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## SHOSHONE-BANNOCK TRIBES ATTEND COLUMBIA BASIN TRIBAL LEADER MEETING TO URGE CONGRESS TO MAKE HISTORIC INVESTMENT IN NORTHWEST INFRASTRUCTURE



*Submitted photo of Shoshone-Bannock Tribal fisherman hunting for salmon, Office of Public Affairs.*

**Mission, Oregon** – On April 14-15, 2021, Fort Hall Business Council Chairman Devon Boyer, Councilman Nathan Small and tribal staff, joined other Tribal representatives from 11 Northwest tribes of the Columbia Basin, to strategize how to advance the salmon and energy proposal from Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID). Simpson’s proposal could make an unprecedented infrastructure investment throughout the Pacific Northwest to save imperiled salmon runs, protect inland agriculture industries, and transform the region’s energy supply for a renewable future. The tribal leaders were hosted by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Mission, Oregon.

In a strong intertribal effort, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes joined Tribal leaders and staff from across the Northwest to try and find common voice on Congressman Simpson’s ‘Northwest in Transition’ proposal. Chairman Boyer stated, “Today, the Tribes unite to support everyone who lives within the Columbia River Basin. We need a comprehensive approach to the issues of how we manage the Snake River, because our salmon are running out of time.”

Shoshone-Bannock Fish & Wildlife Director, Chad Colter, explained, “The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have always advocated for our salmon because it is so valuable and important to our people. In 1990, our Tribe petitioned the federal government to list Sockeye Salmon as an endangered species to draw awareness to all of our salmon stocks in Idaho.”

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During this tribal leader meeting, congressional representatives along with Oregon and Washington governors learned directly from tribes of their perspectives on Simpson's proposal, so they can better understand how important this issue is for our region and to tribes. Councilman Small further added, "Today, the Tribes will be speaking on behalf of our salmon. Our fish are at risk of going extinct and Simpson's proposal is our best chance to save them."

The tribes united around the following set of "common ground" principles intended to continue and expand their dialogue with agricultural and energy interests, including:

- The true wealth of our region begins with the health of our rivers, fish and the ecosystem they support, which is our culture, history, and future;
- Agriculture is an important part of our region's economy;
- Affordable and reliable power is important to regional families and business – tribal and non-tribal;
- Providing legal certainty for the vast majority of federal dams in the Columbia/Snake River basins is a necessary element of a lasting solution;
- A significant federal infrastructure investment in alternative energy and transportation provides a unique opportunity to restore salmon while keeping power affordable and maintaining agricultural commerce.

The next step will be for tribal leadership to begin the process of developing specific proposals that will eventually lead into a congressional legislative bill to introduced as part of President Biden's infrastructure bill.

Chairman Boyer adds, "A legislative solution is preferable to all other avenues and is urgently needed. The time for action is now. We urge our community members, Tribal members, citizens of Idaho, to take action by going to Simpson's website and offering your personal comments in support of the proposal. **Your individual voice is critical to this effort.**"

For more information on the Initiative, visit <https://simpson.house.gov/salmon/>

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