

Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative Developed by the Yakama, Umatilla, Warm Springs and Nez Perce Tribes and the States of Washington and Oregon

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Abstract:

The proposed Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative (CBRI) strives for a true win-win outcome. The CBRI helps bring forward the Tribal people and fisheries left behind in the rush of development by restoring salmon and steelhead with other native species and their habitats and investing in fisheries infrastructure. In so doing, the CBRI also protects and enhances other key service sectors by modernizing and investing in clean energy, agriculture, and transportation, helping restore vital ecosystem functions and services essential for local and regional resilience and adaptation to climate change. The CBRI provides a framework for a durable long-term strategy that restores salmon and other native fish populations to healthy and abundant levels, ensures a clean energy future, supports local and regional economic resilience, restores ecosystem function and honors longstanding unmet commitments to Tribal Nations. To achieve this win-win scenario, the status quo is not an option, and inaction is simply unacceptable. Much like the determined steps necessary to decarbonize our energy system, decisive action is necessary to recover Columbia Basin salmon – incremental action will not be effective and will be more costly in the long run. The rapidly changing economic, energy and climate conditions – not to mention the dire status of the fishery resources - require leaders to plan now for inevitable changes during the coming decades. We must act now with necessary federal investments across the whole of government to be successful.