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Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs
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RECOVERY OF SNAKE RIVER BASIN SALMON AND STEELHEAD RUNS

When Lewis and Clark traveled the Snake and lower Columbia River in 1805-6, there were an estimated 16 million adult salmon and steelhead that returned annually from the Pacific Ocean to the Columbia River basin. This abundant fishery was central to the Columbia's River tribes' subsistence, culture, ceremonies and trading economy. Two hundred years later, there are 37 dams on the Columbia River system, and only 1-2 percent of those historic wild stocks remain, and many are extinct. Thirteen unique populations are federally listed as threatened or endangered.

The four dams on the Snake River block passage of juvenile fish to the sea, resulting in the loss of 90 percent of the salmon and steelhead in the Snake River basin, which includes the Salmon River in central Idaho. The 140 miles of the free-flowing Salmon River would supply prime habitat for recovered runs and which would revitalize the economy of central Idaho. The four dams generate a small amount of energy and facilitate heavily subsidized barging transportation. Studies have shown that there are cost-effective options for clean, affordable energy and rail transportation in place of the dams.

The Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs supports recovery and restoration of the Salmon and steelhead runs to the Snake River basin, including consideration of the removal of the four Snake River dams.