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IN RE:

COLUMBIA RIVER SYSTEM OPERATIONS
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
AND PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

PUBLIC MEETING

HELD BY
TELECONFERENCE ON
MARCH 25, 2020
4:00 P.M.



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8 **MARCH 25, 2020**
9 **4:00 P.M.**

10
11 **OPERATOR:** Ladies and gentlemen, thank you
12 for standing by, and welcome to the CRSO Tribal
13 (sic) Conference Call. At this time, all lines are
14 in a listen-only mode. Later, we will have an
15 opportunity for your comments; instructions will be
16 given to you at that time. If you should require
17 assistance on today's conference by an operator
18 offline, you may press a star zero and an operator
19 will assist you at that time.

20 As a reminder, today's conference is being
21 recorded.

22 I would now like to turn the conference
23 over to our host, Maryam Habibi. Please go ahead.

24 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Hello, and
25 welcome. I'm Maryam Habibi, and I will be your

1 facilitator today.

2 We've scheduled these teleconferences to
3 provide opportunities for you to submit verbal
4 comments during the comment period for the Columbia
5 River System Operations draft EIS. In a few
6 minutes, I will let you know how to indicate if you
7 would like to provide a comment.

8 First, I'd like to introduce who will be
9 listening to your remarks today. We have deputies
10 representing the three agencies: the U.S. Army
11 Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and
12 Bonneville Power Administration.

13 We'll start with the U.S. Army Corps of
14 Engineers and an overview of the draft EIS. Jim?

15 **MR. FREDERICKS:** Okay. Thank you, Maryam.
16 Just a point of clarification. This is the CRSO
17 Public Meeting. I think we said Tribal Meeting.
18 It's the Public Meeting. So we're taking comments
19 from the public.

20 My name is Jim Fredericks. I am the Corps
21 of Engineers Chief of Planning, Environmental
22 Resources and Fish Policy for the Northwestern
23 Division.

24 The corps has the lead role on this
25 environmental impact statement, and we appreciate

1 our working partnership with the co-lead agencies,
2 Bonneville Power Administration and the Bureau of
3 Reclamation.

4 The corps manages 12 of the 14 dams being
5 analyzed in the Environmental Impact Statement.
6 These dams are operated for many purposes, including
7 flood risk management, power production, and
8 navigation. We do understand the significance of
9 this Environmental Impact Statement on individuals,
10 communities, and the environment in the Pacific
11 Northwest. We appreciate you taking time to provide
12 verbal comments on the EIS over the phone.

13 Please note that while you cannot see us,
14 my colleagues and I will listen to all of your
15 comments and consider all of them, whether verbal or
16 written, as we proceed to the final Environmental
17 Impact Statement.

18 The goal of the EIS is to analyze the
19 impacts of operating, maintaining, and configuring
20 14 federal dams, reservoirs, and related facilities
21 that make up the Columbia River System. Based on
22 this analysis, we identified, in accordance with the
23 National Environmental Policy Act, a preferred
24 alternative that seeks to balance the many
25 obligations of the Columbia River System.

1 While the region derives many benefits
2 from the Columbia River System, the dams, even those
3 with fish ladders and downstream passage routes,
4 have adversely impacted fish and wildlife and Native
5 American tribes.

6 Constructions of the dams directly
7 impacted many of the region's tribal communities,
8 including inundation of tribal homes, villages,
9 resource gathering locations, and traditional
10 fishing sites. These dams also inundated salmon and
11 steelhead habitat.

12 Recognizing the system effects and the
13 many regional interests in the Columbia River
14 System, we made it our priority to listen to and
15 consider all viewpoints. And from regional input
16 and analysis and other information, we developed
17 objectives focused on improvements for fish
18 migration and survival, power supply, greenhouse gas
19 emissions, operating flexibility, and water supply.

20 We narrowed the analysis to five
21 alternatives for operating the system. Each
22 alternative is made up of a combination of measures
23 or actions that were deliberately designed to meet
24 all or most of the eight EIS objectives to the
25 greatest extent possible.

1 One alternative is the no action
2 alternative. This is essentially the way the system
3 was running at the beginning of the EIS in 2016, and
4 it provides us with a baseline from which we can
5 compare the other alternatives. Let me briefly
6 describe the multiple objective alternatives, or MOs
7 as we call them.

8 Multiple Objective 1 focused on designing
9 an alternative to improve conditions for ESA-listed
10 fish, including both life stages of anadromous fish
11 and resident or non-migrating fish.

12 Multiple Objective 2 was developed to
13 increase hydropower production and reduce regional
14 greenhouse gas emission with a focus on low carbon
15 emissions. It would provide spill at eight dams to
16 110 percent total dissolved gas. It was also
17 intended to benefit lamprey and endangered salmon
18 while avoiding or minimizing adverse impacts to
19 other authorized project purposes.

20 Multiple Objective 3 includes breaching
21 the four lower Snake River dams and increasing
22 juvenile fish passage spill with the main features
23 being for anadromous fish while avoiding or
24 minimizing adverse impacts to other authorized
25 project purposes.

1 Multiple Objective 4 focused on high-spill
2 operations at 125 percent total dissolved gas to
3 decrease migration time of juvenile anadromous fish
4 with measures for water management flexibility,
5 hydropower production, and additional water supply
6 for fish flows while avoiding or minimizing adverse
7 impacts to other project purposes.

8 Our analyses showed that these
9 alternatives meet the purpose and objectives of the
10 system to varying degrees and with varying levels of
11 beneficial and adverse effects.

12 To improve what we learned, we selected a
13 combination of measures from the alternatives to
14 develop a preferred alternative. The operational,
15 maintenance, and structural measures in the
16 preferred alternative will allow us to meet the
17 intent of the EIS and it balances multiple,
18 sometimes competing river resource needs,
19 congressional authorized purposes, and the agency's
20 mission.

21 Specifically, actions in the preferred
22 alternative will improve conditions for ESA-listed
23 anadromous and resident fish and provide the plan to
24 address uncertainty related to anadromous fish model
25 inputs and continues to provide for reliable

1 economic and carbon-free power, continues to provide
2 for authorized water supply, it improves water
3 management operations, including spill that maintain
4 congressionally authorized flood risk protection,
5 while providing flexibility for current and future
6 climate variability and other purposes, and it
7 continues fish and wildlife programs and mitigation
8 commitments that were in place or planned at the
9 start of this process.

10 We will review all comments and consider
11 substanant (sic) input as we develop the final EIS.
12 We will publish the final EIS, including responses
13 to substantive comments this summer, and we will
14 issue records of decision by September 30th, 2020.

15 I recognize this is a very brief overview
16 and encourage you to read the executive summary for
17 more detailed information and read into some of the
18 EIS chapters to build greater understanding of this
19 work, the outcomes, and to inform your comments.

20 We appreciate you taking the time to join
21 us on the phone today and we look forward to
22 receiving your input.

23 I'll now turn it over to Roland Springer.

24 **MR. SPRINGER:** Thank you, Jim. Good
25 evening. My name is Roland Springer. I'm the

1 Bureau of Reclamations Deputy Regional Director for
2 Resources in the Columbia-Pacific Northwest Region.

3 Reclamation owns and operates two dams
4 that are being analyzed as part of the Environmental
5 Impact Statement; they are Grand Coulee Dam in
6 Washington and Hungry Horse Dam in Montana. These
7 facilities are used for irrigation, power
8 generation, and flood control.

9 The Bureau of Reclamation's mission is to
10 manage, develop, and protect water and related
11 resources in an environmentally and economically
12 sound manner in the interest of the American public.
13 This Environmental Impact Statement is a very
14 important part of our mission.

15 I appreciate this opportunity to listen to
16 your comments and I thank you for taking your time
17 to join us in this call.

18 I will now turn it over to Scott.

19 **MR. ARMENTROUT:** Appreciate it, Roland.
20 My name is Scott Armentrout. I am Bonneville Power
21 Administration's Executive Vice President for
22 Environment, Fish and Wildlife. Bonneville Power
23 Administration transmits the power produced at the
24 Army Corps and Reclamation facilities.

25 Really look forward to hearing your

1 comments this evening. I'll pass it back to our
2 facilitator, Maryam.

3 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you, Scott. We're now
4 ready to begin hearing from those who have called
5 in. If you indicate if you would like to provide a
6 public comment, we will pause while we take your
7 names and add your lines to enter a queue. If you
8 would like to make a comment, please press one then
9 zero now.

10 Agency officials will remain on the line
11 for the entire call to hear your comments. Though
12 we will not be responding to questions or comments
13 today or providing any additional presentation, the
14 agencies welcome and will consider your comments in
15 developing the final EIS, which, as Jim mentioned,
16 will be released this summer.

17 All comments provided during this
18 teleconference will be recorded, transcribed, and
19 submitted to the record for the draft EIS. Any
20 personal information you share on the call will
21 become public. Everyone listening on the call will
22 be able to hear your remarks.

23 Our operator will state your full name
24 when your line is open. Each speaker will have
25 three minutes to provide their comments. We will

1 notify you when you have 30 seconds remaining; at
2 that time, you'll hear me say you have 30 seconds
3 remaining. If you do not wish to use your full
4 three minutes, you may let us know that you would
5 like to yield your remaining time. When three
6 minutes have passed, I'll interrupt and if you're
7 not wrapped up, the operator will mute your line to
8 prepare for the next caller. If you're sharing a
9 phone with someone, please let us know before you
10 begin your comment, so we can move to the second
11 speaker after the first is finished.

12 Currently, we have 23 callers in the queue
13 that have indicated they would like to provide
14 comments.

15 Operator, we're ready now for the first
16 speaker.

17 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our first comment
18 comes from the line of Nina Sarmiento. Our first
19 comment comes from the line of Nina Sarmiento. Your
20 line is now open; please go ahead.

21 **NINA SARMIENTO:** Okay. Thank you so much
22 for this opportunity. I'm going to start my public
23 comment right away.

24 The lower Snake River dam (inaudible) in
25 the new Columbia River System (inaudible) --

1 **MS. HABIBI:** Excuse me. Nina?

2 **NINA SARMIENTO:** Yes?

3 **MS. HABIBI:** We're having trouble hearing
4 you. Your line is cutting in and out.

5 **NINA SARMIENTO:** My line's cutting in and
6 out, okay.

7 **MS. HABIBI:** I can hear you. I can hear
8 you better right now.

9 **NINA SARMIENTO:** Okay. So I'll continue.
10 So the 2002 EIS cost updates and corrections has a
11 fully developed alternative for immediate breaching.
12 Although the alternative was recognized as having
13 the highest probability to recover endangered
14 species, it was not chosen at the time.

15 The CRS has taken four years and \$80
16 million in attempting to justify non-breach
17 alternatives has presented MO-3 or the breach
18 alternative as a poison pill. MO-3 has been
19 poisoned by including more spill, structural
20 measures, and mitigation on other lower Columbia
21 dams. Overestimated breach costs and unnecessary
22 mitigation costs further poison the (inaudible).
23 Thus, the actual cost of breaching has been inflated
24 upwards of \$600 million, despite analysis already
25 done that it can be accomplished in half a million.

1 Closer look at the Appendix Q, cost
2 analysis table or (inaudible) -3, shows that the
3 breach estimate for the new EIS includes \$212
4 million in annual capital costs from other dams.
5 The four lower Snake Dams have no capital cost
6 (inaudible).

7 Similarly, the operation and maintenance
8 cost for all other Columbia River System dams
9 included in annual cost (indiscernible) breaching,
10 when in reality only operation and maintenance costs
11 for recreation will remain post-breaching.

12 MO-3 has been falsely presented as
13 extremely expensive; even so, evidence in MO-3
14 points to breaching as the only alternative that
15 saves money, ratepayer money, and has the highest
16 probability of recovering salmon and orca. The
17 continuation of using this current method to
18 (inaudible) non-breach alternatives, after
19 witnessing failed fish recovery and their impact on
20 fish (indiscernible) --

21 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Those are always
22 way more engaging for --

23 **NINA SARMIENTO:** -- to extinction.

24 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Part of me, there's
25 a little bit of stress, because not that I'm

1 (indiscernible) --

2 **NINA SARMIENTO:** Is someone talking in the
3 background, because I can hear them?

4 Failure to connect the breaching
5 alternative (indiscernible) impacts on Southern
6 Resident orca's is itself --

7 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
8 remaining.

9 **NINA SARMIENTO:** -- a fatal flaw -- is a
10 fatal flaw in choosing the preferred alternative.
11 In (inaudible) times, these endangered species and
12 (inaudible) federal agencies should address the
13 Columbia River System in a two-tiered process.
14 (Inaudible) dams. Tier two is addressing systems
15 operation and further mitigation in the rest of the
16 Columbia River Basin using (indiscernible), assuming
17 that the full --

18 **MS. HABIBI:** Your time has lapsed.

19 **NINA SARMIENTO:** -- lower Snake River Dam
20 (indiscernible).

21 Thank you so much.

22 **MS. HABIBI:** This is your facilitator
23 Maryam Habibi. There were a couple of times during
24 that comment where the phone cut in and out. So we
25 would encourage you to submit your comments online

1 as well or in writing, to do one of the other
2 methods indicated on our website at www.crso.info.

3 Operator, we're ready to move to the next
4 caller.

5 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment
6 comes from the line of Alex McGregor. Alex
7 McGregor, your comment is available for now.

8 **ALEX MCGREGOR:** Good afternoon, friends.
9 Kudos to the three agencies for developing a
10 preferred alternative, protecting salmon without
11 destroying jobs, clean energy, efficient
12 transportation, and the livelihoods of farm families
13 and rural communities.

14 I'm Alex McGregor. The McGregor Company
15 serves 2,000 farmers in three dozen towns. We've
16 been farming and ranching near the Snake River
17 Canyon since Washington was a territory.

18 During the last decade, the Columbia Snake
19 River System produced outstanding salmon runs, back-
20 to-back-to-back years of the best returns in more
21 than three quarters of a century. Salmon revs were
22 improving year after year.

23 What changed? The Pacific decadal
24 oscillation, periodic ocean temperature variations
25 turned to a less favorable warm cycle. A

1 particularly warm body of ocean water nicknamed The
2 Blob made it worse.

3 The bottom line notes NOAA Fisheries
4 biologist Laurie Weitkamp, is that many salmon runs
5 are in a downward trend due to unfavorably warm
6 ocean conditions. Removing dams, writes a UW
7 fisheries professor, would have a very, very small
8 effect on Columbia Chinook runs.

9 This winter, UW fishery scientists
10 reported on another challenge. Northern killer
11 whale populations have tripled with Columbia River
12 Chinooks now facing a gauntlet of predictors on
13 their return home, with smaller and less prolific
14 drags last in the cafeteria line reaching the Salish
15 Sea.

16 Toxics from fast-growing cities that are
17 very high, leading EPA to state, The decline in
18 salmon is closely associated with the decline in the
19 health of Puget Sound. It is clear that there are a
20 lot of unanswered questions, a UW fishery scientist
21 reports.

22 All of us, rural and urban, east and west,
23 need to do our share, avoiding draconian steps like
24 dam removal while protecting our iconic salmon and
25 looking more from scientific study along the way,

1 might just give us access to the most important
2 wheat terminal in the nation and produce 80 percent
3 fewer hydrocarbons than trucks or rail. Farmers
4 have helped improve fish habitat, reducing
5 waterborne soil erosion more than 85 percent.

6 It's not an either/or proposition.
7 Washington can have both healthy rivers and a
8 healthy economy. Working together, we can make it
9 happen. Thank you.

10 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we're
11 ready to move to the next caller.

12 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
13 line of LeeAnne Beris. LeeAnne Beris, your line is
14 now open for comment.

15 **LEEANNE BERIS:** Hello, and thank you for
16 the opportunity to speak this afternoon. My name is
17 LeeAnne Beris, and I'm the Executive Director of
18 Earth Ministry and Washington Interfaith Power and
19 Light. We are a Washington state-based organization
20 of clergy, congregations, and thousands of
21 individual people of faith who transform our faith
22 into action for the well-being of our communities
23 and the environment.

24 I'm glad to be able to comment on the
25 Columbia and Snake River Draft Environment Impact

1 Statement today, because in the faith community, we
2 care as much about people as we do for God's
3 creation. It's important to all of us that we work
4 together to craft solutions for the Columbia Basin
5 that work for everyone. That's why Earth Ministry
6 has been bringing together Native leaders, farmers,
7 fishermen, and people of faith over the last several
8 years to discuss the future of the Snake River. Our
9 Loaves and Fishes events throughout Eastern
10 Washington have provided safe spaces for community
11 members to share their hopes for the region and to
12 be in conversation about potential challenges.

13 Unfortunately, this DEIS stops short of
14 the necessary scope and scale to implement the
15 inclusive change that we've heard people calling for
16 at these Loaves and Fishes events. We have a moral
17 obligation to act. We know that all remaining Snake
18 River salmon and steelhead populations are in deep
19 trouble today since the 2019 fish returns were some
20 of the lowest on record. Southern Resident orcas
21 face extinction due to the lack of their main pray
22 Chinook salmon. And as caretakers of God's
23 creation, we must do better. We must act urgently
24 and boldly or we will lose these iconic northwest
25 species forever.

1 We must also care for our neighbors as
2 ourselves. This means we should undertake the
3 necessary planning to ensure that changes to the
4 river system, including potential removal of the
5 four lower Snake River dams is done in a way that
6 meets the needs of those who depend on the river.
7 We need healthy fishing and farming communities. We
8 need a reliable and affordable energy system and we
9 need solutions that live up to our nation's
10 obligations to tribal communities.

11 The federal agencies' approach in this
12 DEIS maintains the status quo that resolves none of
13 these challenges and meets no one's needs. The
14 state's community is calling on Northwest elected
15 officials, federal agencies, and policymakers to
16 work with each other as well as Northwest tribes,
17 farmers, fishermen, community leaders, and all other
18 river stakeholders, to develop a salmon recovery --

19 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
20 remaining.

21 **LEEANNE BERIS:** -- to develop a salmon
22 recovery plan that actually restores salmon and
23 ensures a prosperous region for everyone. Thank
24 you.

25 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. This is your

1 facilitator, Maryam Habibi. For those who may have
2 joined us, this is a public meeting for providing
3 comments on the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like
4 to provide a comment, please press one then zero to
5 add your name to the queue.

6 Agency officials remain on the line to
7 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
8 questions or comments during this meeting or
9 providing additional presentation, the agencies
10 welcome and will consider your comments in
11 developing the final EIS, which will be released
12 this summer.

13 If you provide a comment, you're welcome
14 to remain on the line to hear from others.

15 Operator, we're ready for the next caller.

16 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment
17 comes from the line of Chad Jensen. Chad Jensen,
18 your line is now open for comment; please go ahead.

19 **CHAD JENSEN:** Thank you for the
20 opportunity to comment. I wish we could do this in
21 person, but thanks for the opportunity during these
22 trying times. I'm Chad Jensen, and I'm honored to
23 serve as the CEO of Inland Power and Light based
24 here in Spokane, Washington.

25 The draft EIS is an impressive document,

1 and I tip my hat to all the effort put in by the
2 three agencies.

3 I want to start off by saying dams are
4 meaningful to our area and the entire Northwest.
5 Dams provide us with carbon-free power that meets
6 our state mandates and provides a reliable backup
7 for renewables.

8 If the dams are removed, the impact on
9 rates and our Northwest economy would be
10 significant. Our economy was built on affordable
11 energy, and this is as important now as ever before.
12 Dam removal is projected to raise BPA rate by as
13 much as 50 percent. To us, that translates to up to
14 25 percent for our members. This power also cannot
15 be replaced without impacting rates in our carbon-
16 free footprint.

17 I encourage us to take a realistic
18 approach as we look at this. I agree we need to do
19 more to save fish, but this must be done in a
20 holistic approach. Dams are just one piece of the
21 puzzle. Avian and predation is an issue and we
22 must address. It is estimated that 33 to 55 percent
23 of upper Columbia juvenile snakehead are eaten by
24 bird. Also seal predation and harvest and all other
25 risks must be taken into consideration, along with

1 troubling ocean conditions.

2 I will make this brief. I support the EIS
3 suggested action and note that even the draft EIS
4 shows that losing the lower Snake River dams would
5 double the risk of regional blackouts. They are
6 important to our economy. They're important to our
7 future. And I do believe strongly that there is a
8 balance where we can take care of fish, meet the
9 needs of our farmers, transportation, and our energy
10 needs.

11 Once again, I thank you for the
12 opportunity to comment and appreciate your time.
13 Thank you.

14 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we're
15 ready for the next caller.

16 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment
17 comes from the line of John Francisco. John
18 Francisco, your line is open for comment; please go
19 ahead.

20 **JOHN FRANCISCO:** Thank you. My name is
21 John Francisco, and I'm the CEO for Northwest
22 Requirements Utilities, or NRU. NRU is the trade
23 association that represents 53 of the Bonneville
24 Power Administration's load following customer
25 utilities who serve over 650,000 end use retail

1 electricity consumers. Most of NRU's member
2 utilities receive the entirety of their wholesale
3 electricity from the BPA. NRU will be submitting
4 detailed written comments in addition to these oral
5 comments.

6 NRU would like to extend our appreciation
7 to the many agencies who collaborated on the
8 extensive effort necessary to produce a
9 comprehensive and well-balanced draft EIS.

10 NRU is especially pleased to see the
11 engagement of the agencies with Northwest tribal
12 leaders and that their interests were often and
13 appropriately cited in the draft. The lead agencies
14 set clear objectives under comprehensive public
15 input for the NIFA (phonetic) process prior to the
16 analysis of each defined multiple objective, and
17 adhered to those objectives when identifying the
18 preferred alternative. After extensive analysis,
19 the draft recommends the only alternative that meets
20 all of those objectives.

21 The preferred alternative acts to benefit
22 fish stocks while not being punitive to other uses
23 and users of the river. Other alternatives under
24 consideration potentially could have been more
25 beneficial to salmon and steelhead, but would have

1 done so at an impossible societal cost in terms of
2 jobs, other environmental damage, risk of
3 electricity blackouts, and increased electricity
4 rates of up to 50 percent.

5 The preferred alternative is clearly the
6 most balanced approach to meeting the objectives
7 identified and agreed upon in the beginning of the
8 process.

9 However, the preferred alternative is not
10 perfect. The spill regime identified in the
11 preferred alternative relies on spill to generate
12 total dissolved gasses well above recommended
13 levels. Spill at this level has not yet proven to
14 be beneficial to fish stocks.

15 NRU strongly encourages the lead agencies
16 to expeditiously design and implement a robust fish
17 monitoring program to ensure the proposed spill
18 levels deliver the increases in population shown in
19 the model.

20 Implementation and monitoring must be
21 followed by a willingness to invoke the adaptive
22 management protocols to quickly adjust spill levels
23 and increased fish survival is not shown.

24 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
25 remaining.

1 **JOHN FRANCISCO:** Thank you. Thank you
2 again for the tremendous effort it took to produce
3 this holistic and balanced draft EIS. Please don't
4 waiver when considering comments that push back on
5 the preferred alternative in favor of alternatives
6 that are not well-balanced or do not meet all
7 objectives of the agencies.

8 This completes my comments. Thank you.

9 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we're
10 ready for the next caller, please.

11 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. The next comment
12 comes from the line of Gary Wiens. Mr. Wiens, your
13 line is open for comment now.

14 **GARY WIENS:** Thank you. This is Gary
15 Wiens. I'm CEO of Montana Electric Cooperatives
16 Association. Our association is comprised of 25 co-
17 ops that deliver electricity to about 40 percent of
18 the state's population. And we will also be
19 submitting written comments.

20 We believe we must protect both the salmon
21 and maintain clean, affordable power system. We
22 know the salmon population is struggling. But the
23 salmon issue is bigger than the future of the lower
24 Snake River dams. And so we urge that this issue
25 not be framed as a hydropower problem so that we can

1 focus on key issues of harvest, hatcheries, habitat,
2 ocean conditions, and predation.

3 Also, we also must have a dependable power
4 system. And just imagine what the situation would
5 be like right now with this public health crisis we
6 have with COVID-19 if we didn't have reliable
7 electric power.

8 The draft EIS points out that the cost of
9 replacing these dams would result in approximately
10 \$1 billion annual increase to electricity costs.
11 This would result in a 25 percent increase in our
12 folks' monthly electric power bills. That's just
13 simply unacceptable, unaffordable. Montanans, we're
14 generally a low-income state. And I know many of
15 the people that are served by our electric co-ops,
16 they are low-income people. They just simply can't
17 afford a 25 percent increase.

18 And especially when you think about this
19 coronavirus, the economic impact's going to only get
20 worse. And so their ability to pay that kind of
21 increase is just not acceptable.

22 The Montana Electric Co-Ops Association,
23 we believe that the salmon do need our help. But we
24 also believe very strongly that the lower Snake
25 River dams are critical to our region. And so we

1 would support developing a comprehensive shared
2 solution that's compatible with the important need
3 of reliable power service in a modern world.

4 And thank you again for the opportunity to
5 comment.

6 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we move on
7 to our next commenter, I'd like to take a moment to
8 welcome anyone who has joined us.

9 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
10 And this is a public meeting for providing comments
11 on the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like to provide
12 a comment, please press one then zero to add your
13 name to the queue.

14 Agency officials remain on the line to
15 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
16 questions or comments during this meeting or
17 providing additional presentation, the agencies
18 welcome and will consider your comments in
19 developing the final EIS, which will be released
20 this summer.

21 If you've provided comment, you're welcome
22 to remain on the line to hear from others.

23 Operator, we're ready to move to the next
24 caller now.

25 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the

1 line of Joshua Crowe. Joshua Crowe, your line is
2 now open for comment; please go ahead.

3 **JOSHUA CROWE:** Hello. My name is Joshua
4 Crowe. I recently graduated from Eastern Washington
5 University with a master's degree in sports and
6 recreation administration. For my master's thesis,
7 I researched the recreation potential of a free-
8 flowing lower Snake River. As an outdoor recreation
9 professional, the potential of a 200-mile free-
10 flowing lower Snake River is vastly appealing.

11 Having guided whitewater trips on many
12 rivers, including the Deschutes and the lower
13 Salmon, I have seen the potential for recreation and
14 economic opportunities on free-flowing rivers.
15 Rivers like the Deschutes, Salmon, and the Selway,
16 provide opportunities to outfitters similar to what
17 a free-flowing lower Snake River would provide.
18 Activities like rafting, kayaking, hunting, and
19 sport finishing would bring millions of dollars in
20 revenue to the local economies of the lower Snake
21 River.

22 Healthy free-flowing rivers are rare
23 recreational resources compared to the vast number
24 of lakes and reservoirs in the region.

25 As a Spokane resident, I am incredibly

1 grateful for the flowing sections of the Spokane
2 River that provide a variety of employment
3 opportunities for myself, included, but not limited
4 to teaching whitewater rafting to Eastern Washington
5 University students, guiding whitewater and scenic
6 floats for ROW Adventures, and guiding for the City
7 of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department.

8 A free-flowing lower Snake River would
9 provide residents with all the previously mentioned
10 employment opportunities and more. A free-flowing
11 lower Snake River would provide an abundance of
12 economic opportunities for the region. A free-
13 flowing lower Snake River would eliminate the need
14 for the flood control levies currently distancing
15 downtown Lewiston and Clarkston from the riverfront.

16 There are many examples nationally of
17 revitalized waterfronts improving economic
18 prosperity in a region. A free-flowing lower Snake
19 River would mean a healthy riparian zone or
20 riverbank. Zones like these are incredibly
21 important to wildlife, including game animals like
22 water fowl and large mammals. A healthy lower Snake
23 River would provide significant recreational hunting
24 opportunities for such animals, although fishing
25 methods on a free flowing lower Snake River will

1 need to change compared to current methods used on
2 the reservoirs. Recreational fishing is projected
3 by many to increase post-dam removal.

4 Many of the recreational activities
5 currently pursued along the lower Snake River would
6 continue. Examples of these activities include
7 swimming, boating, and camping.

8 Today, the lower Snake River is a chain of
9 reservoirs with sterile riverbanks, declining fish
10 populations, limited recreational opportunities, and
11 minimal esthetic appeal. It is a dying river
12 separated from its people with a bleak future. A
13 free-flowing --

14 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 second remaining.

15 **JOSHUA CROWE:** -- lower Snake River will
16 be a dessert canyon jewel, banks teaming with
17 wildlife, healthy fish populations, world-class
18 recreations opportunities, a beauty that would bring
19 life to both residents and tourists alike.

20 As a lover of nature and the outdoors, I
21 have spent my life dedicated to working in the
22 outdoors. It pangs me to see such a beautiful
23 creature as the Snake River trapped being such
24 unnecessary impediments.

25 As a recreation professional, I implore

1 you to look closely at the economic benefits that a
2 free-flowing 200-mile section of river would bring
3 to the region. On a purely economic basis, a free-
4 flowing Snake River would greatly benefit the
5 region. But the benefits of a free-flowing lower
6 Snake River --

7 **MS. HABIBI:** Your time has lapsed.

8 **JOSHUA CROWE:** -- would extend far beyond
9 purely the economic.

10 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we're
11 ready for our next caller, please.

12 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
13 line of Robert Phipps. Robert Phipps, your line is
14 open for comment now; please go ahead.

15 **ROBERT PHIPPS:** Good afternoon. Thank you
16 for the opportunity to speak. I'm not quite as
17 eloquent as the other speakers. I have not put as
18 much effort into researching issues as you folks
19 have been talking about.

20 But just from a ordinary citizen's
21 standpoint, I cannot imagine breaching a dam. That
22 dam provides flood control. It provides irrigation
23 water. It generates electricity. There has to be
24 another solution besides breaching the dams. It
25 just seems to be a very illogical step to tear down

1 an engineering marvel.

2 And thank you for the opportunity to
3 comment. I'll yield my time to the next caller.

4 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
5 go to the next caller, please.

6 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
7 line of Barbara Thompson. Barbara Thompson, your
8 line is now open for comment; please go ahead.

9 **BARBARA THOMPSON:** Thank you. My name is
10 Barbara Thompson, and I appreciate the opportunity
11 to share with you my thoughts on breaching the dams.
12 I'm just an ordinary citizen and I'm not as well
13 versed as some of our other speakers have been.

14 I would like to see our dams here in the
15 Pacific Northwest on the Columbia River stay in
16 place. They're vital to our economy. We need them
17 to reach our clean energy goals. Without these
18 dams, the cost of electricity would skyrocket, we'd
19 have rolling blackouts, and it would make the
20 production of goods and services that much more
21 expensive.

22 I know that salmon habitat is critical,
23 that since 2001, there has been \$2 billion invested
24 in improving fish passages. But there's also
25 several predators that prey upon the salmon; seals

1 being number one. I'd like to see those numbers
2 kind of reduced with the seals killing the fish.
3 And maybe also look at some of the fishing practices
4 on the Snake River -- well, Columbia River -- excuse
5 me -- where they have gill nets all across the river
6 and you can't even run a boat across the river
7 without running into a gill net. Possibly build
8 more fish ladders.

9 But river traffic with barges and moving
10 goods and services helps keep a lot more trucks and
11 stuff off the freeways.

12 The dams are essential to our agriculture,
13 to flood control. And it just seems ridiculous to
14 take away an engineering marvel like the gentleman
15 ahead of me had said and spend billions of dollars
16 to remove something that is vital to agriculture, to
17 our economic way of life and to our energy.

18 Thank you for your time and for providing
19 us a venue to share how we feel. I yield my time.

20 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we move on
21 to the next caller, I'll take a moment to welcome
22 anyone who has joined us.

23 I'm your facilitator, Maryam Habibi. This
24 is a public meeting for providing comments on the
25 CRSO draft EIS. If you would like to provide a

1 comment, please press one then zero to add your name
2 to the queue.

3 Agency officials remain on the line to
4 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
5 questions or comments during this meeting or
6 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
7 welcome and will consider your comments in
8 developing the final EIS, which will be released
9 this summer.

10 We encourage you to remain on the line
11 after you provide your comments.

12 And now we're ready to move to the next
13 caller.

14 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
15 line of Don Morrison. Don Morrison, your line is
16 open for comment now; please go ahead.

17 **DON MORRISON:** Thank you. My name's Don
18 Morrison, and I am a supporter of the removal or
19 bypass of the four lower Snake River dams. I've a
20 lifetime resident, 66 years in the state of
21 Washington, and watched salmon populations
22 disappear. I'm also a board member with Spokane
23 Falls Trout Unlimited Chapter Number 76, which was
24 formed to fight these dams back then.

25 I've seen the river is heating up, it is

1 heating up. The reservoirs are full of predators.
2 The water's too hot for the fish. The outstanding
3 spawning ground in Idaho, the fish can't get there.
4 These dams have done nothing but bleed money. I
5 recently read where they lost \$49 million, because
6 most of the power generated by those four dams is
7 given away.

8 As far as the irrigation goes, I believe
9 there's 14 places that depend on it. We do have an
10 invention called pipe that can be ran to the river
11 and pots.

12 The orca, the population is dying because
13 they don't have the food source. The numbers of
14 fish coming through the Snake River now is
15 disgusting; it's sad, it's pathetic. And this can
16 be erased.

17 As far as the argument of flood control,
18 the Snake River dams are run of the river. They do
19 nothing for flood control. The barge traffic that
20 used to go up them is down by 70 percent, which is
21 subsidized by the federal government for \$27,000 a
22 barge on each trip. And every time the lock opens,
23 you lose about \$700 worth of electricity. You can
24 do the math.

25 Anyway, I am in full support of those dams

1 being bypassed. The job opportunities are huge in
2 replanning and restoring the land, bringing --
3 putting through infrastructure that would be needed.
4 And the recreational opportunities benefit
5 Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, is something that is
6 probably in the billions of dollars, far more than
7 what these dams are worth keeping.

8 Thank you for allowing me to speak, and I
9 yield my time.

10 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
11 move to the next caller, please.

12 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment
13 comes from the line of Julia Good Stefani. Julia
14 Good Stefani, your line is open for comment now;
15 please go ahead.

16 **JULIA GOOD STEFANI:** Hi. Good afternoon.
17 And thank you to everybody for taking time out of
18 your daily life to join this call. My name is Julia
19 Good Stefani. I'm an attorney with the Natural
20 Resources Defense Council.

21 My first request on this call is for an
22 extension of the public comment period. Given the
23 COVID-19 situation, I don't believe the public has a
24 meaningful opportunity here with just 45 days to
25 comment on a nearly 8,000-page document. And we'd

1 ask the agencies, as we've done in writing, to
2 consider an extension so that more people can join.

3 My second, from our standpoint, the
4 preferred alternative is inadequate. It continues
5 in large part the current status quo. And I
6 appreciate that the river needs to be managed to
7 meet multiple objectives. And I also appreciate the
8 benefit of hydropower in this time and all time.
9 But at the same time, the EIS was court ordered
10 because the system has failed for decades to meet
11 its obligations under the Endangered Species Act.
12 And that obligation is simply to ensure that the
13 system will not jeopardize the continued existence
14 of multiple salmon runs.

15 This EIS, in my opinion, in its current
16 form continues to fail as the other ones have, to
17 meet that legal requirement. In light of that,
18 while balancing needs is important and objective,
19 you can't do that and continue to violate the law.

20 So we have asked -- We will be submitting
21 formal comments and asking the agency to reconsider
22 the two alternatives that were analyzed that move us
23 into the recovery realm for salmon in meeting ESA
24 obligations are the maximum spill and the lower
25 Snake River dam removal options, which we support.

1 I believe it's a false dichotomy to say
2 that you cannot have dams -- that you have to choose
3 between dams and clean energy. We, of course,
4 support meeting our climate change goals and
5 transitioning to carbon-free resources. We
6 appreciate the importance of the Snake River dams
7 and any transition away from using those resources
8 would have to be done in a way that replaces them
9 with carbon neutral resources.

10 A very large study was conducted by Energy
11 Strategies --

12 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
13 remaining.

14 **JULIA GOOD STEFANI:** I appreciate it. --
15 a couple of years ago and found that the dams could
16 be removed and replaced with clean alternatives
17 without compromising reliability. In fact, the
18 system would be more reliable. We need a
19 comprehensive solution that takes care of
20 communities, that can take care of businesses, that
21 meets Native people's needs, and the needs of
22 wildlife, including the Southern Resident orcas that
23 depend on these salmon runs for survival.

24 Thank you for your time.

25 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can

1 move to the next caller, please.

2 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
3 line of Laura Ackerman. Laura Ackerman, your line
4 is now open for comment; please go ahead.

5 **LAURA ACKERMAN:** Good afternoon. My name
6 is Laura Ackerman, and I have been involved in this
7 issue as a volunteer since the early 1990s. In
8 February of 2000, I brought my nine-day old daughter
9 to a hearing in Spokane to testify on behalf of
10 salmon. When she was 16, in November of 2016, we
11 went to an open house conducted by federal agencies
12 in Spokane, on this issue. Now she is 20, and again
13 I am testifying.

14 Nothing has changed in almost 30 years.
15 The federal government agencies have wasted time,
16 money, and energy on this serious situation in
17 trying to prevent the continued historical decline
18 of salmon, steelhead, and other wildlife for all
19 these years. And this DEIS is no exception.

20 Citizens of all different opinions have
21 had their time and energy wasted as well, and we
22 need regional Northwest cooperation with all
23 stakeholders: farmers, fishers, scientists, tribal
24 nations, and so on. We need it to be supported by
25 elected officials at the local, state, and federal

1 levels, and that is what is going to make a
2 difference, because, clearly, the federal agencies
3 have failed. And I'm really sad to say that. But
4 they should have taken their leadership seriously
5 instead of promoting the broken wheel of the status
6 quo.

7 So we all need to work together to
8 facilitate a comprehensive stakeholder process. And
9 unfortunately, that has not happened because we have
10 seen the judicial reduction -- rejection of five
11 federal plans. And the agencies have only attempted
12 to maintain their position, because that was the
13 thing that was the easiest to do.

14 So now we all need to roll up our sleeves
15 and listen to one another and get this done, because
16 I don't want to be testifying on this issue, the
17 same thing, in ten years. And I would ask that we
18 expand the comment period to 120 days, because every
19 American has had their lives upturned by the
20 coronavirus. People are distracted and worried, and
21 we need more time.

22 I will be sending in technical comments.
23 But for now, I'm in favor of MO-3, the dam removal
24 alternative, because none of the supposed balances
25 that I have heard about on this call and that I've

1 heard about for almost 30 years have made a
2 difference.

3 Thank you, and I am done speaking.

4 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we move on
5 to the next caller, I'd like to take a moment to
6 welcome those who have joined us since we began
7 taking comments.

8 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
9 This is a public meeting for providing comments on
10 the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like to provide a
11 comment, please press one then zero to add your name
12 to the queue.

13 Agency officials remain on the line to
14 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
15 questions or comments during this meeting or
16 providing additional presentation, the agencies
17 welcome and will consider your comments in
18 developing the final EIS, which will be released
19 this summer.

20 If you provide a comment, we encourage you
21 to remain on the line to hear from others. We
22 currently have 21 callers in the queue.

23 Operator, you may move to the next caller.

24 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment
25 comes from the line of Jacob Schmidt. Jacob

1 Schmidt, your line is now open for comment; please
2 go ahead.

3 **JACOB SCHMIDT:** Thank you for the
4 opportunity to speak. My name's Jacob Schmidt. I'm
5 calling from Spokane, Washington. Wanted to say
6 that over the past few years, I've heard an
7 increasing concern about climate change and our
8 ability to meet renewable energy goals from people
9 and groups that have been silent on these issues in
10 the past.

11 While I welcome the newfound interest in
12 combating the effects of a warming planet on our
13 region, I would like to call attention to an issue
14 with the hierarchy of the values of many of these
15 groups.

16 Climate change is a real threat to our
17 region, but we must understand why that is. Warming
18 temperatures mean warmer rivers and an increasingly
19 acidified ocean.

20 The series of dams on the lower Snake and
21 lower Columbia rivers nullify the cooling properties
22 of a free-flowing river, creating a homogenous body
23 of slow, hot water. I know this from tracking the
24 temperatures of the forebay of each dam each summer
25 and have cross referenced this with the fish count

1 at those same dams. There's a clear correlation
2 between hot water and dead fish that should be
3 obvious to anyone who can take the time to look.

4 While the power produced from hydro dams
5 is cleaner than coal or gas-fired plants, the dams
6 themselves are accelerating the negative effects of
7 climate change on endangered salmon and the hundreds
8 of species that rely on them for food, including the
9 Southern Resident orcas and us, the humans that
10 catch them and eat them as well.

11 Combating climate change is not simply
12 about shutting down coal plants and turning down the
13 global temperature. It is about preserving
14 ecosystems, food systems, and biodiversity. It is
15 the salmon-dependent communities of fishing towns,
16 particularly those on Native American reservations
17 that will suffer first and most if we do not put our
18 values in the right order and take the necessary
19 actions to restore the lower Snake River to its
20 free-flowing state to allow for coldwater refuges
21 for endangered salmon.

22 I'll yield the rest of my time.

23 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you can
24 move to the next caller.

25 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment

1 comes from the line of Jim Byrne. Jim Byrne, your
2 line is now open for comment; please go ahead.

3 **JIM BYRNE:** Hi. I am Jim Byrne. I'm the
4 Vice President of the Clark County Chapter of Trout
5 Unlimited. I thank you for the opportunity to speak
6 tonight. Chapter favors MO-3, the breach
7 alternative.

8 This draft Environmental Impact Statement
9 provides more of the same. It supports the status
10 quo and fails to adequately address fish and whale
11 needs. The five previous biological opinions were
12 refuted by the federal courts for not addressing dam
13 removals and fish survival.

14 I'd like to talk about cost to this. Two
15 dueling economic studies exist. Their outcomes
16 depends upon their funding source; one says take the
17 dams out, we can make up the power, the other one
18 says, oh, it'll be very difficult to make up the
19 power.

20 In this DEIS, not all costs are included.
21 For example, the cost to dredge Snake River annually
22 is \$12.8 million a year, and that's not referenced.
23 In the breaching option, increases in appliance
24 efficiencies, wind, and solar power are downplayed.

25 Fisheries are supposed to have equal

1 weight with energy production and transmission. The
2 DEIS appears to be more of about electric power than
3 endangered species survival.

4 We would also like to see an extension to
5 the comment period. And I yield my time.

6 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you may
7 move to the next caller.

8 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
9 line of Scott Simms. Scott Simms, your line is now
10 open for comment; please go ahead.

11 **SCOTT SIMMS:** Thank you. Good afternoon.
12 My name is Scott Simms. I'm the Executive Director
13 of the Public Power Council, or PPC. I was born,
14 raised, and educated in Washington state, and come
15 to you today from Portland, Oregon.

16 Formed in 1966, PPC is the largest
17 regional association of nonprofit, consumer-owned
18 utilities in communities large and small about the
19 Pacific states of Washington, Oregon, Montana,
20 Idaho, and a portion of Nevada, whose electric needs
21 are served in whole or in part by the Bonneville
22 Power Administration.

23 As suppliers to predominantly clean,
24 renewable hydropower to millions of Northwest
25 citizens, our member utilities work to balance

1 environmental stewardship and economic initiatives
2 so we can continue safely and reliably delivering
3 24/7 what is fast becoming a basic human service in
4 our modern economy, and that is reliable and
5 affordable electricity.

6 Today, I'd like to focus on the matter of
7 resource adequacy. In the energy industry to be
8 resource adequate, it is to be ensured that citizens
9 and businesses have acquired sufficient resources to
10 satisfy forecasted future consumption in a reliable
11 manner.

12 The resource adequacy was analyzed as part
13 of the CRSO DEIS. In fact, the analytical framework
14 for the power generation and transmission analysis
15 is strong. It looks at energy, capacity,
16 flexibility, and EHG emissions, using robust and
17 well-vetted regional tools.

18 But since the time the DEIS was initiated,
19 the regional power supply outlook has been evolving
20 rapidly, due to accelerated retirements of thousands
21 of megawatts of coal capacity and with the addition
22 of more intermittent renewals on the grid.

23 The Northwest Power Pool and regional
24 utilities have identified a growing resource
25 adequacy need in coming years to maintain

1 reliability and prevent blackouts. At the same
2 time, hydro played an ever increasing critical role
3 in integrating intermittent renewable resources.

4 DEIS, particularly MO-3 and MO-4, show the
5 replacement cost of the lower Snake River dam
6 capacity with zero emissions carbon resources would
7 cost nearly \$1 billion every year.

8 So given this reality of thermal
9 retirements, the cost of full replacement of lost
10 hydro capability from alternative operations,
11 including the ability to integrate other renewables
12 into the grid, we believe such issues should be
13 updated with more recent developments in the co-lead
14 agency CRSO documentation and that the matter should
15 be taking center stage in the final EIS.

16 Thank you for the opportunity to comment
17 today.

18 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we move on
19 to the next caller, I'll take a moment to welcome
20 anyone who has joined us.

21 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
22 This is a public meeting for providing comments on
23 the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like to provide a
24 comment, please press one then zero to add your name
25 to the queue.

1 Agency officials remain on the line to
2 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
3 questions or comments during this meeting or
4 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
5 welcome and will consider your comments in
6 developing the final EIS, which will be released
7 this summer.

8 If you provide a comment, we encourage you
9 to remain on the line to hear from others.

10 Currently, there are 20 callers in the
11 queue.

12 Operator, you can move to the next caller,
13 please.

14 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
15 line of Jim Waddell. Jim Waddell, your line is now
16 open for comment; please go ahead.

17 **JIM WADDELL:** Thank you. Yes. My name is
18 Jim Waddell. I'm a civil engineer and I also was a
19 member of the Army Corps of Engineers for 35 years.
20 And notably, I was the deputy district engineer in
21 Walla Walla, Washington for several years while we
22 studied the lower Snake River dams back in the late
23 1990s.

24 And so I'm pretty well familiar with those
25 dams and what it takes to operate. But I've also

1 spent a good deal of my retirement studying these
2 dams because of my deep concerns about the
3 misinformation that's been put out in terms of
4 power, irrigation, flood control, and a whole host
5 of issues.

6 I'm also recently elected, about a year
7 ago, as a public utility commissioner here in the
8 state. But I'm not representing that as a
9 commissioner or anything about the Corps of
10 Engineers. I'm here as a ratepayer and a citizen
11 who's deeply concerned about what we're about to buy
12 ourselves into with this draft EIS.

13 Several things that I -- There's 1,000
14 things I could point out in the 8,000 pages and the
15 other supporting documents you have to read to go
16 through this. But I will try to hit a few key
17 points that hit some of the highlights.

18 Number one, on the energy side, the draft
19 EIS makes some outrageous claims in terms of
20 benefits from the Snake River dams. For instance,
21 it says that there's more than 2,000 megawatts of
22 sustained peaking capability during the summer and
23 winter and there's a holding capacity. Two thousand
24 megawatts of peaking power is simply impossible on
25 these winter river dams. But that's a big huge part

1 of the replacement cost that the draft EIS
2 identifies as part of that billion dollars. What,
3 in fact, the DEIS also mentions is over 2,000
4 megawatts of surplus power. This power is now being
5 sold mostly at a loss and the Snake River dams
6 produce about 900 megawatts of that.

7 So if we want to save BPA and hydro, we
8 really need to get rid of these high-cost dams and
9 move that money to the other projects, the other
10 Columbia River dams that are deeply under funded.
11 And as a guy in the Corps of Engineers who used to
12 look for this money, that's what we're all about.

13 I should also point out that ratepayers
14 have financed over a billion dollars in mitigation
15 efforts on the Snake River dams with no improvement
16 in SARs.

17 I think the bad news for Eastern
18 Washington is if we don't breach those dams, you're
19 going to lose -- well, you already lost them. But
20 what you lose is the opportunity for three to four
21 thousand agriculture and recreation --

22 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
23 remaining.

24 **JIM WADDELL:** -- spots that could be put
25 back into the 140-mile stretch once the dams are

1 breached. That was at one time a very prosperous
2 farming area and it could be returned to that.

3 I also point out that the spill programs,
4 the recent ones are not effective and, in fact,
5 killing more salmon.

6 So basically, the situation we're in right
7 now is that we need to basically breach these -- two
8 of these dams immediately this year in order to save
9 money for ratepayers and also give salmon a chance.

10 We can use the rest of this EIS --

11 **MS. HABIBI:** Your time has lapsed.

12 **JIM WADDELL:** -- and other options across
13 the basin. Thank you.

14 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, please
15 move to the next caller.

16 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment
17 comes from the line of Bob Sallinger. Bob
18 Sallinger, your line is now open for comment; please
19 go ahead.

20 **BOB SALLINGER:** Good evening. My name's
21 Bob Sallinger. I'm the Conservation Director for
22 the Audubon Society of Portland. Tonight I am
23 testifying on behalf of Portland Audubon and our
24 17,000 members.

25 I would simply begin by thanking you for

1 the opportunity to testify before you, but I don't
2 feel thankful for this opportunity tonight. The
3 decision to move forward with these phone hearings
4 in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis just two days
5 after Oregon issued its stay-at-home orders is a
6 disgrace.

7 My organization, like so many others, is
8 working nonstop to take care of our staff, support
9 our volunteers and communities, maintain critical
10 operations and comply with best practices in light
11 of an unprecedented crisis. Even prior to the
12 COVID-19 outbreak, you chose the process with a
13 public comment period of only 45 days, a length of
14 time that you were fully aware was inadequate to
15 allow for meaningful public review of a document
16 that's over 8,000 pages.

17 This is a highly complex plan. Your
18 decision to proceed with hearings and refusal to
19 extend deadlines cuts the public out of this process
20 and benefits big corporate stakeholders that have
21 the capacity to respond under these circumstances.
22 Again, it's simply a disgrace and it shows a
23 stunning indifference to public participation
24 process.

25 Unfortunately, it does not come as a

1 surprise. For nearly 25 years, the U.S. Army Corps
2 and other federal agencies have openly and
3 flagrantly thumbed their noses at the law and the
4 public. Despite multiple losses in federal courts,
5 the federal agencies responsible for recovering
6 salmon on the Columbia/Snake River system have
7 failed time and time again to bring forward a plan
8 to recover (indiscernible) salmon, salmon and
9 steelhead.

10 You have failed time and time again to
11 adequately address the primary causes of decline,
12 including meaningful consideration of breaching of
13 the obsolete Snake River dams. You have ignored the
14 best available science. And you have scapegoated
15 native predator species such as cormorants and sea
16 lions, despite overwhelming public opposition as a
17 way to divert attention from your chronic failures.
18 The slaughter of cormorants on East Sand Island will
19 range among the great wildlife travesties of the
20 last century.

21 The strategy appears to be to bring
22 forward plans that you know are inadequate, get
23 sued, lose in court, and then wash, rinse, and
24 repeat. And sadly, this has worked for you. You
25 have delayed recoveries for nearly a quarter of a

1 century. Unfortunately, what it has not worked for
2 is the salmon and the communities that depend on
3 them, and the salmon move closer and closer to
4 extinction.

5 And your current plan --

6 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
7 remaining.

8 **BOB SALLINGER:** -- perpetuates this trend.
9 We have lost faith in you and your process. We look
10 to Northwest policymakers to step in and craft real
11 solutions that you have so carefully avoided. We
12 look to the federal courts to truly hold individuals
13 and agencies accountable for chronic and systemic
14 flouting of the law. We hope you prove us wrong,
15 but it doesn't look likely.

16 What we are asking for is the following:
17 it's time to breach the obsolete Snake River dams;
18 it's time to truly address flows on the Columbia
19 River to ensure salmon can make it safely to the
20 ocean; it is time to stop scapegoating native
21 predators that are simply doing what comes
22 naturally; and it is time to stop wasting --

23 **MS. HABIBI:** Your time has lapsed.

24 **BOB SALLINGER:** -- taxpayer dollars and
25 public resources. Thank you.

1 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
2 go to the next caller, please.

3 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next call comes
4 from the line of Manly Norris. Manly Norris, your
5 line is now open for comment; please go ahead.

6 **MANLY NORRIS:** Hello. Thank you there.
7 My name's Manly Norris, and I work here in the tech
8 industry in the beautiful city of Portland, Oregon.
9 I'm a birder. I'm an avid outdoorsman and I'm a fly
10 fisherman, in that order.

11 So I think as many people have pointed out
12 today, these proposals do promote the status quo,
13 which has been clearly rejected five times in the
14 past by a federal court over the last 25 years. So
15 it is an enormous waste of public resources.

16 Number two. As previous commenters have
17 highlighted, I believe that the hydropower
18 capabilities provided by these dams are greatly
19 overstated as are the risks of blackouts and energy
20 rate increases. In fact, I really call them
21 outright sensationalized.

22 I believe that the plan should instead
23 focus on the removal of the obsolete Snake River
24 dams. We need to increase flows over the Columbia
25 River dams. And we need to improve habitat

1 restoration.

2 And in case anybody needs a reminder,
3 these salmon, orca have never been in greater danger
4 of extinction than they are today as the direct
5 result of human activities. I think that's the key
6 factor we need to focus on here, which leads to the
7 point of native predators need to be removed from
8 this plan.

9 I would also request that they extend the
10 comment period in light of the coronavirus.

11 Thanks again. That completes my comments.
12 Yield my time.

13 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
14 move to the next caller, please.

15 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next call comes
16 from the line of Laura Raspun (phonetic). Laura
17 Raspun, your line is now open for comment; please go
18 ahead.

19 **LAURA RASPUN:** Yes. Hello. I'm a
20 citizen. I've heard both sides of the stories
21 living in the tri-cities. This past year we've
22 heard a lot kind of one-sided publicity, rather a
23 large publicity campaign in the tri-cities to keep
24 the dams. But an earlier presentation by Jim
25 Waddell convinced me about -- considering his

1 expertise, about a lot of the misinformation that's
2 out there.

3 And I understand there have been many
4 studies that show that the dams' energy, irrigation,
5 and transportation services can be replaced cleanly
6 and affordably and actually could result in a net
7 economic and community benefit, both locally and
8 regionally.

9 Some misinformation that is not about
10 taking out Columbia River dams, it's just the lower
11 Snake dams that are having this impact on the salmon
12 and also costly to operate and not necessarily that
13 reliable for power or necessary for power where it
14 couldn't be replaced if we put our minds to it.

15 A dam removal transition plan must include
16 economic development and other investments to
17 responsibly assist affected communities as needed.
18 And like again, we can find a way to protect all
19 Northwest communities and preserve -- provide clean
20 energy, but we cannot bring back the salmon.

21 That's all I have.

22 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we move on
23 to our next caller, I'll take a moment to welcome
24 those who may have joined us.

25 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.

1 This is a public meeting for providing comments on
2 the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like to provide a
3 comment, please press one then zero to add your name
4 to the queue.

5 Agency officials remain on the line to
6 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
7 questions or comments during this meeting or
8 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
9 welcome and will consider your comments in
10 developing the final EIS, which will be released
11 this summer.

12 We encourage you to remain on the line
13 after you provide comments.

14 There are currently 21 callers in the
15 queue.

16 Operator, we can move to the next caller,
17 please.

18 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
19 line of Sam Mace. Sam Mace, your line is now open
20 for comment; please go ahead.

21 **SAM MACE:** Thank you for the opportunity.
22 My name is Sam Mace, longtime resident of Eastern
23 Washington and Inland Northwest Director for Save
24 Our Wild Salmon Coalition, which is collective of
25 conservation organizations, commercial fishing

1 associations, and sport fishing businesses and
2 groups working to restore wild salmon and steelhead
3 to Columbia River.

4 And 20 years ago, the agency put forward
5 (inaudible) much different than this. Here in
6 Spokane (indiscernible) during that time
7 (indiscernible) hundred people (indiscernible) to a
8 public hearing and more than 500 of those folks
9 urged the federal agencies to remove the dams to
10 restore salmon and steelhead. And unfortunately,
11 the agencies ignored public input and
12 (indiscernible) non-dam removal alternative.

13 And here we are again. The agencies have
14 failed to restore salmon and steelhead. Our runs
15 have declined further. And fishing-dependent
16 communities have lost millions of dollars and many,
17 many jobs in that time. The orcas are struggling as
18 well from lack of salmon.

19 And the public has offered, yet again, a
20 DEIS which is deeply flawed in fallacies and
21 assumptions and no hope of restoring our fish.

22 And there is another path here we can
23 take. And I think we need to listen to the
24 Republican Congressman from Idaho, Congressman Mike
25 Simpson, and as the reasons for having the hard

1 conversations and hard questions, the reality is,
2 there's an opportunity to come together and figure
3 out a path forward here. And we're in a better
4 place to do that than we were 20 years ago.

5 In the past two decades, barging on the
6 lower Snake River, the main reason those dams were
7 built, has been reduced more than 50 percent.
8 Farmers like ship to rail and other means. And new
9 clean renewable energy resources have come online.
10 We have many more alternatives to these four
11 outdated, aging lower Snake River dams.

12 And fishermen are tired of having their
13 livelihood pitted against farmers. It's a total
14 false choice. And it's time to come together to
15 support both of our food producers and small
16 business owners, both our farmers and fishermen.

17 We can build modern transportation
18 alternatives. We can modernize our energy system.
19 We can restore a recreation and fishing economy that
20 can benefit rural communities up and down the river
21 from the mouth of the Columbia River clear up into
22 Central Idaho, towns like Riggins and Orofino.

23 There are alternatives for our
24 transportation and energy. As Congressman Simpson
25 said recently in response --

1 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
2 remaining.

3 **SAM MACE:** But as Congressman Simpson said
4 recently in response to this DEIS, the fish need a
5 river. They don't have another alternative.

6 So let's come together to restore our
7 rivers so that we can keep having salmon and
8 steelhead for our orcas, for our tribes, for our
9 next generation, restore our recreation economy and
10 build the infrastructure that will benefit our
11 farmers, energy users into the future; Eastern
12 Washington and the Northwest would be much better
13 off.

14 Thank you for the time.

15 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you can
16 move to the next caller, please.

17 **OPERATOR:** Next comment comes from the
18 line of Keith Kutchins. Keith Kutchins, your line
19 is now open for comment; please go ahead.

20 **KEITH KUTCHINS:** Yeah. My name's Keith
21 Kutchins. I'm a retired biologist from Spokane,
22 Washington. I think what I'd like to cover today is
23 that this...

24 Anyway, first of all, I support that
25 preferred alternative should require bypassing the

1 four lower Snake dams, MO-3, and also maximizing
2 spill as is in the preferred alternative. But also,
3 it needs to require operations that provide the
4 numeric goals and objectives required by Tribal
5 Rights, USD Oregon, and the Northwest Power Act.
6 It's not just on ESA.

7 The data that's in this EIS is, of course,
8 the judge's order under the continuing litany of
9 failed buyouts since 1991. But it can't be limited
10 to just attempting to prevent jeopardy to the
11 threatened and endangered species, unless it helps
12 land conditions mentioned in this other law.

13 But what's really problematic to me is the
14 way the objectives are written. The objectives must
15 secure as a priority to other multiple uses the fish
16 protections; in other words, to meet those fish
17 protections and then achieve the other multiple
18 uses.

19 When you look at the objective of how
20 water supply is written, meet existing and assure
21 future water supply. Why can't the objective for
22 the fish be written in a similar way? They're
23 creating floors for the fish that we cannot go
24 below, rather than establishing ceilings in these
25 alternatives that we can't go above. The fish need

1 -- they need a floor.

2 So the way this EIS develops alternative
3 is to meet fish needs only after the primary manmade
4 uses of the river, such as water supply and
5 electricity production have been met. But instead,
6 this EIS should develop the preferred alternative
7 that first meets the needs of the fish, then meets
8 the other multiple objectives of built capacity of
9 manmade uses. I think what we'd find is, perhaps,
10 that they are one and the same, as has been
11 mentioned by several of the other testifiers today.
12 Alternatives that require the actions to meet the
13 objectives in managing the manmade uses of the
14 rivers should be in accordance to what the fish
15 need.

16 So this EIS is potentially flawed from the
17 get-go --

18 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 second remaining.

19 **KEITH KUTCHINS:** -- in that the objectives
20 are -- thank you -- in the way the objectives are
21 developed.

22 Finally, the fish objective, it must be --
23 okay.

24 Under the fish objective, it's kind of a
25 joke being that there's four of them, there's

1 (inaudible). And then the word improve is --
2 improve resident fish, improve adult anadromous
3 fish, improve juvenile anadromous fish, improve
4 lamprey. It's very negative --

5 **MS. HABIBI:** Your time has lapsed.

6 **KEITH KUTCHINS:** -- very vague and not
7 well established. Thank you. I'll continue
8 tomorrow.

9 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
10 move to the next caller, please.

11 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
12 line of Kurt Miller. Kurt Miller, your line is now
13 open for comment; please go ahead.

14 **KURT MILLER:** Hi. Thank you so much. My
15 name is Kurt Miller. I'm the Executive Director for
16 Northwest RiverPartners. We represent the majority
17 of the region's not-for-profit community on
18 utilities across the Northwestern states as well as
19 other groups that support low carbon transportation
20 and clean energy and agricultural jobs. It's a
21 pleasure to be here with you tonight.

22 And I want to acknowledge the great
23 comments that have come in. This is, by far, the
24 most active session that we've had. I've called
25 into the previous three.

1 The one thing I do want to do, I have some
2 prepared comments. I'm actually going to swap those
3 out just to respond to some of the things that I've
4 heard tonight.

5 First of all, I think that there is --
6 there's this need, I think, for people to, if they
7 would like to see a dam breaching alternative, to
8 try to diminish the importance of the lower Snake
9 River dams. Now, what I would tell you, as one of
10 the industry leaders had said to me, is that it's
11 okay to acknowledge that the lower Snake River dams
12 are really important to the region and that salmon
13 are also in trouble and need our help. And those
14 two things don't have to be mutually exclusive, and
15 they're not.

16 There is overwhelming evidence shown in
17 the EIS and very clearly documented, but also
18 supported by many of the region's energy
19 forecasters, including Energy Strategies, which is
20 the group that wrote the Northwest Energy Coalition
21 Study, which had earlier, based on 2016 assumptions,
22 said that the lower Snake River dams could be easily
23 and affordably breached.

24 They have now come forward and said that
25 they're actually forecasting an energy shortage for

1 the Pacific Northwest. The fact is that so many
2 coal-fired generating units have retired, it's
3 actually put us in a much different situation than
4 we were in 2016, when they developed their
5 assumptions. Even though the actual forecast wasn't
6 released from them until 2018, they used those older
7 assumptions.

8 So the point is that the region can't
9 afford a billion dollars of extra cost per year in
10 electricity costs. They can't work -- our customers
11 can't afford a 25 percent monthly electric bill
12 increase. And those things just aren't okay and not
13 -- and I guess what I'm trying to say is that just
14 because you don't want the dams to be there doesn't
15 take away the fact that those are the facts.

16 And so I really would encourage people on
17 this call to look for ways that we can help salmon
18 that don't require the destruction of really
19 critical infrastructure, because the dams --

20 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
21 remaining.

22 **KURT MILLER:** -- are real and they're
23 important for people who need affordable
24 electricity. They're real in their ability to help
25 us reduce the region's carbon footprint. They're

1 real in their ability to help provide agricultural
2 jobs. Those things are all real and we have the
3 data to back that all up.

4 So I just encourage us to think bigger and
5 think of other ways that we could help salmon
6 without trying to diminish the importance of the
7 dams.

8 And with that, I yield the rest of my
9 time. Thank you.

10 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we move to
11 the next caller, I'd like to take a moment to
12 welcome those who may have joined us.

13 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
14 And this is a public meeting for providing comments
15 on the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like to provide
16 a comment, please press one then zero to add your
17 name to the queue.

18 Currently there are 19 callers in queue.

19 Agency officials remain on the line to
20 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
21 questions or comments during this meeting or
22 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
23 welcome and will consider your comments in
24 developing the final EIS, which will be released
25 this summer.

1 We encourage you to remain on the line if
2 you've provided a comment, to hear from others.

3 Operator, we're ready to move to the next
4 caller, please.

5 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
6 line of Rob Bignall. Rob Bignall, your line is now
7 open for comment; please go ahead.

8 **ROB BIGNALL:** Yeah. Rob Bignall. Thank
9 you for this opportunity. I'm the owner of It's All
10 Good Guide Service, representing the Northwest
11 Guides and Anglers Association.

12 We do not support the preferred
13 alternative outlined in the DEIS for salmon and
14 steel on the Snake River. We are accruing record
15 losses and low returns affecting my business and
16 many others in the sport fishing industry.

17 I would like to meet with the stakeholders
18 in representing the guiding industry to help find a
19 more common ground. Our fish are out of time. Our
20 marine mammals are out of time. We are out of time.

21 Thank you, and I yield the rest of my
22 time.

23 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
24 move to the next caller, please.

25 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the

1 line of Mike Peterson. Mike Peterson, your line is
2 now open for comment; please go ahead.

3 **MIKE PETERSON:** Hi, and thank you for the
4 opportunity to comment. I'm Mike Peterson. I'm the
5 director of the Lands Council based in Spokane.
6 We've been around for 35 years.

7 Improving salmon runs has been studied.
8 Hundreds of millions have been spent on recovery,
9 and they're still declining. And in my mind, the
10 DEIS offers really nothing new.

11 But there has been a new change in the air
12 that I want to speak about more, and it's been
13 people deciding to try and actually work out
14 solutions to some of the impacts of removing the
15 dams.

16 As far as transportation, we clearly need
17 to improve our rail system. We need to make it
18 easier for all agriculture producers, especially the
19 wheat producers, to get their goods to market, down
20 to the docks in Pasco or further down the river.

21 As far as energy, our energy grid is
22 changing. BPA's facing solvency challenges. And
23 the grids are interconnecting up and down the cost
24 in a way we've not seen before. That's not
25 reflected, unfortunately, in the DEIS, just kind of

1 skips over that.

2 The Lands Council's been part of some
3 interesting collaborations. Years ago, we were part
4 of the timber wars, and I'd say the water wars.

5 And, but I see some new hope for the
6 salmon wars. And I want to talk about that for the
7 rest of my time. It involves people getting
8 together and talking through their interests as
9 opposed to their positions. Up in Northeast
10 Washington, the Northeast Washington Forestry
11 Coalition has worked together, timber conservation,
12 an energy company, in what used to go down as clear
13 cuts and logging in roadless areas. Everyone
14 agrees, let's move away from that. Let's do
15 restoration.

16 Mills were closing back in the '80s and
17 '90s. They're no longer closing. The log yards are
18 full. The Colville National Forest had the highest
19 amount of timber of any forest in the country
20 because of this collaboration, people working
21 together.

22 On the Spokane River, where I live, a
23 diverse group of people, including dischargers,
24 agencies, conservation groups have gotten together
25 to deal with the very challenging problem of

1 polychlorinated hydrocarbon, PCBs. And they are now
2 -- Spokane's probably the innovator in the country
3 at reducing these PCBs as they're reaching out to
4 other places around the country. That happened
5 because people came together, sat down, and started
6 working through --

7 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
8 remaining.

9 **MIKE PETERSON:** What I would suggest is we
10 need some working groups; one for energy, one for
11 the transportation and agriculture issues, and the
12 salmon recovery issues. Let's start working
13 together instead of just pitting ourselves against
14 each other and let's -- we can find these solutions
15 if we remove the dams. We can do this, folks, but
16 we got to work together.

17 Thank you very much.

18 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. We can move to
19 the next line, operator.

20 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from
21 Stuart Maxin. Stuart Maxin, your line is now open
22 for comment; please go ahead.

23 **STUART MAXIN:** Hello. My name is Stuart
24 Maxin. I live in Spokane and I'm a member of the
25 Spokane Falls Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

1 The draft Environmental Impact Statement
2 falls short of the goal I seek most; the preferred
3 alternative must include dam removal. We need to
4 restore salmon to the Snake River basin. Salmon are
5 a keystone species.

6 We're all stakeholders of one sort or
7 another. We know we can do without the power
8 produced by the lower Snake River dams. It's
9 approximately four percent of the total power
10 produced in our region with a ten percent surplus.
11 Much of the surplus power is sold below the cost of
12 production.

13 What about agricultural interests?
14 Irrigation is relatively simple since very little of
15 the water is used for irrigation. Let them continue
16 to irrigate.

17 What does leave you with? Well, primarily
18 with wheat shipment. This is the reason the Snake
19 River dams were built in the first place, to make
20 Lewiston, Idaho a seaport and give farmers a more
21 economical way of transporting their commodities to
22 markets. Sending wheat to Pasco by rail where they
23 can be loaded on barges is a very doable option.

24 During my years of talking with like-
25 minded people, no one has ever said forget about the

1 farmers. We all eat and agriculture is a big part
2 of our economy. Rather, we need to come together
3 and work in support of our goals.

4 As run of the river dams, they provide no
5 flood protection. Snake River Chinook feed the
6 Southern Resident killer whales. Access for salmon
7 to 5,000 miles of high quality, high elevation
8 streams is one of the best things that will come
9 from breaching the dams.

10 Scientists agree that the biggest salmon
11 restoration project that's even possible today is
12 simply the removal of those four dams.

13 Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

14 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
15 move to the next line, please.

16 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment
17 comes from the line of Errol Povah. Errol Povah,
18 your line is now open for comment; please go ahead.

19 **ERROL POVAH:** Good afternoon. My name is
20 Errol Povah. I'm a second officer with Sea Shepherd
21 Conservation Society, an amazing organization that
22 I've been with for 24 years. So you can probably
23 guess which side of this issue I'm on. I'm calling
24 from Vancouver, B.C.

25 And all those who praise the dams remind

1 me very much of our illustrious Prime Minister and
2 Alberta Premier, Jason Kenney. The only difference
3 being, they praise oil. The similarity being, like
4 the dam praisers, they blissfully ignore wind,
5 solar, and geothermal.

6 I've been fighting for the orcas, both
7 captive and wild, for three decades, most recently
8 participating in the marchforthedams.com, a 22-day,
9 236-mile march from Portland to the Ice Harbor Dam.
10 The event was incredible. We received huge public
11 support. And like so many things globally, our
12 march was disrupted at about the two-thirds mark
13 when COVID-19 -- sorry -- at about the two-thirds
14 mark. When COVID-19 is done, we will complete the
15 march, culminating with a huge protest at Ice
16 Harbor.

17 I will not stop fighting for the orcas
18 until the four lower Snake River dams are breached.
19 And I simply cannot fathom how any decent, kind,
20 informed, enlightened, educated, moral, ethical,
21 sane, rational, logical, loving, caring person could
22 possibly do a cost benefit analysis and arrive at
23 the conclusion, yeah, we're okay with multiple
24 species of salmon, most notably Chinook, going
25 extinct, which will directly cause the demise of the

1 Southern Resident orcas. That is arrogant and
2 ignorant in the extreme.

3 I encourage everyone to visit damsense.org
4 for a lot more information. Thank you.

5 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we go to
6 our next caller, I'd like to take a moment to
7 welcome anyone who has joined us.

8 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
9 This is a public meeting for providing comments on
10 the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like to provide a
11 comment, please press one then zero to add your name
12 to the queue.

13 Agency officials remain on the line to
14 hear your comments. Though we're not responding to
15 questions or comments during this meeting or
16 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
17 welcome and will consider your comments in
18 developing the final EIS, which will be released
19 this summer.

20 We encourage you to remain on the line
21 after you've provided comments to hear from others.

22 There are currently 18 callers in the
23 queue. As a reminder, if you'd like to provide a
24 comment, you may press one then zero.

25 Operator, we're ready to move to the next

1 caller.

2 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
3 line of Les Wigen. Les Wigen, your line is now open
4 for comment; please go ahead.

5 **LES WIGEN:** This is Les Wigen. I'm a
6 former Whitman County wheat farmer and was a county
7 commissioner for 12 years in Colfax. I was born and
8 raised in Whitman County and live 17 miles from the
9 Snake River.

10 And I watched the transmission of the
11 Snake River system go from a free-flowing river to
12 one that brought irrigation, fishing,
13 transportation, and hydropower, recreation, and jobs
14 to the Port of Whitman County in the Lewiston area.

15 I consider the Snake River as our I-5
16 corridor to the world. Taking out the Snake River
17 dams would be like taking out I-5 bridges between
18 Canada and the Oregon border. Taking out the Snake
19 River dams would be like taking out Ballard Blocks
20 and salmon from Lake Washington. You want to do
21 that?

22 The decline in population of salmon and
23 steelhead started prior to the construction of the
24 four Snake River dams before Bonneville was ever
25 built. We've had record numbers of fish. And you

1 can go to the Corps of Engineers; they've got all
2 the records.

3 I want to point out that in the '50s and
4 '60s, the Idaho Fish and Game poisoned the Stanley
5 basin lakes to get rid of the red sockeye for
6 rainbow trouts. They poisoned Stanley Lake, Petit
7 Lake, Yellow Belly Lake, and Hell Roaring Lake in
8 Idaho. I talked to a guy from Idaho Fish and Game
9 today, and he admitted that they did poison those
10 lakes. So if you want an answer on that, call the
11 Idaho Fish and Game Department.

12 Okay. I'm going to just move on here. Do
13 not blame the decline of coastal fishing on our
14 fish-friendly dams. Former senator, Terry -- Henry
15 Jackson and Warren Magnuson and representative Tom
16 Foley attended the dedication of Little Goose Dam in
17 1970. They praised the accomplishment dams brought
18 in the Northwest.

19 The four lower Snake River dams produce a
20 total of 1,000 megawatts, enough to power greater
21 Seattle. We need to --

22 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
23 remaining.

24 **LES WIGEN:** Okay. Governor Cecil Andrus
25 of Idaho road a jet boat up to Lower Granite Dam in

1 '92, and he said, I will save the Salmon River. I
2 will save the salmon. They drew down the water 80
3 feet behind lower Granite, and it just destroyed the
4 road between Granite and Lewiston, and the river was
5 a like the Spokane River with 100 yards of mud bath
6 from the edge of Whitman County and Idaho.

7 Tom Foley, I talked to him in 1994. He
8 said --

9 **MS. HABIBI:** Your time has lapsed.

10 **LES WIGEN:** Tom Foley said that Snake
11 River dams will never be broke, be taken out,
12 because Congress has to appropriate the money.

13 **MS. HABIBI:** Operator, we need to move to
14 --

15 **LES WIGEN:** Okay.

16 **MS. HABIBI:** -- the next caller, please.

17 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
18 line of Grant Putnam. Grant Putnam, your line is
19 now open for comment; please go ahead.

20 **GRANT PUTNAM:** Thank you. My name is
21 Grant Putnam. I am the President of the Northwest
22 Guides and Anglers Association as well as a longtime
23 farmer, rancher, biodynamic farmer and rancher in
24 Central Oregon, and irrigator as well and user --
25 and water user.

1 We definitely do not support the current
2 recommendations of the DEIS. As I had heard earlier
3 a wonderful comment from one of our first speakers
4 about over the last decade we had seen one of our
5 largest number of years of return to salmon. And
6 those were in direct correlation to our high water
7 and huge snow pack years, multiple years in a row.
8 With those things that occurred that lined up, we
9 then had downstream smolt migration that really
10 mitigated the negative effects of those upriver
11 Snake River dams.

12 This year, our constraining stocks for
13 both spring and fall Chinook are going to come
14 directly from our returns, our potential low
15 returns, our inability to actually -- a sport
16 angler, commercial fish, is going to be as low as I
17 have ever seen with the impact of a lifetime
18 Oregonian like myself. I'm also a 25-year fishing
19 guide. The impact on these fish is obviously a
20 direct correlation to our businesses here in the
21 Pacific Northwest, as well as the opportunity for
22 the salmon to recover and survive what those
23 upriver, Snake River dams are doing.

24 Being a water user and an irrigator, I
25 know that there are ways to work through this and,

1 you know, I don't want those -- those farmers and
2 ranchers to be negatively impacted. But I also know
3 that if we don't do something, our fish, those fish,
4 are going to wink out in a not-too-distance future.
5 And the passion that I've heard --

6 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 second remaining.

7 **GRANT PUTNAM:** The passion that I've heard
8 today from both sides, I truly understand. Let's
9 work together. Let's figure out a way. It can be
10 done. We can do this so that we don't impact power
11 and that we can recover fish. It's happening all
12 around the country with other dam removal projects.

13 Thank you very much for your time, and
14 let's do this together.

15 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
16 move to the next call.

17 **OPERATOR:** The next comment comes from the
18 line of James Martin. Mr. Martin your line is open
19 for comment now; please go ahead.

20 **JAMES MARTIN:** Hi, there. I'm Jim Martin,
21 and I'm retired Chief of Fisheries of Oregon
22 Department of Fish and Wildlife. I spent 30 years
23 with ODFW, a major portion of which was involved in
24 a series and sequence of negotiations ordered by
25 various judges, beginning with Judge Marsh,

1 negotiating with action agencies, states, and tribes
2 to remedy a series of illegal and inadequate
3 biological opinions in the EISs for the hydro
4 system.

5 Forty years have passed and not much has
6 changed, except the fish and the orcas are in more
7 dire straits than ever.

8 But this whole conversation about the
9 importance of Snake River dams sounds remarkably
10 familiar in a world that's changing out from under
11 them. The action agencies waste time planning
12 actions that look busy and expensive, but tinker
13 around the politically acceptable edge of the
14 problem while we lose lead time and fail to solve
15 the salmon and orca problem.

16 I do not support the preferred alternative
17 of the draft EIS. This draft EIS is just much of
18 the same I've experienced over my entire adult life.
19 When will our political leaders insist on a plan
20 that'll actually save the salmon and honor the
21 Native American treaties?

22 This plan is basically a prescription to
23 let these fish go extinct and blame the weather.
24 And we should be ashamed of ourselves as a people if
25 we stand for that and our elected leaders stand for

1 that. But that's what the Corps and BPA will give
2 us.

3 Thank you very much.

4 **MS. HABIBI:** Before we move on to our next
5 caller, I'd like to take a moment to welcome
6 everyone who has joined us.

7 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
8 This is a public meeting for providing comments on
9 the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like to provide a
10 comment, please press one then zero to add your name
11 to the queue.

12 Agency officials remain on the line to
13 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
14 questions or comments during this meeting or
15 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
16 welcome and will consider your comments in
17 developing the final EIS, which will be released
18 this summer.

19 We currently have 15 callers in the queue.
20 As a reminder, you can press one then zero to add
21 your name to the queue to provide a comment.

22 Operator, we're ready to take the next
23 call.

24 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
25 line of Ali Berman. Your line is now open for

1 comment; please go ahead.

2 **ALI BERMAN:** Hi, there. Yeah. I live in
3 Portland, Oregon, and care deeply about native
4 salmon and I'm terrified for their future. Not only
5 do they have to fight against climate change, they
6 need to fight against our dam systems that have been
7 failing them for more than 20 years.

8 And I'm horrified of the hundreds of
9 millions of dollars of public funding that have been
10 spent on non-solutions that have allowed salmon to
11 move closer to extinction.

12 It's really time for solutions, not the
13 same failed strategies.

14 In addition, I would just like to speak
15 out against the scapegoating of other native
16 wildlife like double-crested cormorants. Both
17 people and wildlife deserve so much better.

18 And I would like to -- I agree with so
19 many people on the call today. But I'll stand
20 behind Portland Audubon's comments as well, as a
21 member. So thank you to Bob Sallinger for that.

22 And that's it. Thank you for your time; I
23 really appreciate it.

24 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
25 go to the next caller, please.

1 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
2 line of Rennie Ferris. Rennie Ferris, your line is
3 now open for comment; please go ahead.

4 **RENNIE FERRIS:** Thank you. Rennie Ferris,
5 now retired, but grew up in the nursery and
6 landscape business on the coast of Oregon, Newport
7 specifically.

8 And like many people that have said
9 already, I don't like the preferred alternative. I
10 don't think that the DEIS is going to solve the
11 crisis any better than it's done in the past.

12 We need to restore a spring and winter
13 wild Snake River fish. And, but what I can address
14 specifically is a long record of volunteer service
15 to groups like the Soil and Water Conservation
16 District, MidCoast Watersheds Council, the Coast
17 Private Advisory Council that was working with the
18 Northwest Forest Plan, the Coast RAC.

19 And in all of those, we did remarkably
20 well because we purposely sought out a very diverse
21 group of stakeholders. And the little bit of angst
22 in the beginning, but found out quickly that it's
23 kind of hard to yell at somebody when you're sitting
24 across the table from them meeting after meeting.

25 And we put together in the Watershed

1 Council in particular, some incredible projects,
2 continued to do so, because we considered all sides
3 and chose what we could -- what we could work
4 together on. And I would really encourage that in a
5 process that that diverse stakeholder be fully
6 embraced and have the federal facilitators work that
7 in, and I think we might come up with a ways of
8 making this work.

9 And with that, I was hoping I was short
10 and so yield my time. Thank you.

11 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
12 move to the next caller, please.

13 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment
14 comes from the line of Jerald Holm. Jerald Holm,
15 your line is now open for comment; please go ahead.

16 **JERALD HOLM:** Good evening. I am Jerald
17 Holm of Richland, Washington. I testify today as a
18 private citizen. I'm a scientist by training and
19 perhaps by personality; therefore, I value careful,
20 fact-based evaluations of any issue.

21 The staffs of the Corps of Engineers and
22 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration have
23 prepared a careful, fact-based evaluation, the EIS,
24 of the value of the dams on the Columbia and Snake
25 Rivers or of their removal.

1 The results of the EIS seem encompassing,
2 fact-based, and carefully evaluated and balanced.
3 The public and governments at all levels would be
4 misled and wrong to fail to give the EIS and its
5 results great weight in the decisions as to the
6 dams.

7 Real science and facts should be prized
8 rather than feel-good but engaging stories. Failure
9 to do so leads to dangerous and harmful outcomes
10 like the recent measles outbreak in Vancouver,
11 Washington area.

12 Thank you. This concludes my comments.

13 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
14 move to the next caller, please.

15 **OPERATOR:** The next comment comes from the
16 line of Madeline Wiley. Madeline Wiley, your line
17 is open now for comment; please go ahead.

18 **MADELINE WILEY:** My name is Madeline
19 Wiley. I am a lifelong resident of Washington, 63
20 years. I am for removing the four dams on the lower
21 Snake River, leaving a measly 1,162 dams in our
22 state. I know they are not all electric-producing
23 dams, but still...

24 The draft EIS was done by people whose
25 jobs are at stake and how things are currently the

1 status quo. It's the folks in the hen house, for
2 Heaven's sake. And from what I have read, the 15
3 cents made for every dollar spent at all these four
4 dams comes mostly from the sale of the electricity
5 sent to Northern California from these four dams.

6 Our beloved orcas are dying, so are the
7 Chinook salmon. This is on our watch.

8 The dams being an engineering marvel, my
9 foot. Do we call trucking the fish around the four
10 dams a marvel, too? We have to do this because the
11 fish can't make it downstream through the dams. The
12 fish ladders don't work; that's just going upstream.

13 We have spent over \$1 billion for this
14 ridiculous trucking of fish. Seriously? It's
15 laughable. We help out the farmers in the
16 Bonneville agency. Let's use the money we are
17 giving them to figure out a new way for all.

18 We are a wealthy state with engineering
19 and IT expertise. Our electrical costs are some of
20 the lowest in the country. I believe Mississippi
21 and Louisiana are the only states that pay lower
22 fees than we do.

23 Let's use our creativity and this
24 knowledge base to bring about a change. Let's save
25 the wonder of our state and not dig into the lack of

1 change and say, this is how things are.

2 While this does impact some jobs, it will
3 create new jobs. And as we know, projects create
4 even more jobs. So there would be a surge in jobs
5 while undoing the earthen part of the dams and
6 figuring out new transportation for the farmers.

7 And also, we need to think about the
8 Native Americans and how we have impacted their
9 lives and make sure we are taking care of them, too.
10 Thank you.

11 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we move on
12 to the next caller, I'll take a moment to welcome
13 anyone who has joined us.

14 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
15 And this is a public meeting for providing comments
16 on the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like to provide
17 a comment, please press one then zero to add your
18 name to the queue.

19 Agency officials remain on the line to
20 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
21 questions or comments during this meeting or
22 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
23 welcome and will consider your comments in
24 developing the final EIS, which will be released
25 this summer.

1 If you provide a comment, we encourage you
2 to remain on the line to hear from others. There
3 are currently 13 callers in queue. Again, if you'd
4 like to provide a comment, you may press one then
5 zero.

6 Operator, we're ready to go to the next
7 caller, please.

8 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
9 line of Joel Aylor. Joel Aylor, your line is now
10 open for comment; please go ahead.

11 **JOEL AYLOR:** Thank you for this
12 opportunity today. My name is Joel Aylor, and I'm a
13 Nez Perce elder.

14 I'd like to remember the words of Cecil
15 Andrus in the 1975 celebration at Lewiston, when he
16 cast a sour note and he said that the new waterway
17 could mean doom for Idaho salmon runs both in
18 dollars and cost to our natural resources. I
19 remember that.

20 I believe that the EIS process would
21 offset community involvement and fishing returns to
22 the Snake River system. But after watching returns
23 and fish counts along with talking to family and
24 friends, we believe the spring and fall and wild
25 Snake River salmon will experience another low

1 return this year.

2 So many would like more involvement and to
3 see much different results than we have in past
4 years.

5 I do not support the preferred alternative
6 outlined in the DEIS. And I will yield my time.

7 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you can
8 move to the next caller, please.

9 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
10 line of Candace Larson. Candace Larson, your line
11 is now open for comment; please go ahead.

12 **CANDACE LARSON:** Hello. And thank you for
13 accepting my very brief comments. My name is
14 Candace Larson. I have lived, worked, and paid
15 taxes in Oregon since 1986, and I care deeply about
16 the sustainability of our Northwest ecosystems.

17 I have watched the Corps mismanage the
18 Columbia River System to the detriment of multiple
19 native species for many, many years. And today, I
20 am calling to oppose the agencies' preferred
21 alternative and ask you, instead, to adopt the plan
22 that prioritizes removal of the four obsolete Snake
23 River dams, a plan that increases water flows over
24 the existing Columbia River dams, and a plan that
25 improves and restores habitat for imperiled species.

1 I am in support of Portland Audubon's more
2 extensive comments on this issue. And I thank you
3 for your time.

4 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
5 move to the next caller, please.

6 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment
7 comes from the line of Vicki Medley. Vicki Medley,
8 your line is now open for comment; please go ahead.

9 **VICKI MEDLEY:** Thank you. My name is
10 Vicki Medley, and I live in Portland, and I'm a
11 native Oregonian. And I've been watching this
12 debate for over 20 years. And honestly, I'm amazed
13 that we are still discussing this.

14 As a child, I watched the salmon runs in
15 the Gorge and the orcas in the San Juans. And we
16 all know that if we do not act soon, those runs will
17 be gone forever. Our salmon will become extinct and
18 the orcas will continue to suffer.

19 So I say enough already. We know what we
20 need to do. We need to remove the four Snake River
21 dams. We need to restore native habitat and
22 increase the river flow to the Columbia. We need to
23 stop scapegoating native wildlife in this plan.

24 This is a huge waste of public resources
25 as it has been for 20 years, and we can do better.

1 We need solutions by Northwesterners for
2 Northwesterners. And you can hear from callers on
3 all sides of this the desire for more creative
4 problem solving. So please listen to their quest
5 for creative partnerships, coalitions, facilitation,
6 and conversations.

7 I urge you to restore the salmon runs and
8 restore balance to the Columbia River basin. And
9 I'm also in support of Portland Audubon's earlier
10 comments. Thank you.

11 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
12 move to the next caller, please.

13 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
14 line of Jacqueline Koch. Your line is open.
15 Jacqueline, your line is now open; please go ahead.

16 **JACQUELINE KOCH:** Hi. Thank you for
17 taking my comments. My name is Jacqueline Koch, and
18 I'm based here in Seattle, Washington.

19 I just want to start my comments with
20 pointing out a key memory as I made Washington my
21 home and was able to invite my father out here to go
22 salmon fishing for the first time and what an
23 important memory that was for me.

24 And how at this point in time, we're
25 actually seeing salmon disappear. And it's a moment

1 of shame, quite frankly, that we have not moved
2 beyond this.

3 So I also want to add to my comment the
4 fact that there's great frustration that this
5 comment period was shortened and that agencies
6 refuse to consider the implications of the
7 coronavirus on public participation for the comment
8 period. In short, the public participation cannot
9 be at its fullest when we are all dealing in this
10 context of a global pandemic.

11 First and foremost, the DEIS offers us
12 more of the same, which are previous plans that were
13 not legal or acceptable and this is fully
14 inadequate. This DEIS essentially forces us to
15 consider what our world would look like without
16 salmon, and that's absolutely unthinkable in my
17 mind.

18 The DEIS downplays the best scientific
19 information we have, and that shows that by
20 restoring the lower Snake River, we would be able to
21 increase salmon runs back to millions strong. This
22 would help support commercial and tribal fishing
23 communities as well as the starving orcas in Puget
24 Sound.

25 So I think we must be honest, the previous

1 efforts to recovering salmon and providing
2 communities where securities have failed, it sets us
3 winners and losers. And what we truly need is a
4 win-win. And for a win-win, we need to move beyond
5 this EIS for it's not addressing the needs in the
6 Pacific Northwest. It's important for communities
7 to come together and lean into each other's
8 challenges and help each other find meaningful
9 solutions.

10 This is a truth that we cannot continue to
11 ignore. In doing so, we ignore the pain of fellow
12 Washingtonians. We have alternatives. We have
13 options. We have other ways to produce energy and
14 irrigate our crops, but we do not have a lot of time
15 and the salmon are running out of time.

16 So I believe that we can maintain cheap,
17 clean power, bring back healthy harvestable salmon
18 runs --

19 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
20 remaining.

21 **JACQUELINE KOCH:** -- and support the
22 livelihood of our neighbors upriver, downriver, and
23 to the coast. But we have to be truthful about what
24 this DEIS contains, and it does not contain the
25 solutions that the Pacific Northwest residents are

1 asking for.

2 And I yield my time. Thank you.

3 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we move on
4 to our next caller, I'll take a moment to welcome
5 anyone who has joined us.

6 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
7 This is a public meeting for providing comments on
8 the CRSO draft EIS. If you'd like to provide a
9 comment, please press one then zero to add your name
10 to the queue. Pressing one then zero again would
11 take your name out of queue.

12 Agency officials remain on the line to
13 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
14 questions or comments during this meeting or
15 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
16 welcome and will consider your comments in
17 developing the final EIS, which will be released
18 this summer.

19 We encourage you to remain on the line to
20 hear from others after you've provided comments.
21 Operator, we're ready to move to the next caller,
22 please.

23 **OPERATOR:** Our next line has two callers.
24 We'll first take comments from Joel Brady-Power.
25 And after that, we will take comments from Tela

1 Aadsen. Your line is now open for comment; please
2 go ahead.

3 **JOEL BRADY-POWER:** My name is Joel Brady-
4 Power. I'm a commercial fish direct marketer, and I
5 live in Bellingham, Washington. Salmon are my life,
6 my livelihood, and they do not sustain just me. My
7 wife and I market all of our catch, mostly in
8 Washington state, to restaurants, grocery stores,
9 and individuals.

10 Salmon send ripples throughout our local
11 economies, communities, and ecosystems. When we
12 return from the fishing grounds, we sell our catch
13 in our community. These fish are then sold by local
14 grocers and served at local restaurants. We, in
15 turn, take the money we earn from these sales and
16 put it back into our community, frequenting the same
17 local establishments that sustain us.

18 Every year we haul our boat out for
19 repairs and maintenance in Port Townsend, employing
20 many local small businesses from the ports to
21 shipwrights, marine electricians, and mechanics. We
22 purchase parts, pay moorage, buy groceries and fuel,
23 all from the money we earn from the salmon we catch.

24 Without healthy fisheries, all of this
25 goes away. The economic impact of diminished salmon

1 runs are felt throughout our coastal communities and
2 beyond. We need to restore our salmon runs and
3 protect the vibrant coastal communities who depend
4 on them. The preferred alternative in the DEIS
5 fails to do this. It does not meet the needs of
6 Northwest communities and it has threatened the
7 survival of salmon, orcas, and the livelihoods of
8 fishermen and their communities.

9 Salmon returns to the Snake and Columbia
10 River are currently at all-time lows. Scientists
11 tell us that the single best action we can take to
12 help these endangered salmon is to restore the Snake
13 River by removing its four dams.

14 The time to act is now. We need to bring
15 back the economies of our coastal communities, but
16 it does not have to come at the expense of the
17 farming community. I believe that together with the
18 leadership of our elected officials we can find a
19 way forward that is sustainable for all: salmon,
20 tribes, fishermen, and the energy sector.

21 But it is time for a new approach. The
22 DEIS has not worked, it's not working, and will not
23 work in the future. It is time for the people of
24 the Northwest to find and create creative solutions
25 that will work for us all moving forward.

1 Thank you. And here's Tela.

2 **TELA AADSEN:** My name is Tela Aadsen. I'm
3 a commercial fisherman and have spent 32 years
4 trolling for salmon in Southeast, Alaska. I live in
5 Bellingham and am co-owner of Nerka Sea-Frozen
6 Salmon, through which my husband and I self-market
7 our catch.

8 My father-in-law started this family
9 business in 1998, when he took one of his salmon to
10 a neighboring chef in Mikana (phonetic). Twenty-two
11 years later, I still make weekly deliveries to that
12 same chef.

13 This is one of the many enduring
14 partnerships within our local economy. We sell the
15 majority of our salmon here in Washington state
16 where, as lifelong Whatcom and Skagit County
17 residents, my husband and I share deep roots with
18 farmlands. We've built our livelihood on our
19 customers' farm-to-table values. Our chefs text me
20 pictures of their latest specials, our salmon plated
21 with locally farmed Brussels sprouts, a glass from
22 the Walla Walla Winery on the side. Paired
23 together, we enhance each other's work.

24 Our customers often come to me with
25 questions about orca and salmon. I share their

1 concerns. If we fail to act now for healthy rivers,
2 estuaries, and ecosystems, everyone relying on this
3 farm-to-table chain will suffer. The essential
4 services that fisher families, farmers, shipping,
5 and food service industries provide have never been
6 so starkly illustrated as they currently are with
7 the COVID-19 crisis highlighting the economic value
8 and mutual dependency that our coastal and farming
9 communities share.

10 Restoring and preserving salmon is
11 critical to our region's well-being. The DEIS does
12 not meet this need. The salmon returns to the Snake
13 and Columbia River is at an all-time low.
14 Scientists have repeatedly identified the removal of
15 the four lower Snake River dams as the single best
16 action we can take.

17 I'm confident there is a path forward that
18 values the well-being of salmon, orca, coastal
19 communities, farmers, tribal members, and the energy
20 sector. The DEIS preferred alternative is not that
21 path.

22 Thank you for your time.

23 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we're
24 ready to move to the next caller, please.

25 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the

1 line of William Grimes. William Grimes, your line
2 is now open for comment; please go ahead.

3 **WILLIAM GRIMES:** Thank you for the
4 opportunity to comment tonight. My name is Bill
5 Grimes, and I'm an urban planner living in Spokane.
6 My consulting practice focuses on long-range
7 planning, visioning, community engagement, and the
8 preparation of environmental impact statements much
9 like the one that's the topic of tonight's hearing.

10 First, while I appreciate the opportunity
11 to participate via this conference call, it's a poor
12 substitute for an in-person hearing. It should not
13 remain the only opportunity we have to present our
14 comments, to hear from others interested in this
15 proposal.

16 I found the testimony tonight informative
17 and inspiring, and I imagine there are others unable
18 to participate on the line who have ideas that are
19 just as informative and inspiring as what we've
20 heard so far; without another hearing, we may never
21 know. Conducting a hearing tonight in the time of
22 COVID seems to prioritize certain interests over
23 others, and that's unfortunate.

24 Second, the draft EIS appears to only
25 superficially describe the impacts to communities

1 and facilities if the dams are to be retained.
2 Rising sediment levels and the difficulties in
3 dredging will likely require building taller levies
4 and constructing multiple road and rail bridges in
5 response. These changes will have significant
6 impact on the communities along the river, impact
7 that must be more fully identified and addressed in
8 the draft.

9 As it is written, it appears that dam
10 retention simply maintains a status quo, and that is
11 both misleading and untrue.

12 I ask that you extend the comment period
13 both to allow opportunities for those unable to
14 participate tonight and to permit public review and
15 comment of a more honest dam retention alternative,
16 one that adequately addresses community impact and
17 the cost of rising river levels.

18 Thank you for your time today.

19 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, please
20 move to the next caller.

21 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
22 line of Peter Sallinger. Peter Sallinger, your line
23 is now open for comment; please go ahead.

24 **PETER SALLINGER:** Hi. My name is Peter
25 Sallinger. Thank you for the opportunity to

1 comment. I (indiscernible) about the issue of
2 climate change as do many. However, my end goal in
3 fighting climate change has never been to simply
4 stop a changing temperature. Instead, my end goal
5 is to provide a greener, healthier environment for
6 the species of this planet.

7 Allowing the continued killing of Snake
8 River salmon is not only incompatible but
9 antithetical to that goal. That is why I support
10 the comments made by the Portland Audubon Society.

11 I'm disappointed that federal agencies
12 have decided to move forward with phone hearings and
13 ignored requests to allow a reasonable timeline for
14 public comment. It shows a real disrespect for
15 public engagement.

16 I urge you to select an alternative that
17 does the following: number one, breach the four
18 obsolete Snake River dams; two, improve flows over
19 the Columbia River dams to benefit salmon; three,
20 stop scapegoating native predator species such as
21 cormorants and sea lions.

22 I urge you to comply with law, stop
23 wasting taxpayer dollars, and take the necessary
24 steps to recover salmon. I yield the rest of my
25 time.

1 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we move to
2 the next caller, I'll take a moment to welcome
3 anyone who has joined us.

4 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
5 And this is a public meeting for providing comments
6 on the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like to provide
7 a comment, please press one then zero to add your
8 name to the queue. Agency officials remain on the
9 line to hear your comments. Though we are not
10 responding to questions or comments during this
11 meeting or providing additional presentation, the
12 agencies do welcome and will consider your comments
13 in developing the final EIS, which will be released
14 this summer.

15 We encourage you to remain on the line to
16 hear from others after you've provided comments.
17 There are currently eight callers in queue. As a
18 reminder, if you'd like to provide comments, you may
19 press one then zero to add your name to the list.

20 Operator, we can move to the next caller
21 now.

22 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
23 line of Lucy DePaolo. Lucy DePaolo, your line is
24 now open for comment; please go ahead.

25 **LUCY DEPAOLO:** Hi. Thank you for the

1 opportunity to comment. Thank you, agency
2 officials. My name is Lucy DePaolo, and I'm a
3 concerned citizen, human being, a business owner,
4 and a descendent of the Black Feet Nation.

5 I support removal of the four lower Snake
6 River dams. And I am deeply concerned about the
7 health and the declining population of our wild
8 salmon and steelhead, from numbers like 18 million
9 in the 1800s to barely 2 million, and very few of
10 those 2 million are actually wild.

11 So I believe that the power from the dams
12 can be replaced effectively by new renewable
13 resources like wind and solar energy.

14 And I also believe deeply in inclusion of
15 public comments and public process, and I would like
16 to ask for an extension of this process.

17 Thank you so much for listening, and
18 that's it.

19 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
20 move to the next caller, please.

21 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
22 line of Susan Nolte. Susan Nolte, your line is now
23 open for comment; please go ahead.

24 **SUSAN NOLTE:** I do support the comments
25 offered by the Audubon Society. A couple things

1 that I do want to point out, that, number one,
2 removal of the dams does seem to be a key ingredient
3 to ensuring the sustainability of the salmon runs.
4 And there do seem to be alternatives for
5 transportation of farmers' wheat, as offered by a
6 caller earlier.

7 And I would like to point out that there
8 are a number of practices that can be put into place
9 by farmers in the area that would mitigate our need
10 for irrigation regarding improvement of soil and
11 farming practices. And I would just refer those who
12 are interested to two books; one is called Soil Will
13 Save Us, and the other is Dirt to Soil.

14 So these kind of creative solutions are
15 what we need to craft a plan that would allow
16 removal of those Snake River dams without harming
17 the livelihood of farmers in the area. And down
18 river, restoration of habitat is an important piece
19 of this. A case in point is a review of the levee
20 system in the Portland area by the Army Corps of
21 Engineers. And that review of the system failed to
22 look at creating habitat that would be favorable for
23 salmon.

24 So there's another area where a creative
25 look can be taken at what we're doing, to find ways

1 to support the salmon.

2 Also, in 2016, the plan proposed was
3 rejected by the courts, and that's why we're here
4 trying to craft a new plan. And our energy usage is
5 changing and we're coming onboard with new and
6 creative ways to produce electricity. And I was
7 taken aback by a comment by a caller earlier that
8 much of electricity generated by those dams is going
9 south to California and not being used locally.

10 So again, there are a lot of --

11 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
12 remaining.

13 **SUSAN NOLTE:** Thank you. There are a lot
14 of stakeholders that have a finger in this pie. And
15 I again want to reiterate that removal of the dams
16 is essential to the survival of the salmon, but
17 there are ways to mitigate the effects of dam
18 removal. There really are ways. So we need to
19 gather around and sort that out and -- but I think,
20 number one on the table should be dam removal,
21 without a doubt.

22 So I thank you for the opportunity to
23 express my thoughts, and I would encourage you to
24 reject this preferred, so-called preferred
25 alternative draft EIS.

1 Thank you so much. And I do hope that
2 everyone who would like an opportunity to give
3 commentary is able to in these trying times. Thank
4 you.

5 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you can
6 move to the next caller, please.

7 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
8 line of Wanda Keefer. Wanda Keefer, your line is
9 now open for comment; please go ahead.

10 **WANDA KEEFER:** Thank you. I'm calling as
11 a private citizen from Clarkston, Washington.

12 I do support the preferred alternative. I
13 think the federal agencies have been tasked with the
14 impossible job of solving a planet-wide problem
15 through the management of a single river system.

16 Let me say that another way. You can't
17 change the management of the Columbia/Snake River
18 and expect it to change world conditions.

19 Unfortunately, people who say nothing has
20 changed have it wrong. This is what has changed.
21 The world's human population is growing. The
22 predator population is growing. Temperatures
23 worldwide are increasing. Weather patterns are
24 getting more uncertain. And the pollution in the
25 oceans is more significant. All of these impact

1 fish and orcas. Salmon spend 75 percent of their
2 time in the ocean.

3 The draft EIS is responsive and
4 appropriate to the extent that it can be, because,
5 obviously, the larger world problems are not within
6 the scope of the federal mandate which created the
7 dams. So the named preferred alternative is really
8 our only option.

9 What I want to tell you, though, is my
10 recreation story, inspired by earlier comments.
11 It's entirely opposite of the young college
12 recreational expert who testified tonight from
13 Spokane.

14 I'm over 60 years old. One of my favorite
15 recreational activities is kayaking on flat water
16 right outside my house in Clarkston, Washington. I
17 go out three to four times a week in the summer at
18 the end of my long workday. Temperatures have
19 dropped from 100 degrees to 90 degrees by then,
20 making it an enjoyable time.

21 People in the Lewis Clark Valley survive
22 hot summers by playing in the water. That would be
23 taken from me if dams are breached and flat waters
24 are eliminated.

25 The young man's comments on the new

1 whitewater puts the interest of young people who are
2 thrilled by adrenalin against the interest of older
3 people like me. His presumption that the new
4 whitewater was going to be world-class, like the
5 caliber of the Selway, Lochsa, and Clearwater, is
6 absolutely incorrect.

7 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
8 remaining.

9 **WANDA KEEFER:** They will, at best, be
10 mediocre. I made a mistake not taking my kayak out
11 on Labor Day weekend. There must have been 10,000
12 people using the confluence of the Snake and
13 Clearwater rivers that weekend. They would not have
14 fit in the tiny little stream that will remain when
15 the dams are removed.

16 A Corps of Engineers' study showed that
17 there were 1.7 million recreation touches on or near
18 the water in the Lewis Clark Valley. And Idaho has
19 --

20 **MS. HABIBI:** Your time has lapsed.

21 **WANDA KEEFER:** -- (inaudible) study, that
22 \$7 million worth of benefits in 2016. Thank you.

23 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
24 move to the next caller, please.

25 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment

1 comes from the line of Bob Rees. Bob Rees, your
2 line is now open for comment; please go ahead.

3 **BOB REES:** Good evening. My name is Bob
4 Rees, representing the Northwest Guides and Anglers
5 Association as their executive director. Our
6 association represents 58 professional fishing
7 guides and charter operations in the Pacific
8 Northwest. Collectively, we prosecute tens of
9 thousands of fishing trips every year in the waters
10 of Oregon, Washington, California, and Idaho.

11 Our businesses have suffered immeasurable
12 loss due to the combined crushing blows of lethal
13 water temperatures, unprecedentedly poor ocean
14 condition, and a river that is detrimental to the
15 lifecycle of Pacific salmon. We are truly at a
16 crossroads.

17 Thank you for the opportunity to comment
18 on the Draft Environment Impact Statement for
19 Columbia River operations --

20 **(Background talking)**

21 **MS. HABIBI:** I'd like to take a moment to
22 remind our (indiscernible) to put their phones on
23 mute.

24 **(Background talking)**

25 **MS. HABIBI:** If you are not a speaker at

1 this time, please put your phone in mute.

2 If you are not a speaker, please put your
3 phone in mute.

4 **BOB REES:** Thank you. As you might
5 interpret from my introduction, Columbia River
6 operations are failing fish and compromising the
7 small rural communities of Oregon, Washington, and
8 Idaho, that rely on sport fishing as a means of
9 making a living. There is no such thing as a full-
10 time fishing guide any longer, as I used to be for
11 well over two decades of my life.

12 Once again, our sport fisheries will be
13 directly curtailed with Snake River salmon, the most
14 constraining stock of fish that will keep our boats
15 dry docked for much of 2020. Our businesses will
16 not sustain another season of compromised
17 opportunity.

18 I have had to personally relocate to
19 Oregon City from the north Orion coast, upend my
20 daughter's education, and ask my wife to get a job
21 to enable ends to meet. This has been a major
22 upheaval in our lives with no sign of reprieve.

23 As we've seen with the onslaught of the
24 coronavirus, our government's role is to bring
25 together people to find community solutions to deal

1 with the crisis at hand. The federal government has
2 had two decades and several federal lawsuits to get
3 it right, but the salmon crisis remains an obstacle
4 to robust borough commerce and propagates an
5 adversarial environment between neighbors in our
6 rural communities.

7 The current DEIS does much of the same
8 and, most importantly, continues the trajectory of
9 the extinction of wild salmon forever from the
10 Columbia River basin. This is something we simply
11 cannot accept as a society.

12 While the warm-water blob and poor ocean
13 conditions do have a role in the downturn of Snake
14 River salmon, in 2015, the lethal summer water
15 temperatures in the main stem Columbia and Snake
16 rivers killed over 90 percent of sockeye salmon
17 return and compromised countless baby salmon en
18 route to the Pacific Ocean. Countless broodstock
19 sturgeon were also killed in the hot water in the
20 pools above Bonneville Dam, compromising the future
21 of this 200 million-year-old species. In conclusion

22 --

23 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
24 remaining.

25 **BOB REES:** -- in the case of this DEIS,

1 it's clear that we need our Northwest policymakers
2 to foster a process that brings together our
3 region's stakeholders to have a meaningful
4 discussion and come to a collaborative solution that
5 works for farmers, fishermen, and maintains a
6 reliable energy grid for our communities. Thank
7 you.

8 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you can
9 move to the next caller, please.

10 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
11 line of Veronica Phelps. Veronica Phelps, your line
12 is open for comment; please go ahead.

13 **VERONICA PHELPS:** My name is Veronica
14 Phelps, and I'm a resident of Oregon. I'm an
15 onshore volunteer for Sea Shepherd Conservation
16 Society, the volunteer coordinator of Wildwood
17 Conservancy of Oregon, and I worked on salmon
18 restoration projects in Humboldt County with the
19 California Conservation Corps.

20 I am in support of breaching the four
21 lower Snake River dams. The BPA is sitting on a \$15
22 billion debt, diverting from practical solutions by
23 persecuting native predators, and prolonging the
24 suffering of salmon and orca populations. The time
25 is yesterday to breach the dams.

1 Mother orca, Tahlequah, carried her dead
2 child for 17 days and showed the world how
3 desperately her dying family needs us to take
4 action. We play God to these individuals with the
5 power to decide the fate of entire species. Why
6 would we not use this power to end their suffering
7 and restore the health and safety of these native
8 animals?

9 I yield my time.

10 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you can
11 move to the next caller.

12 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
13 line of Jennifer Hall. Jennifer Hall, your line is
14 open for comment now; please go ahead.

15 **JENNIFER HALL:** Thank you, and good
16 evening. I am glad to have the chance to comment on
17 the draft DEIS for Columbia and Snake River salmon.
18 My name's Jennifer Hall. I live in Spokane,
19 Washington. I'm a private citizen.

20 I oppose the preferred alternative stated
21 in the DEIS and support removal of the four lower
22 Snake River dams.

23 I'd like to start by saying that the
24 heritage of our area matters as in the tribes. Our
25 salmon and our orca matter. Agriculture matters.

1 Climate matters. Our culture matters, the culture
2 of the Pacific Northwest and tourism of the Pacific
3 Northwest that is interwoven with salmon, orca, wild
4 places, and recreation.

5 Science also matters. And the science is
6 clear that a cold, unimpeded lower Snake River is
7 the best alternative to support all of these.

8 The dams are exorbitantly expensive. And
9 at this time, fortunately, with technology, there
10 are other more cost-conscious and greener power
11 replacement options.

12 I'm confident in the expertise of the
13 organizations involved to balance all the needs to
14 find a solution that is more effective to save all
15 of the things that need preservation. And I
16 encourage the decision to be made for the future,
17 not for the present.

18 Thank you for the opportunity.

19 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we move on
20 to the next caller, I'll take a moment to welcome
21 anyone who has joined us.

22 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
23 This is a public meeting for providing comments on
24 the CRSO draft EIS. If you'd like to provide a
25 comment, please press one then zero to add your name

1 to the queue.

2 Agency officials remain on the line to
3 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
4 questions or comments during this meeting or
5 providing additional presentation, the agencies
6 welcome and will consider your comments in
7 developing the final EIS, which will be released
8 this summer.

9 We encourage you to remain on the line to
10 hear from others after you've provided comments.
11 Currently there are six callers in queue. A
12 reminder, you may press one then zero to add your
13 name to the list.

14 Operator, you may move to the next caller.

15 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
16 line of Mark Grotbo. Mark Grotbo, your line is now
17 open for comment; please go ahead.

18 **MARK GROTOBO:** (in progress) Ravalli
19 Electric Cooperative located in Victor, Montana.
20 While we will submit additional written comments for
21 the CRSO DEIS, I wanted to take this opportunity to
22 say that we cannot disregard the serious and
23 intertwined issues in the Northwest with regard to
24 the electric resource adequacy, salmon protection,
25 and maintaining a clean and affordable power system.

1 We do not dispute that salmon do need our
2 help along the west coast. Salmon and steelhead are
3 struggling in rivers both with and without dams. It
4 is absolutely clear to us that the salmon issue is
5 larger than just what happens on the lower Snake
6 River dams. Taking a micro view of the subset of
7 hydro system ignores items such as ocean conditions,
8 harvests, predation, to name a few. We cannot
9 ignore items such as water quality of watersheds
10 from the urban areas around Puget Sound.

11 As states and utilities have closed or are
12 moving towards closure of base load generation with
13 minimal base load generation being put back into the
14 mix, this causes those of us living in a cold
15 climate great concern. In Montana, system
16 reliability is literally a matter of life or death.
17 The Bitterroot Valley is not an ideal place for wind
18 or solar generation. This is the reason the vast
19 majority of the local residential members which have
20 renewable resources stay connected to the grid.

21 Alternatives to the grid are expensive and
22 not always reliable. Our peak energy usage is on a
23 cold winter morning before the sun comes up and the
24 wind is a blowing. Considering taking out or
25 reducing generation on carbon-free resources does

1 not make sense. There are not reliable or
2 affordable alternatives.

3 My members are still struggling with the
4 loss of the timber industry. Increasing the bills
5 in today's uncertain market is not an option.

6 As we are bracing for the effects of the
7 financial impact of the coronavirus, removal of a
8 proven carbon-free base load generation source when
9 all the components are not being taken into account,
10 does not make sense to my members, the communities,
11 or the region.

12 At Ravalli Electric, we believe that
13 salmon do need our help, but we believe strongly
14 that the lower Snake River dams are absolutely
15 critical to our region. We believe all aspects of
16 the struggling salmon need to be studied and
17 addressed. We must get to work to figure out best
18 comprehensive solution, while maintaining reliable
19 and affordable electricity supply. Thank you.

20 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you may
21 move to the next caller, please.

22 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
23 line of Debbie Stempf. Debbie Stempf, your line is
24 now open for comment; please go ahead.

25 **DEBBIE STEMPEF:** Thank you for allowing me

1 to make a comment. I support the comments made
2 earlier by Audubon. And I want to stress, I really
3 believe we can reach a solution that helps the
4 farmers get their wheat to market as well as help
5 our communities, orcas, and tribes that depend on
6 our salmon. These fish are all of ours. This is a
7 legacy of our great Northwest.

8 With a beautiful environment that is
9 salmon-ready above the Snake River dams, it's time
10 to breach the dams and let that river flow free.
11 Thank you.

12 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you may
13 move to the next caller, please.

14 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
15 time of Roberta Joyntner (phonetic). Roberta
16 Joyntner, your line is now open for comment; please
17 go ahead.

18 **ROBERTA JOYNTNER:** Thank you. Can you
19 hear me? I'll assume you can.

20 **MS. HABIBI:** Yes, we can hear you.

21 **ROBERTA JOYNTNER:** Thank you. You know my
22 concern is that -- and I'm from Oregon. My concern
23 is that we are about to embark with the preferred
24 alternative on one that will not work, because it
25 doesn't address the two remaining factors. Granted,

1 there are other global issues at play here. But
2 without additional flow over the Columbia River dam,
3 habitat restoration, and, most important, removal of
4 the four Snake River dams, we're not addressing the
5 key limiting factors in the system.

6 The Snake River basin is huge. The pools
7 above the dam preclude the smolts from getting to
8 the ocean in time for their ocean window. And any
9 plan that doesn't include addressing those dams
10 won't work and will perpetuate the status quo, waste
11 a lot of resources and a lot more time and end up in
12 court more.

13 In addition, it ends up into scapegoating
14 other species. And continued killing of sea lions
15 and cormorants isn't helping.

16 And in terms of energy, it is really
17 important to meet the needs of all, as is pointed
18 out by prior callers. And my understanding is, is
19 in terms of the south, to where a lot of the energy
20 is being transported, there are large, large plants
21 going into -- solar plants going into effect. And
22 the cost effectiveness of that solar energy is
23 becoming more and more desirable and will overtake
24 the need for the Northwest industry -- or our
25 Northwest energy.

1 So I support looking again at alternatives
2 that include flow over the Columbia River dam,
3 habitat restoration, and removal of the four Snake
4 River dams. Thank you.

5 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
6 move to the next caller.

7 **OPERATOR:** Our next call comes from the
8 line of Elizabeth Nealey (phonetic) for comment.
9 Elizabeth Nealey, your line is now open; please go
10 ahead.

11 **ELIZABETH NEALEY:** Hello. My name is
12 Elizabeth Nealey. I am (inaudible) --

13 **MS. HABIBI:** Excuse me, Elizabeth. We're
14 having trouble hearing you.

15 **ELIZABETH NEALEY:** -- (inaudible) of the
16 four obsolete Snake River dams is essential for
17 salmon recovery. The core has been taken to court
18 five times and lost five times for their failure to
19 develop a credible plan to recover salmon.

20 I also support the comments made by the
21 Audubon Society of Portland regarding native
22 predator species. Species such as cormorants and
23 sea lions should not be scapegoated for doing what
24 comes naturally, eating fish, killing native
25 wildlife, while the primary causes of salmon decline

1 go unaddressed.

2 (Inaudible) recover salmon by breaching
3 Snake River dams and to avoid killing native
4 predators such as cormorants and sea lions that have
5 coexisted with salmon since time immemorial. Thank
6 you.

7 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, can you
8 please move to the next caller?

9 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
10 line of Wes Klaassen. Wes Klaassen, your line is
11 now open for comment. Please go ahead.

12 **WES KLAASSEN:** Thank you for the
13 opportunity to make a comment on this issue. I am
14 against breaching the dams. I understand the
15 situation with the salmon. But some of the reasons
16 why I am against it, I would like to share. And I
17 live halfway between Lower Granite Dam and Little
18 Goose Dam on the breaks of the river.

19 From a lot of my farm, I can see the
20 Central Ferry terminal where I deliver my grain.
21 It's between 5 to 12 miles from my farm. I haul 100
22 to 160 thousand bushel loads a year to the Central
23 Ferry terminal. The only other option is maybe go
24 to Endicott, Washington, which is a low volume rail
25 facility, to load my grain or haul it to Portland

1 truck by truck. When you talk about a carbon
2 footprint, mine would increase enormously.

3 And all the grain grown in Whitman County
4 would have to find either a rail, which a lot of
5 rails have been abandoned and sold, or you'd have to
6 haul it by truck. This would be devastating for me
7 as a farmer. I live in a low rainfall area. And
8 the reason why I am productive is because of my
9 cheap way of getting grain to the Portland terminal.

10 Another thing that the dams provide me is
11 cheap, reliable power. On a cold, cold winter day
12 with cloud cover, it is the only green energy
13 available; wind and solar are not an option. Well,
14 in fact, our whole area, we'd have to go to fossil
15 fuel generation of power; again, then you have
16 increased the carbon footprint.

17 I've heard many people talk about
18 recreation when they discuss the dams. One of the
19 things you have to remember is the Snake River is
20 enjoyed immensely now. Every Sunday after church,
21 my family, my six kids, four that are adopted, we go
22 to the river and we go water skiing, inner tubing
23 and have a great afternoon.

24 And I remember the stories of my grandpa
25 and his uncles almost drowning on the Snake River

1 because it was an unsafe river for untrained people
2 before the dams were put in.

3 One more thing I just would like to
4 encourage people to remember is several winters we
5 have had problems with flooding, and Portland has
6 been saved by the dams. It has allowed engineers to
7 let the right amount of water out at the right time.
8 And you look at the disasters that have happened on
9 the Missouri River over the last couple years, and
10 we are blessed to have these dams. It's not
11 perfect. We need to find solutions that --

12 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
13 remaining.

14 **WES KLAASSEN:** We need to find solutions
15 that will work for the salmon. We need to fully
16 fund our fisheries. We need to work with tribal
17 authorities, so that we can have a healthy, strong,
18 large fish come back to spawn and understanding that
19 we have to look at the good for industry that feeds
20 the world versus a recreation of fishing on the
21 Snake River.

22 Thank you for your time. I respect
23 everyone's opinions. I please ask you to consider
24 mine.

25 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we move on

1 to the next caller, I'd like to take a moment to
2 encourage, in particular, Elizabeth Nealey, to
3 submit her comments in writing or online as
4 indicated on CRSO.info. We did have a little
5 trouble hearing you at times during your oral
6 comments.

7 And anyone else who's provided comments
8 but have additional comments, you may also submit
9 online or in writing.

10 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
11 For those who may have joined us, this is a public
12 meeting for providing comments on the CRSO draft
13 EIS. If you would like to provide a comment, please
14 press one then zero to add your name to the queue.

15 Agency officials remain on the line to
16 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
17 questions or comments during this meeting or
18 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
19 welcome and will consider your comments in
20 developing the final EIS, which will be released
21 this summer.

22 If you provide a comment, we encourage you
23 to remain on the line to hear from others. There
24 are currently five people in the queue to provide
25 comments. As a reminder, you may press one then

1 zero to add your name to the queue.

2 Operator, we can move to the next caller.

3 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
4 line of Kathleen Lewis. Kathleen Lewis, your line
5 is now open for comment; please go ahead.

6 **KATHLEEN LEWIS:** Hello. Thank you for the
7 opportunity to speak. I am calling in support of
8 many comments, including Portland Audubon and their
9 statements about having a preferred alternative that
10 devastates salmon, orca, and other fish and wildlife
11 populations to the edge of critical numbers and the
12 unnecessary scapegoating of native wildlife like
13 double-crested cormorants.

14 I support the removal of the dams and
15 finding a solution that includes all businesses and
16 industry that rely on the rivers and allow the
17 wildlife to proliferate and live and not cause
18 extinction of more species so that the salmon can
19 survive, the sea lions can survive, and the orcas
20 will have salmon to feed on, and we won't have to
21 shoot cormorants as an excuse for devastating salmon
22 populations when it is clear to all scientific
23 studies and research that the dams are the source of
24 the problem.

25 Thank you very much.

1 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you may
2 move to the next caller.

3 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
4 line of Barbara Hachmann-Sarmiento. Your line is
5 open, Barbara, if you'll please go ahead.

6 **BARBARA HACHMANN-SARMIENTO:** Good evening.
7 My name is Barbara Hachmann-Sarmiento. I am a
8 private citizen and a resident of New York. I'm
9 calling because I believe that the federal agencies
10 need to begin the breaching of the Snake River dams
11 this year. I have traveled frequently to Washington
12 and Oregon to visit family and also to learn and see
13 wild salmon and orca. And I think that the failure
14 to breach the lower Snake River dams will drive
15 these endangered populations to extinction.

16 From an economic standpoint, I think that
17 the draft Environmental Impact Statement is not
18 going to save taxpayer money. The lower Snake River
19 dams are losing money every year. And choosing a
20 breach would actually save money.

21 Breaching the lower Snake River dams is
22 not only a good choice economically, but also
23 biologically. The Southern Resident killer whales
24 and the Snake River salmon and steelhead will not
25 survive this new Environmental Impact Statement

1 study process.

2 As a first step, the federal agencies can
3 and they need to begin breaching the four lower
4 Snake River dams this year. The federal agencies
5 can no longer afford to drag the process out with
6 another Environmental Impact Statement that will
7 take years while the salmon and the orca go extinct.

8 In addition, the BPA's financial situation
9 will worsen each year and that money will
10 (inaudible) on the dams. Expensive bypass systems
11 and more spill have been tried, and, yet, 2019 was
12 another year of costly efforts to recover Snake
13 River salmon with no results.

14 Federal agencies, I believe, really do
15 need to begin the breaching of the Snake River dams
16 this year and it's of the utmost importance.

17 Thank you so much for your time.

18 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you can
19 move to the next caller, please.

20 **OPERATOR:** Next comment comes from the
21 line of Helena Coker. Helena Coker, your line is
22 now open for comment; please go ahead.

23 **HELENA COKER:** Hello. I just wanted to
24 say that I am a student who's getting their
25 bachelor's in environmental science and assessment,

1 and it's something that's very important to me. And
2 I've done a lot of academic research projects on
3 this, but I'm not affiliated with anything formally.

4 But there have been so many studies I've
5 had to read for my school that show that there isn't
6 really a benefit to us as people for keeping these
7 dams and it just is continuing to harm native
8 populations of fish and birds, but without serving a
9 necessary purpose to human populations nearby.

10 I do really support Portland Audubon's
11 comments about these dams and that breaching them
12 would be the best way to help bird populations and
13 fish populations. And I haven't seen something that
14 shows differently. And there's a lot of research
15 that also shows that the dams will end up costing us
16 more money to keep rather than to take down in the
17 long run, if you look at it over the next few
18 decades.

19 That's my whole comment.

20 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you can
21 move to the next line, please.

22 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment
23 comes from the line of Scout Harnon (phonetic).
24 Scott Harnon, your line is open for comment now;
25 please go ahead.

1 **SCOUT HARNON:** Hi. My name is Scout, and
2 I am a native Oregonian and I'm a wildlife major. I
3 just want to comment that I completely support the
4 comments made by Portland Audubon. These dams have
5 got to go; they're super damaging to our native
6 salmon populations, which really help to keep our
7 forests healthy. And without healthy forests, can
8 we even call ourselves Oregon?

9 That's all I have to say. Thank you.

10 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you can
11 move to the next line, please.

12 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment
13 comes from the line of Kurt Miller. Kurt Miller,
14 your line is now open for comment. Please go ahead.

15 **KURT MILLER:** Hi. Again, Kurt Miller.
16 Thank you. I commented earlier this evening. I'm
17 with Northwest RiverPartners. I did want to, after
18 having listened to a lot of really earnest and well-
19 intended comments, and I definitely respect the
20 different opinions out there, there were a couple
21 clarifications that I think are important to make.

22 The first is this assumption that the
23 power that's coming from the lower Snake River dams
24 is surplus. I've had some discussions with some
25 people who I think have originated that idea. And

1 the truth is there is no -- there's no truth of
2 evidence to that fact. Basically, most of the power
3 that goes south into California is from long-term
4 contracts for wind plants that Californians built to
5 help meet their renewable portfolio standards.

6 So the power trying to guess which
7 megawatts are actually flowing out of BPA's control
8 area is something that actually isn't possible to
9 do. But we do know that those long-term contracts
10 from Northwestern wind projects are committed to
11 California, and we believe that's where the power is
12 coming from.

13 The second thing is the assumption that
14 the power from lower Snake River Dam is somehow
15 uneconomical. BPA has stated clearly that the lower
16 Snake River dam projects are among their most cost-
17 effective projects. And the truth is, and you can
18 do the science, is that there is no new generation
19 that can compete with the existing low cost
20 generation that's already been built like the lower
21 Snake River dams.

22 So to build a new dam would certainly be
23 expensive. But just to replenish an existing dam is
24 much less expensive than the cost of new wind and
25 solar, especially if you back it up with batteries,

1 which have their own economic problems and they have
2 costs. The lower Snake River dams actually act as
3 giant clean energy batteries themselves, but without
4 the mining and the carbon footprint associated with
5 it.

6 The last thing I just wanted to say is
7 that I don't know how the lower Snake River dams got
8 so much associated with the orca, because the truth
9 is, and you can look it up on the University of
10 Washington website, the returns of salmon to the
11 lower Snake River are healthier and better and have
12 been for years than the returns of salmon to the
13 Puget Sound tributaries. So --

14 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
15 remaining.

16 **KURT MILLER:** Thank you. So the truth is
17 that lower Snake River salmon can supplement the
18 diet, but they cannot replace the diet of where the
19 salmon spend -- or sorry -- where the orca spend the
20 majority of their time. The single best thing you
21 can do if you really want to help orcas is to clean
22 up the Puget Sound and help those tributaries. And
23 to push it off onto the lower Snake River dam, what
24 you'll end up doing is breaching dams that weren't
25 really the cause of the orcas' problems in the first

1 place and it will result in not having healthy orca
2 populations, plus, then you won't have the
3 infrastructure that the dams provide.

4 So I just wanted to clarify those
5 comments. Thank you so much for the opportunity.

6 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Before we move on
7 to the next caller, I'll take a moment to welcome
8 anyone who has joined us.

9 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
10 And this is a public meeting for providing comments
11 on the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like to provide
12 a comment, please press one then zero to add your
13 name to the queue. Agency officials remain on the
14 line to hear your comments. Though we're not
15 responding to questions or comments during this
16 meeting or providing additional presentation, the
17 agencies welcome and will consider your comments in
18 developing the final EIS, which will be released
19 this summer.

20 If you provide comments, we encourage you
21 to remain on the line to hear from others.

22 Currently there are five commenters in queue.

23 Operator, you may move to the next line.

24 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
25 line of Don Ringwood. Don Ringwood, your line is

1 now open for comment; please go ahead.

2 **DON RINGWOOD:** Thank you. My voice isn't
3 very good. But I'd like to agree with Kurt Miller,
4 the last caller. I'm a farmer, rancher, retired in
5 Lincoln County. And I favor the non-removal of the
6 dams. I'm also retired fire commissioner. And the
7 Snake River Gorge is very hard to fight fires
8 without helicopters or tankers because of the
9 steepness of the growth. And that would take away
10 the access to slack water to pick up with
11 helicopters and tankers to fight fire in that gorge.

12 Also, from what I have studied, that the
13 salmon population is going down because of world
14 fisheries or fishing the oceans, overfishing the
15 oceans. And I don't think taking out the dams would
16 make any difference in the population in the oceans.
17 And I don't think the problem is the dams, it's the
18 fish that are coming back up the river to spawn
19 numbers are way down worldwide because of
20 overfishing the oceans.

21 And that's all I got to say. And thank
22 you for the time and the opportunity to speak.
23 Thank you.

24 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you can
25 move to the next line, please.

1 **OPERATOR:** Next comment comes from the
2 line of Bruce Gage. Bruce Gage, your line is now
3 open for comment; please go ahead.

4 **BRUCE GAGE:** Thanks, Maryam, and unnamed
5 agency official. Like Maggie said, I'm Bruce Gage.
6 I have a small solar electric company in Spokane,
7 Washington, that I've installed for the last 20
8 years, over a megawatt and a half of solar, which
9 really isn't very much compared to hydro-electric
10 dams.

11 But I think the science clearly shows
12 that, and, in fact, in the EIS comments, they
13 actually said that the removal of the four lower
14 Snake River dams was the best alternative, but they
15 decided not to go with that. And I think it's
16 probably because it's actually the sixth string of
17 20 years of failed federal plans. It really doesn't
18 waiver from the status quo over the last 20 years.

19 It doesn't matter what the science has
20 been saying. The agency officials of the U.S. Army
21 Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, and
22 Bonneville Power Administration, are all federal
23 agencies that are supposed to be working for the
24 greater good of the people in this country. And
25 that doesn't seem to be the case for the last 20

1 years, even though they've been required to do so by
2 a federal judge.

3 And the energy produced by those four dams
4 has already been replaced by solar and wind; one
5 percent per dam of the entire BPA output, one
6 percent of 100 percent. So four percent of the
7 entire BPA output is produced by the four lower
8 Snake River dams, and that's mostly just in the
9 spring runoff time when -- it depends on the snow
10 pack, but when the river's running high.

11 And I think that science right there and
12 the fact that they can be easily breached, the
13 earthen sections can easily be breached by -- I
14 mean, earth movers can do that. The concrete
15 doesn't have to be removed. The locks can be open.
16 We can have a free-flowing Snake River dam to
17 basically save a species, people. The salmon and
18 the orca are going to go extinct in the next five
19 years if that doesn't happen.

20 Eight dams is way too many dams. Eight
21 dams in 900 miles-plus to Redfish Lake is way too
22 many dams for any fish to continue to do into the
23 near future.

24 And so I'd just like to again thank the --

25 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds

1 remaining.

2 **BRUCE GAGE:** -- unnamed agency officials
3 that may be listening. I'd also like to make it a
4 little personal, there's a lot of dead people that
5 are responsible for this as well that,
6 unfortunately, are -- such as Warren Magnuson. But
7 there's a lot of people alive that can do something
8 about this. Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Timothy
9 Vail of the Walla Walla Corps of Engineers; senators
10 Patty Murray, Dan Newhouse, and Maria Cantwell.
11 Other names are from the BPA, Kathy Rogers from
12 Eastern Washington. Actually, Wanda Keefer from the
13 Port of Clarkston. Lorri Gray, Bureau of
14 Reclamation. Kristin Meira, Executive Director of
15 Pacific Northwest Waterways Association. And Kurt
16 Miller --

17 **MS. HABIBI:** Your time has lapsed.

18 **BRUCE GAGE:** -- you're paid to call in,
19 and you're misinformed.

20 **MS. HABIBI:** Operator, you can move to the
21 next caller, please.

22 **OPERATOR:** Next comment comes from the
23 line of Benjamin Coker. Benjamin Coker, your line
24 is now open for comment. Please go ahead.

25 **BENJAMIN COKER:** Thank you. I'm Benjamin

1 Coker, resident and physical laborer of Washington
2 state. And the previous comment about the Portland
3 Audubon Society and their work in restoring the
4 river and the damage that the dam has done really
5 resonates with me. And I would -- I'm in full
6 support of breaching the dam. Thank you.

7 **MS. HABIBI:** Before we move on to our next
8 caller, I'd like to take a moment to welcome anyone
9 who has joined us.

10 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.
11 And this is a public meeting for providing comments
12 on the CRSO draft EIS. If you'd like to provide a
13 comment, please press one then zero to add your name
14 to the queue. Agency officials from U.S. Army Corps
15 of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bonneville
16 Power Administration remain on the line to hear your
17 comments. Though we are not responding to questions
18 or comments during this meeting or providing
19 additional presentation, the agencies do welcome and
20 will consider your comments in developing the final
21 EIS, which will be released this summer.

22 If you provide a comment, you're welcome
23 to remain on the line to hear from others. We
24 currently have two callers in the queue. Again, if
25 you'd like to make a comment, please press one then

1 zero.

2 Operator, we can move to the next caller.

3 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
4 line of Nathan Piengkham. Nathan Piengkham, your
5 line is now open for comment; please go ahead.

6 **NATHAN PIENGKHAM:** Thank you. My name is
7 Nathan Piengkham. I'm a private citizen and a
8 member of the Kalispel Tribe.

9 I would just like to say I'm in support of
10 removing the four lower Snake River dams as our best
11 option. From the research that I've looked at,
12 looks like we could easily have like 10 million wild
13 salmon back in our rivers. And during a time where
14 people are having a lot of health issues and losing
15 healthy options for food, a large number of wild
16 salmon would be a great natural healthy way of
17 getting people stronger and healthy again. And for
18 the future, I think that would be best for all the
19 people in the area. Thank you.

20 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you may
21 move to the next line, please.

22 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
23 line of Nina Sarmiento. Nina Sarmiento, your line
24 is now open for comment; please go ahead.

25 **NINA SARMIENTO:** Thank you so much for

1 this opportunity to speak. My name is Nina, and I'm
2 25 years old. My education is in biology. And
3 before I critique the EIS, which I have the
4 privilege of diving into these past few weeks, I
5 want to address some of the erroneous claims by the
6 hydropower group such as Northwest RiverPartners,
7 Kurt Miller, talking about hydropower. And the dams
8 are losing money and the surplus is losing money.
9 And this can be found in Chapter 3, page 804, of the
10 draft EIS, in which you can see that 26 percent of
11 surplus is sold from BPA for 12 percent of revenue.
12 So 12 percent of revenue from 26 percent of surplus,
13 that sounds like you're losing money; doesn't matter
14 if it's a contract.

15 The next thing I want to point out that
16 that person stated is that the connection between
17 orca, salmon, orca and the Snake River is very
18 clear. And the fact that it's not even in the EIS
19 is a fatal flaw. And from the Center of Whale
20 Research, which is definitely the most reputable
21 source of information on these orcas, they say that
22 the Southern Resident killer whales primarily forage
23 on Chinook and 80 to 90 percent of the Chinook
24 consumed by that group originated from the Columbia
25 River originally. And so they have a study on their

1 website that actually has tracked the orcas and
2 where they foraged. And it's very clear. I mean,
3 it's like denying climate science. You know we know
4 that orcas are related to salmon and related to this
5 river system.

6 So anyway, I want to continue on to my
7 actual critique of the EIS. And my biggest critique
8 is that the non-breach alternative, this EIS has
9 spent \$80 million justifying non-breach alternatives
10 and has presented the MO-3 breach alternative as a
11 poison pill. And this MO-3 has been poisoned by
12 more spill, structural measures and mitigation on
13 other lower Columbia River dams. There's already a
14 fully developed breach plan from the 2002 EIS --

15 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
16 remaining.

17 **NINA SARMIENTO:** So the fact that this EIS
18 says the same thing but with poison in it, is just
19 really, really disappointing. And I don't really
20 have time to point out other specific things. But
21 the MO-3 has been falsely presented as extremely
22 expensive. And even so, the evidence of MO-3 points
23 to it as the only alternative that saves money and
24 has the highest probability of recovering salmon and
25 orca.

1 And I really look forward to commenting on
2 this more with all of my knowledge. Thank you so
3 much.

4 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you can
5 move to the next caller.

6 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
7 line of Kristin Meira. Kristin Meira, your line is
8 now open for comment; please go ahead.

9 **KRISTIN MEIRA:** Thank you. My name is
10 Kristin Meira. I'm the Executive Director of the
11 Pacific Northwest Waterways Association. We're a
12 non-profit, non-partisan regional group comprised of
13 farmers, towboat companies, utilities, terminals,
14 pilots, longshoremen, folks who are very much
15 interested in how things are grown and made in the
16 Northwest and then moved primarily on our waterways.
17 We exist to provide information here in the region
18 and beyond.

19 I want to provide a little bit of
20 information to provide some context for some of the
21 things that I heard earlier in the call. In
22 particular, there was a claim that barging is
23 subsidized by the federal government. This is not
24 accurate. Towboat companies pay a 29 cent per
25 gallon diesel tax for all of their transits on the

1 inland waterway system.

2 There was another claim that dredging
3 costs the federal government \$12 million per year.
4 This is also inaccurate. Most rivers, most federal
5 navigation channels in the United States require
6 annual maintenance dredging. This is true for most
7 of the federal navigation projects in the Pacific
8 Northwest and in other parts of the country. One of
9 the very few places where this is not true is on the
10 Snake River. The Snake River needs almost no
11 maintenance dredging on an ongoing basis. You can
12 just look at the recent history. The Snake received
13 some maintenance dredging in 2006, and then no
14 maintenance dredging until 2015. So I'm not sure
15 where the previous caller received information about
16 a \$12 million annual price tag, but that is not
17 accurate.

18 The last thing I'll mention is that we
19 will be submitting written comments and would
20 welcome and inquiries for information. And we very
21 much appreciate the effort of the federal agencies
22 on this product. Thank you.

23 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, we can
24 move to the next caller.

25 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the

1 line of Errol Povah as a follow-up comment. Mr.
2 Povah, your line is now open for comment; please go
3 ahead.

4 **ERROL POVAH:** Thank you. I just noticed
5 that Kurt Miller got a couple of kicks at the can,
6 so I thought I'd call in for a second time as well.

7 I'd just like to highly commend all of
8 those who have spoken so passionately in favor of
9 breaching the dams. It's got to happen if we care
10 about the salmon species that are going extinct and
11 specifically about the orcas. If we care about
12 them, we need to breach them and we need to breach
13 them now. Thank you.

14 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. This is your
15 facilitator, Maryam Habibi. For those who may have
16 joined us, this is a public meeting for providing
17 comments on the CRSO draft EIS. If you'd like to
18 provide a comment, please press one then zero to add
19 your name to the queue. Agency officials remain on
20 the line to hear your comments. Though we are not
21 responding to questions or comments during this
22 meeting or providing additional presentation, the
23 agencies do welcome and will consider your comments
24 in developing the final EIS, which will be released
25 this summer.

1 We encourage you to remain on the line to
2 hear from others after you've provided comments.
3 Currently there is one caller in the queue. I'll
4 remind you that you may press one then zero at any
5 time to have your name added to the list.

6 Operator, when the line is ready.

7 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
8 line of Bebe Anderson. Bebe Anderson, your line is
9 now open for comment; please go ahead.

10 **BEBE ANDERSON:** Thank you. I'm just
11 calling to support the comments that have been
12 presented by Portland Audubon. I think that it's
13 incredibly important that the dams be removed and
14 the flows be increased to restore habitat. I
15 volunteer at Audubon, work at their -- volunteer at
16 their Wildlife Care Center. I just know how vital
17 habitat restoration is. It's one of the things that
18 makes Oregon great is our habitat. And so I, again,
19 want to just second the comments that have been
20 submitted by Portland Audubon on this matter. Thank
21 you.

22 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. At this time, we
23 have no other callers in the queue to provide
24 comments.

25 This is your facilitator, Maryam Habibi.

1 If you would like to provide a comment, please press
2 one then zero to add your name to the queue.

3 Agency officials remain on the line to
4 hear your comments. Though we're not responding to
5 questions or comments during this meeting or
6 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
7 welcome and will consider your comments in
8 developing the final EIS. This will be released
9 this summer.

10 It looks like we do have another caller
11 entering the queue now.

12 Operator, when they're ready, you may open
13 their line.

14 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
15 line of Jim Waddell. Jim Waddell, your line is now
16 open for comment; please go ahead.

17 **JIM WADDELL:** Thanks again. I'm Jim
18 Waddell. I'm civil engineer, a 35-year veteran of
19 the Army Corps of Engineers, Deputy District
20 Engineer in Walla Walla for a few years, and I'm
21 also a public utility commissioner state of
22 Washington.

23 It's been an interesting conversation. So
24 I want to point out a couple things that are
25 erroneous in this EIS. And I think it's important

1 to realize that what has happened here is with this
2 Multiple Objective 3, the agencies, and I think
3 primarily -- well, I won't say who -- have added a
4 lot of extras to it. It's been called a poison
5 pill. And what that means is, that they've added
6 stuff to make breaching look pretty expensive.

7 The other thing is, some of the cost, this
8 \$1 billion or 100 -- over \$1 billion for
9 implementation cost is really based on an
10 exaggerated breach cost.

11 And all this was pointed out years ago is
12 that breaching is actually very, very inexpensive.
13 It's cheaper than the Elwha breaching, actually.

14 And when you use correct assumptions, and
15 I'm just talking about assumptions, some basic fatal
16 flaws in the assumption and the planning process
17 back in 2000, which has been repeated now in this
18 DEIS when they said they basically escalated cost
19 from 2019 -- or 1999.

20 And what you get is, is if you correct
21 these costs, it turns out breaching by itself will
22 save \$100 million a year in terms of capital, O&M,
23 and construction cost for additional hardware on
24 lower Columbia dams and Snake River dams. Even if
25 you keep all that stuff in there, it still saves \$57

1 million a year. So the preferred alternative is
2 going to cost \$51 million a year, but breaching will
3 save anywhere from 50 to 100 million dollars a year.

4 And so you have to ask yourself, why are
5 ratepayers going to get hit with all this additional
6 cost to support dams that are certainly not
7 restoring salmon and the alleged benefits in terms
8 of cash, annual benefits from hydropower are
9 outrageously overexaggerated.

10 The 2,000 megawatts of sustained peaking
11 power is simply impossible to do on these run of
12 river dams. They are not storage dams. If you try
13 to generate 2,000 --

14 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
15 remaining.

16 **JIM WADDELL:** -- megawatts of sustained
17 power, you will basically drain those reservoirs at
18 least 30 or 40 feet, which eliminates navigation, it
19 eliminates fish passage, and it basically changes
20 the purpose of the project, which does require
21 Congressional authorization; whereas breaching or
22 placing a project into a non-operational status is
23 what we're saying needs to be done with these dams,
24 does not require an authorization from Congress.
25 And the money to pay for this is not appropriated

1 from Congress; it's got to be paid for by Bonneville
2 Power Administration through rates.

3 Even so, like I just said, it's all --

4 **MS. HABIBI:** Your time has lapsed.

5 Thank you. Operator, you may move to the
6 next caller.

7 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
8 line of Bob Sallinger. Bob Sallinger, your line is
9 now open for comment; please go ahead.

10 **BOB SALLINGER:** Thank you. My name is Bob
11 Sallinger. I'm the Conservation Director for
12 Portland Audubon. I testified earlier. I wouldn't
13 ordinarily come back and testify twice, but most
14 hearings that's not allowed, but it appears to be at
15 this one.

16 I just want to make a couple of
17 suggestions. I appreciate the fact that you're
18 working under difficult circumstances tonight. But
19 at the same time, it was your choice to go forward
20 with these kinds of hearings under these challenging
21 circumstances rather than to delay. We disagree
22 with that decision.

23 But since you have, we do think you have
24 an obligation to do these hearings well. And
25 unfortunately, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has

1 a history of doing hearings poorly. They make it
2 very, very difficult for the public to be involved.
3 This sets a new low bar.

4 Couple of suggestions. Number one, we
5 would urge you to have the people who are listening
6 to this hearing on video so the public can actually
7 see who they're talking to. We're not suggesting
8 that you put the speakers on video. But I do think
9 you ought to put the people who are listening on
10 video so we can see who's in the room, who's paying
11 attention, and so there's basic accountability.

12 Number two, I would urge you to have an
13 email line to which you can respond quickly if
14 callers are having problems getting through,
15 problems being heard and so forth, so-on and so-
16 forth. We've heard that there have been some
17 problems tonight.

18 Number three, we would recommend that you
19 post online who is in the room listening to this
20 testimony. That's not online. It would be nice to
21 actually have that information in front of us so we
22 know who is listening.

23 And lastly, we would suggest that you have
24 clear rules. Typically in these kinds of hearings,
25 you don't allow people to come back and testify

1 multiple times, give rebuttal testimony. If, in
2 fact, that is the case, it ought to be clear and
3 transparent and everybody ought to know that that is
4 allowed.

5 And then one final thing, it appears that
6 a number of speakers tonight were difficult to hear,
7 there was a lot of background noise, that kind of a
8 thing. We would really urge you to make sure your
9 systems are functioning well. People are waiting a
10 long time to testify, and it's unacceptable that
11 there's background noise of people having
12 conversations while people are trying to testify
13 online.

14 So thank you. And we hope you can do a
15 better job tomorrow night.

16 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you may
17 move to the next caller.

18 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next comment
19 comes from the line of Keith Kutchins. Mr.
20 Kutchins, your line is now open for comment; please
21 go ahead.

22 **KEITH KUTCHINS:** Thank you. I guess since
23 we're getting some folks circled around to the back
24 of the line, I didn't do that last week, but I'm
25 taking advantage of it today.

1 Just it makes me -- I'm really troubled.
2 This is an Environmental Impact Statement under the
3 National Environmental Policy Act. It is not a
4 water supply impact statement. It's not an
5 electricity production impact statement. It's not a
6 navigation or even, for that matter, a commodities
7 transportation impact statement.

8 So I'm befuddled why the one multiple
9 alternative, Multiple Objective 3, the bypassing the
10 four lower Snake dams by removing the earth infill
11 section, which provides a tremendous benefit to
12 water supply, irrigation, and electricity
13 production, by allowing the storage reservoirs to
14 remain relatively full and stable, why that option?

15 And the folks that are supporting it in
16 these public comments, why that's getting the short
17 shrift. It's been, as Jim Martin so eloquently
18 said, 40, 30 years of this status quo. And back
19 then, some of us were saying not another nickel
20 should be spent on screens, curtains, bypasses, and
21 barges. Lest those nickels, now upwards of hundreds
22 of millions of dollars, end up becoming
23 justification for keeping those four dams in place
24 in the first place.

25 These folks that are saying, let's start

1 the process now, moving earth and so it's actually -
2 - I'm in agreement with and wholeheartedly support.

3 Anyway, a few more topics together and
4 then a final wrap-up on the last day, but I'll be
5 tuning in the next couple days and I'll quit going
6 to the back of the line, thank you for the
7 opportunity to do it once this time; appreciate it.
8 Thank you. I'm done.

9 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. This is your
10 facilitator, Maryam Habibi. For those who may have
11 joined us, this is a public meeting for providing
12 comments on the CRSO draft EIS. If you'd like to
13 provide a comment, please press one then zero to add
14 your name to the queue.

15 Agency officials remain on the line to
16 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
17 questions or comments during this meeting or
18 providing additional presentation, the agencies
19 welcome and will consider your comments in
20 developing the final EIS, which will be released
21 this summer.

22 At the beginning of the meeting we
23 introduced the agency officials that were listening
24 to this call as Jim Fredericks from the U.S. Army
25 Corps of Engineers, Roland Springer from Bureau of

1 Reclamation, and Scott Armentrout from Bonneville
2 Power Administration.

3 If you do provide a comment, we encourage
4 you to remain on the line to hear from others. As a
5 reminder, if you'd like to provide a comment, press
6 one then zero to add your name to the queue.

7 Agency officials will remain on the line.

8 Currently there are no callers in queue.

9 We'll check back in, in a couple of minutes.

10 **(No audio - 3:16:01 to 3:18:02)**

11 **MS. HABIBI:** This is your facilitator,
12 Maryam Habibi. This is a public meeting for
13 providing comments on the CRSO draft EIS. If you
14 would like to provide a comment, please press one
15 then zero to add your name to the queue.

16 Agency officials remain on the line to
17 hear your comments. Though we are not responding to
18 questions or comments during this meeting or
19 providing additional presentation, the agencies
20 welcome and will consider your comments in
21 developing the final EIS, which will be released
22 this summer.

23 We encourage you to remain on the line to
24 hear from others who may join us. It looks like we
25 have two callers in queue.

1 Operator, you may go to the next line.

2 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
3 line of Ruth Ann Hickey. Ruth Ann Hickey, your line
4 is now open for comment; please go ahead.

5 **RUTH ANN HICKEY:** Thank you very much. I
6 am strongly in support of the federal study which
7 rejects dam breaching as a viable option.

8 I am supporting the scientists with NOAA,
9 who have concluded that breaching will not
10 significantly fix the salmon recovery. Salmon are
11 very important. Orca are very important. Low
12 electricity rates are very important.
13 Transportation of goods is important. Farming is
14 important.

15 A gain in salmon recovery from dam
16 breaching is not guaranteed and the cost of
17 breaching dams is too great. We must work together.
18 We must try other solutions. We must look beyond
19 breaching the dams. We must look at pollution in
20 the Puget Sound area. We must look at rising ocean
21 temperatures.

22 Please trust the federal study and the
23 experts behind that study. Please do not follow the
24 advice of those who are very vocal but also narrowly
25 focused and funded by special interests.

1 Thank you very much for your time.

2 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. Operator, you may
3 open the next line.

4 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
5 line of Nina Sarmiento. Nina Sarmiento, your line
6 is now open for comment; please go ahead.

7 **NINA SARMIENTO:** Hi. My name is Nina.
8 This is the second time I'm making a comment, and
9 I'm not doing anything else and I've read a lot of
10 the EIS. And this is an amazing opportunity to
11 speak to these federal agencies. So I hope I'm not
12 violating any rules of the teleconference. But I
13 really have a lot to say about this EIS, because,
14 like I said before, it's really disappointing.

15 And after reading and analyzing the 2002
16 EIS that already had a fully developed alternative
17 for breaching, reading this MO-3 breaching
18 alternative with all of its poisons to make it
19 undesirable has been really disheartening. So I'm
20 going to point out a few more things.

21 So like I said, there's over-estimated
22 breach cost and unnecessary mitigation that was
23 included in this alternative. And I'm going to
24 specifically cite Appendix Q, cost analysis Annex B,
25 multiple objective specific mitigation cost,

1 resource is anadromous fish. And so it's included
2 in this breach alternative 78 million to release
3 hatchery fish to help address the loss of fish in
4 the river during breaching.

5 And so clearly the mitigation action was
6 misguided here because breaching has to occur when
7 there are no fish in the river. And so talking to a
8 biologist, who should be advising the agencies on
9 this process, should know that breaching would
10 happen between December and March when there are no
11 fish in the river. And so then there wouldn't need
12 to be that 78 million allocated towards restoring
13 these fish that would be dead if they were breaching
14 in the middle of the summer.

15 And so that has me wondering, okay, who
16 did these federal agencies make deals with to give
17 the hatcheries \$78 million so they can release more
18 hatchery fish? So these are the types of things
19 that I'm seeing. And I'm just like, okay, you're
20 doing this, this way and it's costing this amount of
21 money, but you can do it another way and it'll
22 actually cost so much less money.

23 And so the whole thing is absolutely
24 ridiculous. And so failure --

25 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds

1 remaining.

2 **NINA SARMIENTO:** Okay. Awesome. So I
3 support breaching, the two-tiered approach, which is
4 the salmon, orca situation is an emergency and
5 breaching needs to happen immediately. And then the
6 EIS can be used further to mitigate and update the
7 system to recover salmon, assuming that the four
8 lower Snake dams are breached.

9 So we're really at this point where time
10 is up for salmon and orcas and ratepayers that are
11 losing money every year.

12 So thanks again. That's what I have to
13 say right now, maybe more later. Thank you so much
14 for hearing me out. I really appreciate this
15 opportunity. This is so awesome. I've never done
16 this before. Thank you.

17 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. This is your
18 facilitator, Maryam Habibi. For those who may have
19 joined us, this is a public meeting for providing
20 comments on the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like
21 to provide a comment, please press one and then zero
22 to add your name to the queue.

23 Agency officials from U.S. Army Corps of
24 Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bonneville
25 Power Administration, remain on the line to hear

1 your comments. Though we are not responding to
2 questions or comments during this meeting or
3 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
4 welcome and will consider your comments in
5 developing the final EIS, which will be released
6 this summer.

7 If you do provide comments, we encourage
8 you to remain on the line to hear from others

9 **(No audio - 3:24:30 to 3:25:11)**

10 **MS. HABIBI:** It looks like we have one
11 caller in the queue.

12 Operator, you may open their line when
13 they're ready.

14 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
15 line of Amy Canada. Amy Canada, your line is now
16 open for comment; please go ahead.

17 **AMY CANADA:** Good evening. Thank you for
18 taking comments tonight. I'm calling because I want
19 to express my profound desire that the dams be
20 breached. I think that any other alternative is
21 just wasting time, wasting money, when we really
22 desperately need these dams to be breached in order
23 to restore salmon, to save orca, and I also believe
24 to really boost the economy in this part of the
25 country. I think that that part of Idaho, even

1 Eastern Washington there, would greatly benefit
2 economically from having a free-flowing river that
3 would attract all kinds of sportsmen.

4 And I just have to say even on a personal
5 level, I just put my almost two-year-old to bed, and
6 I just would really love the day that we could go
7 and fish for salmon, wild salmon on a free-flowing
8 Snake River there. I mean, that is a huge dream of
9 mine.

10 So I just really believe that this is the
11 true alternative that's going to work. And all
12 these other things that are being proposed are just
13 not going to do the job and we're just going to
14 watch this precious, precious resource dwindle away
15 to nothing. Thank you.

16 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. This is your
17 facilitator, Maryam Habibi. For those who may have
18 joined us, this is a public meeting for providing
19 comments on the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like
20 to provide a comment, please press one then zero to
21 add your name to the queue.

22 Agency officials from U.S. Army Corps of
23 Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bonneville
24 Power Administration, remain on the line to hear
25 your comments. Though we are not responding to

1 questions or comments during this meeting or
2 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
3 welcome and will consider your comments in
4 developing the final EIS, which will be released
5 this summer.

6 If you do provide a comment, we encourage
7 you to remain on the line to hear from others.

8 Agency officials will remain on the line,
9 and we'll check back in again in a couple of
10 minutes.

11 **(No audio - 3:27:53 to 3:29:30)**

12 **MS. HABIBI:** It looks like we have one
13 caller in queue.

14 Operator, when they're ready, you can open
15 their line.

16 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
17 line of Leah Sarmiento. Your conference line is
18 open for comment; please go ahead.

19 **LEAH SARMIENTO:** In order to save
20 endangered Snake River salmon, Southern Resident
21 orca, and ratepayer money, the federal agencies
22 should address the Columbia River system in a two-
23 tiered process. Tier one is an emergency response
24 action for the immediate drawdown and breach of
25 Lower Granite and Little Goose Dam, followed by the

1 remaining two dams in subsequent years.

2 Tier two is addressing system operations
3 and further mitigation activities in the rest of the
4 Columbia River basin using the new EIS, assuming
5 that the four lower Snake River dams are breached.

6 The two-tiered approach should be
7 initiated for the following biological and economic
8 reasons: endangered Snake River salmon and
9 steelhead have not recovered since 2002 EIS was
10 implemented and have gotten much worse over the last
11 four years; wild stocks may not survive further
12 studies foreseen in the CRSO process; the economic
13 benefits of the dams to the region have declined and
14 operational costs have risen. The Army Corps of
15 Engineers already spent seven years and 33 million
16 of rate and taxpayer money on the 2002 EIS with a
17 breach alternative.

18 The two-tiered approach can be
19 accomplished following the existing guidelines. The
20 Army Corps of Engineers has a fiduciary
21 responsibility to cease operations and place a
22 project into a non-operational status when projects
23 are losing money economically or causing unresolved
24 or biological harm, that the Corps doesn't need
25 specific authorization to secure the project by

1 breaching.

2 The federal agencies have responsibility
3 to comply with the Endangered Species Act and to
4 take actions necessary to recover endangered salmon,
5 steelhead, and Southern Resident orca. Breaching
6 can be paid for by BPA as the least cost way to
7 accomplish fish mitigation under the 1980 Northwest
8 Power and Conservation Act and as a means of
9 transferring savings from lower Snake River dams to
10 other Columbia River dams.

11 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. This is your
12 facilitator, Maryam Habibi. This is a public
13 meeting for providing comments on the CRSO draft
14 EIS. If you would like to provide a comment, please
15 press one then zero to add your name to the queue.

16 Agency officials remain on the line to
17 hear your comments.

18 There are currently no callers in queue.

19 We will remain on the line and check in
20 again shortly.

21 **(No audio - 3:32:20 to 3:34:02)**

22 **MS. HABIBI:** It looks like we have two
23 callers in queue.

24 Operator, you may move to the first caller
25 when they're ready.

1 **OPERATOR:** Thank you. Have a follow-up
2 comment from Nina Sarmiento. Your line is now open,
3 Nina Sarmiento, for a follow-up comment; please go
4 ahead.

5 **NINA SARMIENTO:** Thank you so much. This
6 is just amazing that I get to point out all of my
7 critiques of this EIS. So I have two more.

8 The first one is on Appendix Q, Annex B,
9 multiple objective specific mitigation costs,
10 navigation, transportation. And so it says that the
11 impact of breaching MO-3 would result in high water
12 velocities which would result in damage to the piers
13 and the bridges. So we would need to protect them
14 from erosion, and this would cost \$203 million.

15 And so this is an inconsistency that I
16 thought that was wrong, because the armor is already
17 on the piers and the bridges, because those piers
18 and bridges were built before the lower Snake River
19 dams were built. So yes, there is an estimated cost
20 to making sure that those structures are viable and
21 are safe; however, \$203 million is the cost that
22 they put in this DEIS, and that is just completely
23 baffling.

24 I see it as another way to increase the
25 cost of MO-3 to make it undesirable when it really

1 is the best alternative to save salmon, save orca,
2 and save money.

3 And so then I'll continue on to my next
4 critique, which is in Appendix Q, Annex B, specific
5 mitigation costs under navigation and transportation
6 where it says breaching of the lower Snake River
7 dams would cause sediment deposit in the navigation
8 channel at the confluence of the Columbia upper part
9 of McNary Reservoir.

10 And so this is completely false. They
11 allocate \$108 million for mitigating this sediment
12 that they say would be deposited so they would have
13 to dredge. However, this mitigation cost was not in
14 the 2002 EIS breach alternative mitigation cost.
15 And so why?

16 So it's because it's not a real mitigation
17 cost. The sediment would be deposited after the
18 breach of our -- after the breach of Ice Harbor Dam,
19 there is still seven miles until the confluence of
20 the Columbia and the Snake. And so it would take
21 over 100 years for sediment to build up at that
22 confluence and for that dredging, which they put a
23 price tag of \$108 million to be necessary.

24 And so for that reason and the reason that
25 it was not identified in the 2002 EIS, this

1 mitigation action is completely (inaudible).

2 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
3 remaining.

4 **NINA SARMIENTO:** So those are just two
5 more things that I saw that's just like, you know,
6 all of these million-dollar price tags adding on to
7 the cost of MO-3 just to make it undesirable and
8 justify the non-breaching alternatives, and it just
9 seems like the federal agencies are trying to make
10 the breach alternative too costly when it was
11 clearly the right choice in 2002, and it is clearly
12 the right choice almost 20 years later. Salmon and
13 orcas cannot wait, neither can ratepayers. I'm a
14 ratepayer. My rates are going up for the next 20
15 years by .3 -- by three percent, and the money lost
16 on these --

17 **MS. HABIBI:** Your time has lapsed.

18 **NINA SARMIENTO:** -- is very significant.
19 So thank you so much. Again, thank you. Have a
20 great night.

21 **MS. HABIBI:** Operator, you can move to the
22 next caller, please.

23 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
24 line of Mike Hickey. Mr. Hickey, your line is now
25 open for comment; please go ahead.

1 **MIKE HICKEY:** Thank you. Let me first say
2 that the current dams on the Snake River should
3 remain. The economic benefit to the region far
4 outweighs the economic benefits gained by improved
5 salmon runs. These dams opened up thousands upon
6 thousands of acres of product -- farm producing
7 lands, much of it at a time when increased food
8 production land is not available throughout the rest
9 of the world.

10 Furthermore, these dams provide renewable
11 energy produced that help combat the global warming.
12 Without the dams, thousands upon thousands of CO2
13 gas will be generated and released into the
14 atmosphere.

15 I'm asking you please to believe the
16 scientists and engineering reports that have been
17 done and concluded that breaching the dams will not
18 guarantee a salmon recovery. Thank you.

19 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. This is your
20 facilitator, Maryam Habibi. For anyone who has
21 joined us, this is a public meeting for providing
22 comments on the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like
23 to provide a comment, please press one then zero to
24 add your name to the queue.

25 Agency officials from U.S. Army Corps of

1 Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bonneville
2 Power Administration, remain on the line to hear
3 your comments. Though we're not responding to
4 questions or comments during this meeting or
5 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
6 welcome and will consider your comments in
7 developing the final EIS, which will be released
8 this summer.

9 As a reminder, if you'd like to provide a
10 comment, you may press one then zero to add your
11 name to the queue.

12 **(No audio - 3:40:38 to 3:40:54)**

13 **MS. HABIBI:** It looks like we have one
14 caller queued.

15 Operator, when they're ready, you may open
16 their line.

17 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
18 line of Aaron Baxter. Aaron Baxter, your line is
19 now open for comment; please go ahead.

20 **AARON BAXTER:** Thank you so very much. I
21 appreciate the opportunity to comment on the lower
22 four Snake River dams.

23 I am fully supportive of their breach. I
24 recognize concerns by locals on irrigation. I
25 understand from reading the reports that it is quite

1 simple to provide irrigation from the river once the
2 dams have been breached.

3 Clearly, the dams are killing about eight
4 million salmon every year. They can make it up;
5 they can't make it back down. The generators -- or
6 sorry -- turbines take them out. Those salmon
7 returning could provide a great deal of economy to
8 the Snake River valley, to recreation, to first
9 peoples. They also are supportive of feeding the
10 Southern Resident orcas which are starving in the
11 Salish Sea. We, as humans, need to do more for the
12 environment; that includes helping out organisms,
13 species that have been around before we ever thought
14 up dams.

15 Governor Kate Brown is offering support to
16 Governor Inslee in making sure there is a just
17 transition to the people reliant in the economy.
18 And when we say that these dams are economically
19 viable, as the last caller did, my understanding is
20 that hundreds of millions of dollars are being spent
21 to keep these obsolete dams running; they need a lot
22 of work.

23 And there's also, the state of California,
24 for example, used to buy the surplus power is
25 generating their own power through other options,

1 solar and wind. So it begs question, why is the
2 state of Washington dragging its heels when 700,000,
3 plus-700,000 signed petitions supporting the breach
4 of these four dams? The dams were initially put in
5 place for barging of materials. The turbines were
6 put in as an afterthought. They only provide four
7 percent -- four to ten percent of the power produced
8 in Washington state. The times when the power
9 production is at its peak is --

10 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
11 remaining.

12 **AARON BAXTER:** -- after the spring floods.
13 So there's enough dams on that river to continue
14 supporting the power needs of the state of
15 Washington.

16 Thank you. I appreciate this opportunity
17 to speak. And I do hope that the bureaucracy that
18 runs this will look at the bigger picture and the
19 money that is being spent by ratepayers to support
20 the dams. Thank you.

21 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. This is your
22 facilitator, Maryam Habibi. For anyone who has
23 joined us, this is a public meeting for providing
24 comments on the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like
25 to provide a comment, please press one then zero to

1 add your name to the queue.

2 Agency officials from U.S. Army Corps of
3 Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bonneville
4 Power Administration, remain on the line to hear
5 your comments. Though we're not responding to
6 questions or comments during this meeting or
7 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
8 welcome and will consider your comments in
9 developing the final EIS, which will be released
10 this summer.

11 It looks like we have one call in the
12 queue.

13 Operator, you may open their line when
14 they're ready.

15 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
16 line of Dale Maggard. Dale Maggard, your line is
17 now open for comment; please go ahead.

18 **DALE MAGGARD:** Yeah. I think this is a
19 real bad idea, the breaching the dams. It will
20 allow a minimal percentage of more fish that are
21 current -- you know, a percentage of what is
22 actually making the trip nowadays. But the cost is
23 huge, not only just the cost of removing it, but
24 when you add the freight bill that's going to come
25 due because the barges aren't going to be allowed to

1 run anymore, they're going to improve highways,
2 build new highways. Twenty-four million miles of
3 additional trucking, I read, will be needed; 24
4 million miles. And so you got to do that. All the
5 new rail lines to replace barge traffic, railroad
6 lines.

7 Increased transportation costs. The
8 farmers are going to get hit with like \$40 million
9 range annually, the cost of those, and without the
10 subsidies the government's going to have to pay, the
11 farmers are going to be forced into bankruptcy, a
12 lot of them, because of it. The fuel consumption by
13 the truck and train nearly five million gallons
14 annually. Okay. It's going to add 1.2 million tons
15 of carbon emissions a year in this state, when we're
16 trying to lower our carbon emissions.

17 The loss of the cheap electricity that
18 it's provided. The irrigation. It's going to
19 result in higher electric bills. Huge reductions in
20 crop production. Certain crops probably being
21 discontinued due to lack of irrigation.

22 It further drives the cost of dam removal
23 beyond anything that is logical as far as acceptance
24 goes. It is absolutely ridiculous. Thank you.

25 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. This is your

1 facilitator, Maryam Habibi. For those who may have
2 joined us, this is a public meeting for providing
3 comments on the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like
4 to provide a comment, please press one then zero to
5 add your name to the queue.

6 Agency officials will remain on the line.

7 Currently there are no callers in queue.

8 We'll remain on the line and check back in again
9 shortly.

10 **(No audio - 3:47:22 to 3:51:01)**

11 **MS. HABIBI:** This is your facilitator,
12 Maryam Habibi. For anyone who's joined us, this is
13 a public meeting for providing comments on the CRSO
14 draft EIS. If you would like to provide a comment,
15 please press one then zero to add your name to the
16 queue.

17 Agency officials from U.S. Army Corps of
18 Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bonneville
19 Power Administration, remain on the line to hear
20 your comments. Though we are not responding to
21 questions or comments during this meeting or
22 providing additional presentation, the agencies
23 welcome and will consider your comments in
24 developing the final EIS, which will be released
25 this summer.

1 It looks like we have one caller in queue.

2 Operator, you may open their line.

3 **OPERATOR:** Our comment comes from the line
4 of William Putnam. William Putnam, your line is now
5 open for comment; please go ahead.

6 **WILLIAM PUTNAM:** Hi, there. Thank you. I
7 appreciate that. My name's William Putnam. I'm,
8 quite frankly, a terrified citizen. It would be
9 nice if I was only a concerned citizen, but I'm
10 actually -- I'm terrified. I'm terrified of quite a
11 few different things, and I'd like to kind of
12 stumble my way through a few of those.

13 I'm terrified that none of us are going to
14 get what we want. And the lifetime of this
15 opportunity for us getting what we want is rapidly
16 diminishing.

17 I think we'd all agree that we want salmon
18 to survive and we all want the orcas to survive. I
19 think we can all agree on that. I'm terrified it's
20 going to be too late. It seems like we're coming to
21 the end of our rope in terms of this opportunity to
22 save them.

23 And quite frankly, I'm terrified that the
24 others aren't going to get what they want. People
25 are saying that they want stable irrigation, stable

1 energy, clean energy from these dams. But from what
2 I've gathered about these dams, based on the benefit
3 to cost ratio being far below one, I've read that
4 the cost to benefit ratio of the four lower Snake
5 River dams is point one five.

6 It's actually a fiduciary duty of the U.S.
7 Army Corps of Engineers to put those dams on non-
8 operation status. And if that happens, then that's
9 it. I'm afraid that that's not going to happen in
10 time for us to save the orcas. I'm afraid that's
11 not going to happen in time for us to save the
12 salmon. But it seems like, regardless of those
13 concerns, it seems like that's going to happen. It
14 seems like because these dams are not providing the
15 benefits that we're -- in relation to spending, it
16 seems like they are going to get shut down.

17 So it seems like this opportunity we have
18 for everyone to get what they want, for the wildlife
19 advocates to get what they want and for farmers and
20 shippers, people working the barges, et cetera, on
21 the river, for us all to get what we want, the
22 lifetime of this opportunity is rapidly diminishing.

23 And I would like to see the money that's
24 currently being wasted on fish mitigation, the
25 hundreds of millions of dollars, if not billions at

1 this point since this --

2 **MS. HABIBI:** You have 30 seconds
3 remaining.

4 **WILLIAM PUTNAM:** -- EIS came out. I would
5 like to see that money being spent to help farmers
6 and others. It seems like it's just a no win, no
7 win for anybody. And quite frankly, it's a no win
8 for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of
9 Reclamation, and Bonneville Power, because their
10 reputations are being sullied, facing lawsuits in
11 regards to Endangered Species Act. Nobody's winning
12 on this, and some of these losses are going to
13 permanent, and that's the loss of orcas and salmon
14 and other wildlife.

15 And because of that, I'm in support of
16 breaching the dams. I yield my time.

17 **MS. HABIBI:** Thank you. This is your
18 facilitator, Maryam Habibi. For those who may have
19 joined us, this is a public meeting for providing
20 comments on the CRSO draft EIS. If you would like
21 to provide a comment, please press one then zero to
22 add your name to the queue.

23 Agency officials remain on the line to
24 hear your comments. Though we're not responding to
25 questions or comments during this meeting or

1 providing additional presentation, the agencies do
2 welcome and will consider your comments in
3 developing the final EIS, which will be released
4 this summer.

5 If you do provide comments, you're welcome
6 to remain on the line to hear from others.

7 It looks like we have callers queuing up.

8 Operator, the next caller when they're
9 ready, you may open their line.

10 **OPERATOR:** Our next comment comes from the
11 line of Nina Sarmiento. Nina Sarmiento, your line
12 is open for comment now; please go ahead.

13 **NINA SARMIENTO:** Thank you. So this is my
14 last comment, and it's because I have something else
15 very specific to point out in the EIS that I am
16 (inaudible) the annexes for irrigation. And federal
17 agencies in this DEIS gave a price tag of 400
18 million for irrigation mitigation. And they got to
19 that price by devaluing the amount of irrigated land
20 and then recording that loss. And that's just
21 absurd. That solution is not helpful for anyone.

22 So a solution that would be much better
23 would be to extend the pipeline from where it is
24 now, taking water out of the reservoir, to the
25 boundaries -- to within the boundaries of the river,

1 given that it is free-flowing again, and all it
2 would take for these farmers to receive irrigation,
3 continued irrigation and have no deficit from this
4 breaching would be to just extend the pipeline. And
5 that would be a fraction of the cost; it would not
6 be 400 million. So it would be 20 million, for
7 example.

8 So that's just another example of where
9 this DEIS has overstated mitigation costs.

10 And then one more thing I'm going to say
11 is about the brainwashing of hydropower. And one
12 specific study is called, the Evaluating Greenhouse
13 Gas Emissions from Hydropower Complexes on Large
14 Rivers in Eastern Washington, 2013, from Richland,
15 U.S. Department of Energy, where it shows that
16 carbon emissions from the reservoirs behind these
17 dams are actually contributing 87,000 metric tonnes
18 of methane, which is more power -- which is more
19 detrimental than carbon emissions towards climate
20 change and that emergency.

21 So I just wanted to make sure that was
22 said.

23 And then I really appreciated that last
24 comment. It was really, really profound. Time is
25 really running out...

1 **(No audio - 3:59:08 to 4:03:08)**

2 **OPERATOR:** Ladies and gentlemen, that does
3 conclude our conference at this time. Thank you for
4 your participation and for using the AT&T
5 Conferencing Services. You may now disconnect.

6 **(Whereupon, the meeting concluded.)**
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CERTIFICATE

I, Debra Sprague, do hereby certify that the proceeding named herein was professionally transcribed on the date set forth in the certificate herein; that I transcribed all testimony adduced and other oral proceedings had in the foregoing matter; and that the foregoing transcript pages constitute a full, true, and correct record of such testimony adduced and oral proceeding had and of the whole thereof.

IN WITNESS HEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 7th day of April, 2020.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debra A. Sprague". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Debra Sprague

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\$1 26:10 47:7	10,000 109:11	1991 62:9	2015 112:14
87:13	100 78:5	1994 78:7	143:14
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\$51 148:2	50:25	91:25	24 73:22
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1 6:8	1966 45:16	2002 12:10	25-year 79:18
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