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Olympia, Washington 98501



3406 Cherry Avenue NE  
Salem, Oregon 97303

June 12, 2013

The Honorable Doc Hastings  
Chair, Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Hastings:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), the state agencies that jointly manage the lower Columbia River to protect and enhance fish and wildlife resources, support the amendment to the Marine Mammal Protection Act as provided in the Endangered Salmon and Fisheries Predation Protection Act, H.R. 1308.

We are encouraged that the provisions of H.R. 1308 will enable our respective agencies and our co-managers to more effectively manage the unusual and increasing behavior by members of healthy and growing sea lion populations that travel as far as 145 miles inland to feed on endangered salmon and other fishery resources.

Extensive actions have been taken and billions of dollars are being spent to improve the survival of Columbia River salmon populations. The recovery plans for the endangered salmon include reductions in all sources of mortality, including harvest, dam operations, hatchery reform, habitat restoration, and predation. No other source of salmon mortality would be allowed to rise from low levels just ten years ago to such high levels today. If the states, tribes, and federal governments are unable to effectively manage the sea lion predation, it is likely to continue to increase and offset improvements and expenditures from other recovery actions in the basin.

We appreciate the work the Natural Resource Committee has put into H.R. 1308. We are encouraged and hopeful that it will be passed by Congress and enable a more effective and

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efficient legal mechanism for the state, federal, and tribal governments of the Northwest to address this challenge in recovering and protecting Columbia River fishery resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Philip Anderson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Philip Anderson  
Director  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Curtis E. Melcher", written in a cursive style.

Curtis E. Melcher  
Deputy Director  
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife