

PRESS RELEASE

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Nez Perce Tribe Praises Congressman Earl Blumenauer's Support for Simpson Northwest Energy and Salmon Plan; Calls on other Northwest leaders to join effort

Lapwai, ID – The Nez Perce Tribe praised Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) for stepping forward to join Congressman Mike Simpson (R-ID) in advancing Simpson's proposed Northwest Energy and Salmon Plan. The Tribe recently joined a historic summit of twelve Northwest Tribes on the Umatilla Reservation to unite in calling for additional support for the Simpson Plan. Blumenauer joined the tribal summit by videoconference, as did Oregon Governor Kate Brown, Congressman Simpson, and staff from several Northwest Delegation offices. ([April 14th Press Release](#)) ([April 15th Press Release](#))

“Congressman Blumenauer has stepped up to show true leadership for salmon and Tribal Nations in the Northwest,” said Chairman Shannon F. Wheeler. **“He recognizes the biological crisis the Northwest faces – many salmon and steelhead populations are heading toward extinction – and at the same time he sees that the solution to the crisis offers broad energy, economic, and infrastructure opportunities for the entire Northwest. Under the Simpson Plan, no one is left behind.”**

In a townhall co-hosted by Simpson, Congressman Blumenauer thanked his colleague for his leadership and vision in calling for immediate action to protect Columbia and Snake River salmon and steelhead, while enhancing the economic vitality of the entire Northwest. Blumenauer, like Simpson and Tribal leaders before him, stated that a comprehensive solution with secured funding is necessary to move the issue forward and that the time to act is now. Calling the legislative opportunity “unprecedented,” he called on other regional leaders to join with him, Simpson, and Northwest Tribes to act on a solution now.

“The status quo is not working. The Nez Perce view restoring the lower Snake River – a living being to us, and one that is injured - as urgent and overdue,” said Chairman Wheeler. **“We thank Congressman Blumenauer for recognizing that this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to right the mistakes of the past and move to a better, smarter future**

for the entire Northwest. The Northwest Tribes stand ready to work with him, Governor Brown, Congressman Simpson, and other Northwest leaders, and we call on others to join us. Now is the time to act.”

The Nez Perce Tribe, with Treaty-reserved rights and as a regional fisheries co-manager, is actively involved in all aspects of salmon recovery in all forums to rebuild natural runs to healthy, harvestable levels. The Tribe has actively participated in decades of federal litigation regarding the impacts of the mainstem Columbia and Snake River dams on fish. The Tribe’s vision and action has rested on what its people see as core truths: *The status of salmon, steelhead, and lamprey is dire. The four concrete barriers on the lower Snake River have a devastating impact on fish and tribal people. Restoring the lower Snake River to a natural river and reconnecting it to the near-pristine habitat of the Salmon and Clearwater basins is the key to rebuilding returns, along with ongoing hatchery and habitat actions. As dire as the situation already is, the fish may have even less time, without action, given the looming impacts of climate warming.*

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