight against climate change by increasing greenhouse gas emissions by causing us to rely on fossil generation longer and would make it harder to achieve our clean energy objectives.

Removal of the dams would also increase power costs by up to 25 percent which would disproportionately impact low-income communities. In 2022, the Snohomish County Public Utility District, the state's largest public utility, estimates it will get 84 percent of its electricity from the region's federal power system, which includes the Snake River dams."

These labor leaders and organizations represent tens of thousands of workers throughout the PNW and support the dams and the clean, affordable and reliable electricity they generate:

Washington State Building & Construction Trades Council

Laborers' International Union of North America Local (LiUNA 335)

International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators Local 36

U.A. Plumbing & Pipefitters Local 32

Pierce County Building and Construction Trades Council

Northeast Washington and Northern Idaho Building and Construction Trades

Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Central Labor Council

Longview-Kelso Building Trades Council

Northcentral Washington Central Labor Council

Spokane Regional Labor Council

Southwest Washington Central Labor Council

Thurston-Lewis-Mason Central Labor Council

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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://nwrivernpartners.org>