

Greetings - First, I'd like to say that I'm glad Governor Little convened this workgroup, and I appreciate the opportunity to comment. Few topics are as important to Idaho as recovery of salmon and steelhead. I have been following the Governor's Salmon Workgroup from its beginning. I was initially asked to be a member of the workgroup, but respectfully turned it down, primarily due to other commitments I already had. I've attended one meeting in Lewiston and monitored another one remotely. I periodically visit the website to catch up on the progress and presentations. Though the topic is vast, I will limit my comments to two main areas: dam breaching and climate change.

Regarding dam breaching, I feel that this is a topic that must be addressed by the workgroup. I realize that consensus on this controversial issue is not likely among the members of the group. However, at a minimum, the issue needs to be explored and provision made for a minority report. I recognize that the recent completion of the Columbia River Systems Operation FEIS makes it less likely that dam breaching will occur in the foreseeable future. This does not make the issue any less relevant, and it should be considered further in future deliberations. It is important that the Governor's Salmon Workgroup investigate the implications of dam breaching and express their findings on the subject.

With respect to climate change, it may seem that there is little Idaho can do to affect that. On a global scale, that may be true. However, everyone must accept responsibility to reduce climate impacts and Idaho has a role to play in that. Also, Idaho can craft policies to address some of the local effects of climate change on salmon and steelhead recovery. One way to do that would be to implement policies that mitigate the effects of warming rivers on fish and other aquatic life. This can be done in many ways, but could include promoting streamside shade, improving instream flows where possible, modifying fishing regulations to reduce warm water effects on fish, and more.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

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