

Spokane Tribe Natural Resources

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June 11, 2025

Low Impact Hydropower Institute
329 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 2
Lexington, MA 02420

RE: Letter of Support for Douglas PUD's Low Impact Certification of the Wells Hydroelectric Project and Support of Tribal Salmon Reintroduction

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Spokane Tribe of Indians ("Tribe"), a member of the Upper Columbia United Tribes ("UCUT"), I am writing to express the Tribe's support for Douglas PUD's application for Low Impact Hydropower Institute (LIHI) certification of the Wells Hydroelectric Project, and to recognize their voluntary support of tribal salmon reintroduction efforts.

Douglas PUD was the first partner to enable the Spokane Tribe to transfer live adult Chinook salmon to its waters. This partnership was established prior to formally initiating the Phase 2 Implementation Plan for the reintroduction of salmon to the blocked areas above Chief Joseph Dam ("P2IP"). The P2IP is a collaborative regional effort that is being led by UCUT member tribes, primarily funded by the Bonneville Power Administration, and is of the utmost importance to the Spokane people.

For over 90 years, the Spokane Tribe has lived without access to Pacific salmon and other anadromous species, a foundational part of our culture, subsistence and economy. The P2IP represents more than a feasibility study, it represents hope and the possibility of returning salmon to our ancestral and Reservation's waters. These include over 1,000 miles of salmon habitat currently blocked by Chief Joseph, Grand Coulee, and the four lower Spokane River Dams.

Although Douglas PUD is not required under its existing license to participate in this effort, it has voluntarily taken significant action to support the P2IP and salmon reintroduction, and we are deeply grateful for that leadership. Their contributions include:

1. Providing adult holding space at the Wells Fish Hatchery for disease testing, which enabled the ceremonial and culturally significant release of adult salmon into the blocked area, which is helping to restore a vital piece of tribal life and heritage.
2. Sharing acoustic telemetry data of tagged adult salmon, critical to understanding fallback behavior below Chief Joseph Dam and within the Wells Project.
3. Raising over 180,000 subyearling Chinook salmon annually at the Wells Fish Hatchery to support telemetry-based behavioral studies, which are expected to advance science that could make reintroduction to blocked habitats a long-term reality.
4. Implementing a returning adult sort-by-code system, which helps identify adult salmon returning to the Columbia River that are destined for reintroduction sites and creating the opportunity for these fish to be repatriated to their natal and traditional waters.

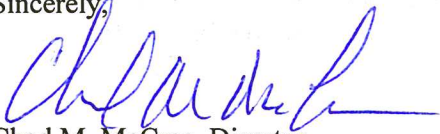
5. Entering into facility use agreements with tribal partners, allowing access for tribal scientists and technicians to collect surplus salmon to support both subsistence use and research and in turn, strengthening tribal food sovereignty and our capacity for scientific leadership.
6. Voluntarily, sharing plans, SOP and adult handling facility engineering drawings of the Wells Fish Hatchery with UCUT funded contractors aiming to develop similar facilities in the future that will support the P2IP program.

These efforts go far beyond the bounds of regulatory compliance. They reflect a deep respect for tribal sovereignty, cultural restoration, and intergenerational equity. The Spokane Tribe recognizes Douglas PUD's role as a committed and proactive partner in this once-in-a-generation opportunity to restore salmon and salmon-based lifeways to the upper Columbia River Basin.

For these reasons, the Spokane Tribe of Indians strongly supports Douglas PUD's application for Low Impact Hydropower certification of the Wells Hydroelectric Project. We urge the Low Impact Hydropower Institute to recognize the importance of Douglas PUD's voluntary efforts, and to certify the Wells Project accordingly.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact myself or our Anadromous Program Manager, Conor Giorgi at (509) 998-1139 with any questions or for additional information.

Sincerely,



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