



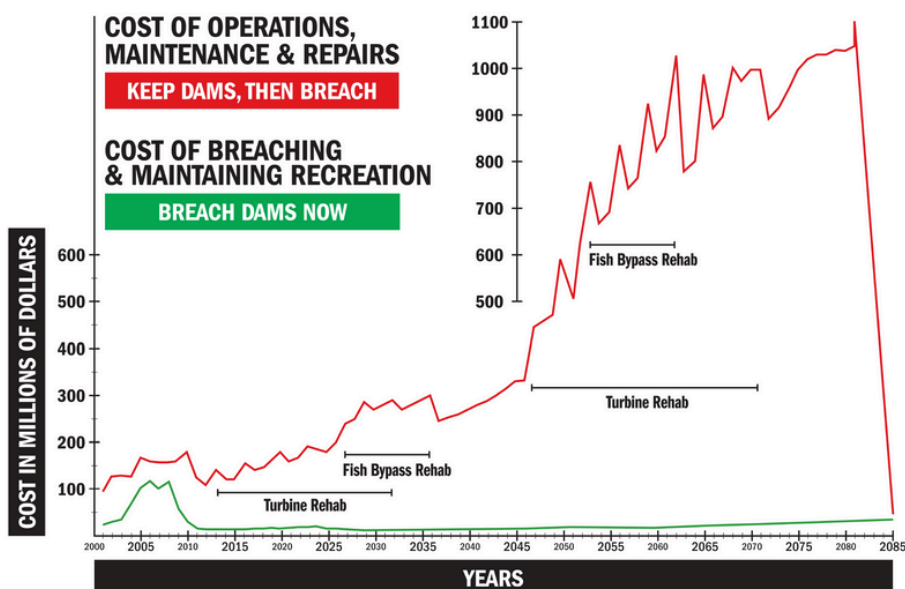
Suggested key talking points for breaching the 4 lower Snake River Dams

- Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW) are the best-studied marine mammal in the world. [\[Source\]](#)
- Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW) are a distinct population of killer whales (orcas) that inhabit the waters of the northeastern Pacific Ocean. Researchers have documented and referred to each individual by identifying an alphanumeric system and given name, i.e. L25 'Ocean Sun'.
- Listed since 2005 as endangered under the Endangered Species Act, this population is in dire condition, with 73 individuals remaining. [\[Source\]](#)
- Southern Resident Killer Whales are among the most intelligent and socially evolved species. Their brain is 5 times the size of a human's.
- SRKW live within their family groups, and mothers feed their sons their entire lives. The SRKWs are connected within their family groups, aka matriline.
- From interpreting photogrammetry, a highly accurate scientific method of turning photos in 3D scans, SR3 and Orca Conservancy reported a list of 14 named SRKW as being in BC1 status this summer. These individuals have a 2-3 times higher probability of mortality. Since releasing the list in the summer of 2024, 3 SRKW have been reported as "missing/deceased." [\[Source\]](#)
- At least 130 species depend on Salmon, including the exclusively fish-eating SRKW. Approximately 80% of their diet is specifically endangered Chinook Salmon. [\[Source\]](#)
- Over half of the Chinook salmon Southern Residents eat come from the Columbia River Basin. [\[Source\]](#)
- Salmon and endangered Steelhead have returned to their original spawning locations since the Elwah dams were removed. In a matter of months, thousands of Chinook have returned to Klamath River since dam removals. This brings greater hope to successfully restore prime foraging habitat for the Snake River Chinook (aka "King") Salmon by breaching the 4 lower Snake River dams. [\[Source\]](#)
- Scientists, including NOAA (National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration), have said for years that removing (or breaching) the lower Snake River dams is the single most impactful action we can take to restore Chinook salmon and recover SRKW. [\[Source\]](#)

- In collaboration with Columbia Riverkeeper, the Stockholm Environment Institute's report shows that the Lower Snake River dams waste roughly 30,400 acre-feet of water yearly. This water evaporates off the surface of the four expansive Lower Snake reservoirs in Eastern Washington, and water waste will likely increase with climate change. [Source]
- This evaporation study complements the recent Lower Snake River Water Supply Replacement Plan draft by the Washington Department of Ecology and the US Bureau of Reclamation. Together, they show that farms along the Lower Snake River can have reliable, plentiful water to grow food and other crops even after dam removal. [Source]
- More than \$17 billion of taxpayer money has been spent trying to recover Columbia and Snake River wild salmon populations, without a single success. [Source]
- The \$7.6 million benefit of lower Snake commercial navigation is now dwarfed by the \$24+ million it costs to maintain and mitigate the channel. [Source]
- Since the construction of the lower Snake River dams began in the 1960s, Snake River wild salmon populations have declined by 60%. Furthermore, the aging dams require more than \$1 billion in upgrades. [Source]
- Breaching the lower Snake River dams will increase economic activity within the counties and legislative districts surrounding the Lower Snake River in southeast Washington. The large influx of visitors in Year 1 will have expenditures of \$500 million and generate nearly \$400 million in economic contribution. [Source]
- I strongly urge you (Governor Bob Ferguson) to prioritize dam service replacement projects, advance near-term salmon recovery efforts, defend federal commitments made to Tribes, and support the Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative. These actions will not only restore salmon and support orcas but also uphold treaty rights and ensure thriving communities, economies, and ecosystems in Washington.

THE COSTS OF KEEPING THE FOUR LOWER SNAKE RIVER DAMS:

A Reevaluation of the Lower Snake River Feasibility Report, dated 1 Jan 2015; Attachment 1: Alternative 3 USACE and BPA Totals, 6.88%, Base Year 2001



Graph by our friends at www.damsense.org