

Oregon looks upstream to the lower Snake River

By JESSICA POLLARD
STAFF WRITER

Last week Oregon Gov. Kate Brown temporarily shifted the political debate from cap and trade during the legislative session to the waters of the Columbia River's largest tributary — the Snake River — and the four lower dams on the Eastern Washington portion of it.

Brown on Feb. 11 wrote a letter to Washington Gov. Jay Inslee expressing her support to remove the earthen portions from the four concrete lower Snake River dams.

She stated the science was clear — removal is the most probable answer to salmon and steelhead population recovery in the Columbia River Basin, which could aid orcas in their forage for fatty spring Chinook salmon off the mouth of the Columbia in late winter each year.

However, she added, "much must be done before this is accomplished in order to help minimize and mitigate for potential harm to other vital sectors."

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the mid-1970s built the Lower Granite Dam, the Little Goose Dam, the Lower Monumental Dam and the Ice Harbor Dam east of Pasco where water discharges into the Columbia. The dams supply water to irrigate farmland, hydropower and transportation routes.

The Nez Perce, Yakama, Umatilla, Warm Springs, and Shoshone Bannock tribes all relied on fishing from the river, which was once a main contributor and contained millions of salmon each year, well before the construction of the dams.

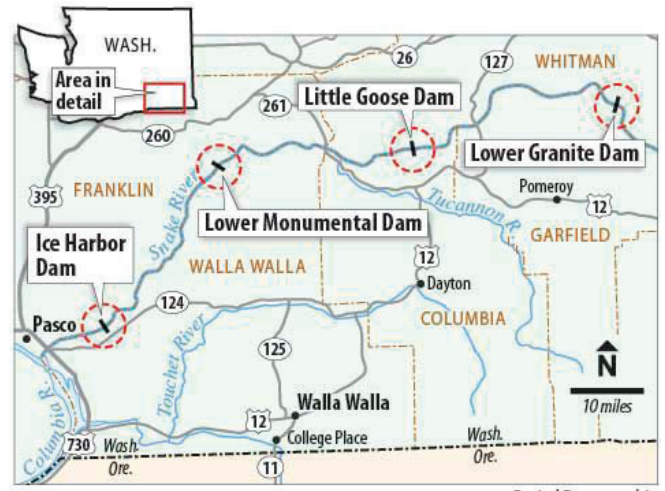
Tribal salmon now are harvested per treaty rights at less than 1% of the levels they were before tribes made contact with white settlers, according to a report issued by the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission in 2014.

"Our diet still consists highly on salmon. It's important we're able to consume those foods," said Chuck Sams, communications director for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. "We agree with a number of science reviews that there are issues around



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

A grain pile and grain elevators operated by United Grain Corp. are seen on Friday afternoon. United Grain Corp. relies heavily on the river system for transport of grain to market.



Capital Press graphic

dams that could be resolved through fish passage and eventual dam removal."

Sams said the Confederated Umatilla Tribes will release a policy statement in coming weeks as the fishing commission works to put its own new analysis of the lower Snake River together.

Electric cooperatives, such as Umatilla Electric Cooperative in Hermiston, purchase the majority of their power from the Bonneville Power Administration, the federal hydro-power agency. Ted Case, director of Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association, said the 1,000 average annual megawatts the lower Snake River dams produce can power a city the size of Seattle. He was shocked to hear Brown's recent position in the lower Snake conversation.

"We've had no consultation, there was no discussion about us," he said. "It's confounding."

He and representatives from other electric cooperatives are worried about what dam removal would bring for rural Oregonians.

"We'll be short of power," he said. "There's a lot of concern as to how we'll reach capacity. You could have blackouts in rural Oregon and electrical grid crashes."

A study in 2018 by Energy Strategies LLC for the Seattle-based Northwest Energy Coalition begs to differ.

The analysis quantified the power from the lower Snake River dams and assessed the fixed and variable costs of implementing renewable replacements, such as wind and solar, and what that would do to market prices.

The lower dams provide nearly 4% of the Pacific Northwest's electricity, according to the report, and at less than a 1% increase in emissions, a new energy portfolio relying on renewables and increased energy-efficiency would add a bit more than \$1 a month to customer costs.

But Energy GPS LLC refuted that last month in a study for Northwest RiverPartners. It stated the lower Snake River dams generate up to 5.5% of the region's electricity and replacing that power would cost \$860 million a year.

"The essence of it is this — the capabilities of these dams cannot be easily or inexpensively replaced. This would hurt those in Eastern Oregon who can least afford it," Case stated in an email to the *Hermiston Herald*.

Case also said he doesn't think the federal approval needed to remove the dams would come anytime soon.

"These dams would have to be removed by congressional action. It would cost billions of dollars," he said. "We're going to do everything we can to prevent that, but I see no broad support for such action."

For the Governor's Office, the letter to Inslee is simply an initiation of discussion about the long-term future.

In an email to the *Hermiston Herald*, Kate Kondayen, press secretary for Brown, said the letter does not call for tearing the dams out, "as has been characterized in initial coverage."

"Instead, Oregon is asserting that we see value in analyzing a future without the dams in the long term, but focusing any definitive next steps on working together to identify a viable path forward to that future with interim steps such as flexible spill agreements," she stated.

Brown's letter raised eyebrows for farmers and ports about what dam removal would mean for the transportation industry. The Pacific Northwest Waterways Association asserts the Columbia Snake River System is the nation's largest wheat export gateway, transporting more than half of all U.S. wheat to overseas markets.

"Compromising, jeopardizing, eliminating any proportion of the system jeopardizes the region on many levels," said Port of Umatilla General Manager Kim Puzey. "The timing is not great."

Brown's letter comes a few weeks before a draft of the Columbia River Systems Operations Environmental Impact Statement is anticipated to be released in

conjunction with the Corps, the Bureau of Reclamation and Bonneville Power in response to a federal ruling calling for a major overhaul of Columbia Snake River dam operations in 2016.

The Port of Umatilla has invested more than \$100,000 in litigation regarding dam removal, and is home to one of Oregon's largest wheat terminals along the Columbia Snake River System.

United Grain Corp operates the terminal and traffics hundreds of millions of bushels of wheat along the Snake River every year, including yields from Umatilla and Morrow counties.

"As a grain company we depend on the river system heavily," said Pacific Northwest United Grain manager Jason Middleton. "Farmers enjoy a low basis number. (Removal) would have an immense impact."

Puzey and Middleton question the fuel efficiency of relying more heavily on trains and trucks without the barge locks provided by the dams.

"People who are concerned with a carbon footprint and the airshed as it relates to transportation can't possibly make a viable argument that the dams be removed," Puzey said.

According to the Waterways Association, transportation via barge is the most fuel efficient. A single barge on a river can carry as much cargo as 134 trucks can.

"Removal would put many more trucks on the freeways and the highways. Infrastructure costs would go through the roof," Middleton said.

But David Moryc, a senior director for American Rivers, said continued discussion could lead

to cost-effective solutions, possibly through the formation of a shortline railroad cooperative along the Snake River.

"It's really important we think strategically about infrastructure upgrades," Moryc said. "How do we replace and improve the benefits that farmers want to see from their transportation systems?"

He asked how the billions of dollars being poured into salmon restoration along the river could be reinvested were dam removal to boost populations back to historical levels.

"You're talking about really high valued habitat where currently the salmon and steel stocks are having trouble because they have to pass through eight dams," he said.

American Rivers has helped negotiate river restoration projects and private dam removals around the Pacific Northwest.

"You've got a number of examples of significant dam removal projects in history. We're seeing positive responses for salmon returns," he said.

Moryc said some utility entities have decided salmon restoration efforts and maintenance costs outweigh the price-tag from options outside hydropower.

He doesn't know how long it could take for dam removal to come to a head at a federal level, and added the environmental impact statement coming later this month likely won't advocate for dam removal. Still, Moryc said he sees a spark in Brown's recent letter.

"My hope is that there are some seeds here," he said, "some kernels of hope in the dialogue."

CRYPTOQUIP

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: O equals S

C VKIOO UDI TAYEF'O OILAPF-HIOU
TYUCUPV CBGEIBIPU LAKEF HI LXEEIF
UDI GIP KEUCBXUI.

l guess the world's second-best writing implement could be called the pen ultimate.

Cryptoquip

Answers
1 Nightclub show
8 Sweet Rosie — (Betty Grable film)
14 Floating with no control
20 Surplus amount
21 Greek Muse of astronomy
22 Pointy beard
23 Cough-quelling tablet
24 Cowboys' toppers
26 Like old teams that ferried borax
28 Luau garland
29 Knife incision
30 —mo replay
31 Big serving spoon
34 Big record label, once
37 Suffix with serpent
38 Long-term home loan option
45 Javelin's path
48 Ending for señor
49 Small musical band
50 The "A" of ETA: Abbr.
51 Mem. of the family
52 1979 Nick Nolte film
59 L-P center
60 More silver-haired
61 Dispatched in the direction of
62 Hold up
64 Pianist's challenge
66 Rajah's mate
68 With a leg on each side of
70 "Apollo 13" org.
71 1994 Erica Jong memoir
76 Unlucky time for Caesar
77 Cold Lipton offering
79 —am (touter of green eggs and ham)
80 Food fish
81 Gp. to call after a stall
82 Delft
86 King in "The Lion King"
89 State south of S. Dak.
90 Flying on foot
93 Ill. in modern name
94 Ex-Texas governor
95 Fat-removal procedure, for short
96 Chou En — (former Communist leader)
97 Old JFK larder
98 Philadelphia election-monitoring group
106 Santa —, California
107 This moment
108 French for "daughter"
109 Meditation syllables
112 Take care of
114 " — mouse?"
117 Phileas Fogg's around-the-world time
122 Right angle feature
127 Satirist P.J. type
129 Lack
130 More boisterous
131 Father, e.g.
132 Seaport south of Kiev
133 No less than
DOWN
1 Male foal
2 States bluntly
3 Gemstone mounting
4 "Am sol" retort
5 Vent vocally
6 Like omelets
7 Be rife (with)
8 Money spent
9 Gluttonous
10 Managed
11 Director Lee
12 Oven knob
13 Ivy League school
14 In past time
15 With 74-Down, longtime morning radio host
16 Match cheers
17 Napoli locale
18 Throwing a big party for
19 Student being quizzed
25 VIP's ride
27 Final: Abbr.
32 " — smile be your umbrella"
33 British peers
35 Artsy —
36 Basically
39 Door part
40 "Do — else!"
41 — avis
42 Provoke
43 Mournful cry
44 Pound sound
45 Iran neighbor
46 Avis offering
47 Inspector in "The Pink Panther"
53 Supermodel
54 Use the ears briefly
55 '62 Bond film
56 RBIs, e.g.
57 Some fishing spears
58 Some Alpine singers
63 Safest option
65 Father
67 Conditions
69 Turnbler top
71 Was a tributary of
72 Bring home
73 Renown
74 See 15-Down
75 Cartoon skunk — La Fume
78 It gives red wine its color
80 " — isn't so!"
83 Eye flirtatiously
84 Nastase of the court
85 —the iceberg
87 Car shaft
88 Marvel's Lee
91 "Platoon"
92 Ex-U.N. head
98 Brief sleep
99 City east of Syracuse
100 Way
101 Having no depth
102 Rains down
103 Actress
104 Really chill, with "out"
105 "Hey, bro!"
110 Singer Callas
111 Comedian
113 Editing mark
115 Total revision
116 Ripened
118 Circle dance
119 Horse pace
120 Cry of pain
121 Spanish muralist
123 Foil material
124 Up to now
125 "Norma —"
126 Trauma ctrs.

SUPER CROSSWORD: MULTIPLE LISTING

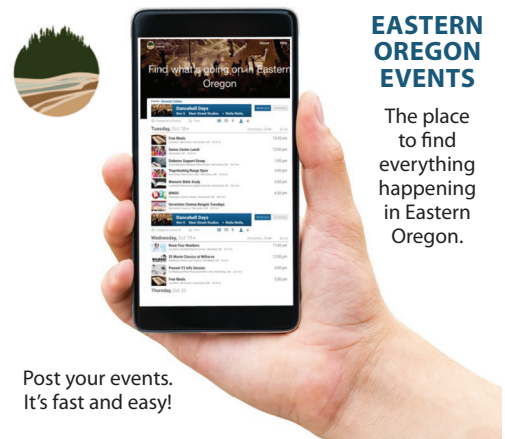
Crossword puzzle grid with multiple listing clues. Clues include: 1 Nightclub show, 8 Sweet Rosie, 14 Floating with no control, 20 Surplus amount, 21 Greek Muse of astronomy, 22 Pointy beard, 23 Cough-quelling tablet, 24 Cowboys' toppers, 26 Like old teams that ferried borax, 28 Luau garland, 29 Knife incision, 30 —mo replay, 31 Big serving spoon, 34 Big record label, once, 37 Suffix with serpent, 38 Long-term home loan option, 45 Javelin's path, 48 Ending for señor, 49 Small musical band, 50 The "A" of ETA: Abbr., 51 Mem. of the family, 52 1979 Nick Nolte film, 59 L-P center, 60 More silver-haired, 61 Dispatched in the direction of, 62 Hold up, 64 Pianist's challenge, 66 Rajah's mate, 68 With a leg on each side of, 70 "Apollo 13" org., 71 1994 Erica Jong memoir, 76 Unlucky time for Caesar, 77 Cold Lipton offering, 79 —am (touter of green eggs and ham), 80 Food fish, 81 Gp. to call after a stall, 82 Delft, 86 King in "The Lion King", 89 State south of S. Dak., 90 Flying on foot, 93 Ill. in modern name, 94 Ex-Texas governor, 95 Fat-removal procedure, for short, 96 Chou En — (former Communist leader), 97 Old JFK larder, 98 Philadelphia election-monitoring group, 106 Santa —, California, 107 This moment, 108 French for "daughter", 109 Meditation syllables, 112 Take care of, 114 " — mouse?", 117 Phileas Fogg's around-the-world time, 122 Right angle feature, 127 Satirist P.J. type, 129 Lack, 130 More boisterous, 131 Father, e.g., 132 Seaport south of Kiev, 133 No less than. DOWN: 1 Male foal, 2 States bluntly, 3 Gemstone mounting, 4 "Am sol" retort, 5 Vent vocally, 6 Like omelets, 7 Be rife (with), 8 Money spent, 9 Gluttonous, 10 Managed, 11 Director Lee, 12 Oven knob, 13 Ivy League school, 14 In past time, 15 With 74-Down, longtime morning radio host, 16 Match cheers, 17 Napoli locale, 18 Throwing a big party for, 19 Student being quizzed, 25 VIP's ride, 27 Final: Abbr., 32 " — smile be your umbrella", 33 British peers, 35 Artsy —, 36 Basically, 39 Door part, 40 "Do — else!", 41 — avis, 42 Provoke, 43 Mournful cry, 44 Pound sound, 45 Iran neighbor, 46 Avis offering, 47 Inspector in "The Pink Panther", 53 Supermodel, 54 Use the ears briefly, 55 '62 Bond film, 56 RBIs, e.g., 57 Some fishing spears, 58 Some Alpine singers, 63 Safest option, 65 Father, 67 Conditions, 69 Turnbler top, 71 Was a tributary of, 72 Bring home, 73 Renown, 74 See 15-Down, 75 Cartoon skunk — La Fume, 78 It gives red wine its color, 80 " — isn't so!", 83 Eye flirtatiously, 84 Nastase of the court, 85 —the iceberg, 87 Car shaft, 88 Marvel's Lee, 91 "Platoon", 92 Ex-U.N. head, 98 Brief sleep, 99 City east of Syracuse, 100 Way, 101 Having no depth, 102 Rains down, 103 Actress, 104 Really chill, with "out", 105 "Hey, bro!", 110 Singer Callas, 111 Comedian, 113 Editing mark, 115 Total revision, 116 Ripened, 118 Circle dance, 119 Horse pace, 120 Cry of pain, 121 Spanish muralist, 123 Foil material, 124 Up to now, 125 "Norma —", 126 Trauma ctrs.

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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

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8	3	6	4	7	2	5	9	1
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8	1	7	7	8	5	9	3	6
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ANSWER

Weekly SUDOKU

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