

White House: To help salmon, dams may need to be removed

BY NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS

Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — The Biden administration on Tuesday, July 12 released two reports arguing that removing dams on the lower Snake River may be needed to restore salmon runs to historic levels, and that replacing the energy created by the dams is possible but will cost \$11 billion to \$19 billion.

The reports were released by the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

“Business as usual will not restore salmon,” said Brenda Mallory, chair of the council. “The Columbia River system is the lifeblood of the Pacific Northwest.”

Many salmon runs continue to decline, which environmentalists blame on dams, Mallory said, and her office is leading multi-agency efforts to restore “abundant runs of salmon to the Columbia River Basin.”

Mallory cautioned that the Biden administration is not endorsing any single long-term solution, including breaching the dams.

On Tuesday, a draft report by scientists at the National



Ted S. Warren/The Associated Press, File
The Lower Granite Dam on the Snake River is seen from the air near Colfax, Washington.

Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration found changes are needed to restore salmon, ranging from removal of one to four dams on the lower Snake River to reintroduction of salmon to areas entirely blocked by dams. A second report studied how power supplies could be replaced if dams are breached.

“These two reports add to the picture — that we are working alongside regional leaders to develop — of what it will take over the decades ahead to

restore salmon populations, honor our commitments to Tribal Nations, deliver clean power and meet the many needs of stakeholders across the region,” Mallory said.

More than a dozen runs of salmon and steelhead are at risk of extinction in the Columbia and Snake rivers.

Billions of dollars have been spent on salmon and steelhead recovery, but the fish continue to decline, speakers said, and it is time to try a different approach. Dam breaching is op-

posed by grain shippers, irrigators, power producers and other river users. Dam supporters blame declining salmon runs on other factors, such as changing ocean conditions.

“We need to go to larger-scale actions,” NOAA scientist Chris Jordan said in a briefing on the report Monday.

“We are at a crucial moment for salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River Basin when we’re seeing the impacts of climate change on top of other stressors,” said Janet Coit, an administrator for NOAA Fisheries.

The issue has percolated in the Northwest for three decades, sparking court fights and political debates over the future of the four dams on the Snake River that environmentalists blame for the decline in salmon and steelhead.

U.S. Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, kicked off the latest round of debates in 2021, when he released a plan saying it would cost \$34 billion to remove and replace the dams’ services in order to save salmon. U.S. Sen. Patty Murray and Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, both Democrats, are

also preparing a report, with their recommendations expected later this summer.

Last month, Murray and Inslee announced that replacing the benefits provided by the four giant hydroelectric dams on the lower Snake River in Washington state would cost \$10.3 billion to \$27.2 billion.

Breaching the dams would significantly improve the ability of salmon and steelhead to swim from their inland spawning grounds to the Pacific Ocean, where they spend most of their lives, and then back to their original spawning grounds to procreate and die, Murray and Inslee said.

Major benefits of the dams include making the Snake River navigable up to Lewiston, Idaho, allowing barges to carry wheat and other crops to ocean ports. Eliminating the dams would require truck and rail transportation improvements to move crops.

The dams also generate electricity, provide irrigation water for farmers and recreation opportunities for people.

The dams have many supporters, including two GOP

members of Congress representing eastern Washington state. The dams are also supported by barge companies, farmers and other business interests. Breaching them would require an act of Congress.

Republican U.S. Reps. Dan Newhouse and Cathy McMorris Rodgers of eastern Washington have introduced a bill to protect the dams, which are located in their districts.

In the late 1800s, up to 16 million salmon and steelhead returned to the Columbia River Basin every year to spawn. Over the next century and a half, overfishing whittled that number down. By the early 1950s, just under 130,000 Chinook were returning to the Snake River.

Construction of the first dam on the lower river, Ice Harbor, began in 1955. Lower Monumental followed in 1969, Little Goose in 1970, and Lower Granite in 1975.

The dams stretch from Pasco, Washington, to near Pullman, Washington, and stand between migrating salmon and 5,500 miles of spawning habitat in central Idaho.

Oregon therapeutic psilocybin program sparks some confusion

BY CLAIRE RUSH

Associated Press/Report for America

PORTLAND — As Oregon drafts the rules for its new psilocybin program, the first of its kind in the U.S., residents are voicing concern about the confusing patchwork of local ordinances that may emerge.

In 2020, Oregon became the first state in the nation to legalize the therapeutic, supervised use of psilocybin after 56% of voters approved Ballot Measure 109. Psilocybin is the active hallucinogenic ingredient in what are commonly referred to as magic mushrooms.

But the measure allows counties to opt out of the program if their constituents vote to do so, and several are hoping to do just that, sparking confusion among residents hoping to get involved in the nascent sector.

Questions about this issue were raised several times during the first public listening session hosted Wednesday, July 13 by

the Oregon Health Authority and its new Psilocybin Services section.

Facilitators are paying thousands of dollars for training, one participant said, asking what could be done if counties opt out.

Several county commissioners, mostly in rural areas, have recently decided to put psilocybin center bans on the ballot in November. But even Clackamas County, which includes Portland’s southern suburbs as well as rural mountain areas, has drafted an ordinance asking voters to prohibit such centers.

A Clackamas County resident during the listening session wondered if there would be any recourse if after becoming licensed for psilocybin events and activities, the county enacts a voter-approved ban.

Brandon Davis, another participant, echoed the concern. “I might have to move and relocate entirely just to get into this business market,” he said.

See **Psilocybin** / A6

Invasive beetle known to wipe out ash trees found in Oregon

PORTLAND (AP) — Forestry officials in Oregon said Monday that an invasive beetle known for decimating ash trees throughout North America and Europe was recently discovered west of Portland.

The Oregon Department of Forestry said the iridescent green emerald ash borer is considered the most destructive forest pest in North America and had been detected in 34 other states before it was discovered in Forest Grove on June 30, KOIN-TV reported.

Officials said it’s the first discovery of the insect on the West Coast. The beetle is believed to have come from Asia through Canada to the U.S.

The insects have killed up to 99% of the ash trees in



Minneapolis Star Tribune-TNS, File

The emerald ash borer. The beetle, which kills ash trees, was first discovered in Oregon in late June 2022.

some North American locations. Years of attack by the invasive beetle species have decimated Connecticut’s population of ash trees, for example.

The emerald ash borer was discovered in Oregon by Dominic Maze, an invasive species biologist for the City of Portland. He was waiting outside a summer camp in Forest Grove to pick up his

children when he noticed several ash trees with D-shaped exit holes in their bark, state officials said.

He recognized the holes as a sign of the emerald ash borer and then spotted the beetles. He called the Oregon Department of Forestry and an entomologist and two other invasive species specialists confirmed the invasion.

“It’s an ecologically vital tree as it shades water, keeping it cooler for fish,” Wyatt Williams, the Oregon Department of Forestry’s invasive species specialist, said. “The roots stabilize streambanks, reducing erosion. And lots of animals, birds and insects eat the seeds and leaves. Losing it will likely have a huge impact on those ecosystems.”

See **Beetle** / A6

**Old, young, rich, poor.
Born here, just got here.
Our calling is you.**

Schedule online, anytime.

Saint Alphonsus
A Member of Trinity Health

BAKER COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
1917 Sew it, Grow it, Show it 2022
BAKER CITY, OREGON

GENERAL

- Theme: “Sew it, Grow it, Show it”
- Fair is open to the public Tuesday-Friday, August 9th-12th, 9am-9pm
- Find the schedule & Premium book on our website, Bakerfair.com
- Questions, call Baker County Fair Office (541) 523-7881
- Buyers Luncheon, Friday @ 4 pm
- Livestock Auction, Friday @ 6 pm

OPEN CLASS

- Starting July 1st we are taking entries for all Open Class/ Open Show exhibits. The entry form is available at bakerfair.com, in the premium book or pick one up at the Extension Office.
- Exhibitors may bring their exhibits Sunday, August 7th from 1pm-6pm, or Monday August 8th from 8am-12pm.

VENDORS:

- Honest Nevada- western accessories
- Broken Box Ranch-western apparel, bags, and home decor
- Classical Conversations Homeschool Group- Snow Cones
- Brewin’ with D Coffee Cart
- Frontier Express Food Truck
- Ballpark Prints
- Uniquely Pam Cotton Candy

ENTERTAINMENT:

- Wednesday August 10th, Frank Carlson 7-9pm
- Thursday Aug 11th Olivia Harms 7-9pm
- Kid Zone, inflatable obstacle course and fun yard games open Wednesday-Friday