



September 2, 2025

Representative Russ Fulcher
1514 Longworth HOB
Washington D.C. 20515

Representative Mike Simpson
2084 Rayburn HOB
Washington D.C. 20515

Senator Mike Crapo
239 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Jim Risch
483 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Representatives Fulcher and Simpson, and Senators Crapo and Risch:

RE: H.R. 2073 "Defending our Dams Act"

The Hemingway Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU) is comprised of over 400 members residing in Blaine County in South Central Idaho. Our membership consists primarily of anglers who support conservation and restoration of cold water fisheries and their habitats. We are reaching out to you, as Idaho's voices in Congress, to work with your colleagues to reject proposed legislation that we believe would negatively impact Idaho.

This week the House Natural Resources Committee will be considering H.R. 2073, proposed by Rep. Newhouse of Washington. If this legislation passes, it would take the option of breaching or removing the four lower Snake River dams "off the table" for discussion of implementation, further study, or funding.

Idaho loses out with H.R. 2073

Although all four dams are in Washington which makes sense for Rep. Newhouse's constituents to oppose removal, etc., it does not make sense for Idahoans. Although Washington residents

receive some benefit from the four lower Snake River dams, those are outweighed by the negative impact on Idahoans who are dependent on thriving steelhead and salmon populations which are vulnerable to extinction because of the dams.

Salmon and steelhead are important to Idahoans

Salmon and steelhead provide enormous economic, recreational, cultural, and ecological benefits to Idahoans. Salmon and steelhead fisheries provide substantial economic benefits in Idaho, making up a significant portion of the over \$1.2 billion and over 8,700 jobs attributed to sport fishing in Idaho. This economic activity supports small and family owned businesses (e.g., guiding, outfitting, lodging, services) with many of those economic benefits coming to rural communities. Those benefits are derived with limited salmon and steelhead fishing opportunities due to depressed numbers of fish whose migration and spawning are blocked by the dams. Salmon and steelhead provide enormous recreational and tourism opportunities, with many tens of thousands of anglers annually fishing for Idaho's anadromous fish. Salmon and steelhead are also culturally important, particularly to Native American tribes for whom the United States holds these fisheries resources in trust.

The lower Snake River dams are the problem

Idaho's anadromous fish are on the path to extinction, despite substantial efforts to mitigate the impacts of the lower Snake River dams on these fish. The science is clear: the single biggest threat to Idaho's salmon and steelhead is the lower Snake River dams. To date, all of the other efforts to reduce salmon and steelhead losses, combined, have not changed the trajectory of Idaho's anadromous fish populations towards recovery.

To date, breaching/removal remains the only viable solution to salmon and steelhead recovery

A multitude of rigorous, peer reviewed scientific studies conclude time is running out to restore salmon and steelhead to Idaho and the rest of the upper Snake River basin. Although it is possible other untried methods for restoring salmon and steelhead may be out there, time is evaporating. If something doesn't change soon, we are at very real risk of losing our salmon and steelhead in Idaho. Pushing legislation that takes what, at this time, is deemed to be the best possible tool for recovery completely off the table, defies logic and takes away virtually any potential for a mutually satisfactory solution.

We need collaborative solutions – not H.R. 2073

Idaho has a strong track record of working towards collaborative solutions to big natural resource management challenges; all of you have played key roles in those in the past. This is no time to surrender and accept legislation that apparently benefits citizens in parts of Washington, at the expense of Idahoans. We urge you to work with your colleagues in the House and Senate to prevent the non-collaborative H.R. 2073 from advancing.

Thank you for your service, and for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nicholas P. Miller". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Nicholas P. Miller

President, Hemingway Chapter Trout Unlimited