



Failing Salmon Recovery Efforts are Costing Taxpayers Billions

Over the last two decades, federal agencies have spent more than \$8 billion on efforts to restore salmon to the Columbia and Snake River Basin. But, in spite of this spending, salmon populations continue to decline. In fact, a comprehensive review by the Government Accountability Office found that from 1982-2002 there was no "conclusive evidence" that any of the federal efforts to restore salmon had been successful.

Since 2000, federal agencies have funneled hundreds of millions of dollars annually to salmon plans that have been ruled illegal. With a price tag of \$500 million per year, the latest recovery plan relies on the same failing measures we have tried for decades. This plan is currently being reviewed in federal court and expected to be ruled on this spring.

Hundreds of Millions Wasted on Ridiculous Schemes

One of the most egregious recovery efforts is the Army Corps of Engineers program to barge and truck fish around the dams. These and other efforts to "improve" fish passage at the dams with expensive, elaborate screen and bypass passage systems have cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars. Not surprisingly short-term fixes like this are little more than taxpayer boondoggles that have failed to stop the decline of salmon populations.



High Cost of Salmon Extinction Will Fall on Federal Taxpayers

Time is running short. Snake River salmon continue to teeter at near-extinction levels with recent studies predicting extinction within the next decade. These fish are a valuable economic and cultural resource to the nation and are protected under treaties with Columbia Basin Tribes and Canada. Extinction could cost taxpayers tens of billions of dollars in compensation if either were forced to take legal action against the federal government. However, the Columbia Basin Tribes and Canada do not want to pursue lawsuits, they want the fish they were promised. The federal government must protect our treaty obligations and protect taxpayers by ensuring wild salmon are recovered in the Snake River.

Salmon Recovery Must be Cost-effective and Scientifically Credible

It is clear current recovery efforts are failing. All options for restoring salmon, including the removal of the four dams on the Lower Snake River must be thoroughly evaluated and the limitless spending of the past must be abandoned. It's time Congress begins seriously considering all options for salmon recovery and stop wasting billions.

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