



PRESS RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE: Idaho Rivers United applauds Congressman Simpson on Columbia Basin Fund plan to restore Lower Snake River and salmon

Boise ID –

In response to Congressman Simpson’s introduction of the Columbia Basin Fund, Idaho Rivers United (IRU) Executive Director, Nic Nelson, issued the following statement:

“Congressman Mike Simpson has just taken the most meaningful step in the decades-long effort to recover Snake River salmon and steelhead. The Columbia Basin Fund and plan for restoration of the Lower Snake River to a natural, free-flowing river is the most comprehensive, science-based plan to date. This Fund is the product of years of public discussion, in DC and throughout the Pacific Northwest and across all sectors, and importantly, incorporates measures that protect the interests and livelihoods of each stakeholder throughout the entire river system. Not only will the plan recover wild salmon and steelhead to abundance, but also appropriates dedicated funding for each industry to develop their own path forward; the what-if questions can now become *faits accomplis*. In the 30 years that IRU has worked on salmon recovery, this is the most significant proposal, and would not only recover wild fish populations, but serves as a catalyst for regional revitalization and modernization of an affordable clean energy future.

“We applaud Congressman Simpson for this ambitious plan that not only stands to bring wild fish back but will rejuvenate our river economies, invigorate the ecosystems, and bolster the agricultural communities of Northern Idaho. The depth of the plan, in all areas, is a testament to the breadth of collaboration and outreach of Simpson’s office with all interested stakeholders and fulfills his commitment to ensuring that everyone benefits.

“The Pacific Northwest has never been so well-positioned, with numerous delegates in key leadership positions on both sides of the aisle, to shape our own future; a better future. We urge our congressional delegation to show leadership in coming down on the right side of history, to undertake the largest river restoration project ever, and end the decades-long struggle to recover wild salmon and steelhead. While much still needs to be done to ensure the success of this effort, for now, we celebrate this monumental step forward.”