



3/25/2022

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Governor of Washington

Dear Governor Inslee:

On behalf of the Columbia River Treaty Tribes, we are asking you to once again veto a section of the operating budget related to gillnet buybacks, as described in [ESSB 5693](#), Section 308, subsection 65. The \$14.4 million allocated to this program could be put to much better use for salmon recovery efforts along the Columbia River rather than targeting a specific type of fishing gear.

Our review of this language leads us to view this as a harvest management policy directive tucked within a budget proviso. In our experience, the management of Columbia River fisheries is best left in the hands of the professional resource managers, not legislators who may be responding to specific constituent groups and not to science or treaty considerations.

Fisheries management, including harvest, is supported by rigorous policy and legal and technical reviews. The budget proviso language, as drafted, would throw these carefully balanced efforts into unneeded and unhelpful new directions. It would also create additional inequities in the State's treatment of gillnet fishers as compared to recreational fishers. We are not comfortable with this ongoing attempt to stigmatize gillnets to achieve harvest allocation goals, and strenuously object to this continued legislative overreach. Banning gillnets is not a conservation measure, but an attack on a specific practice that will create ripple effects along the River.

While we recognize the sovereign interest in the State of Washington in managing its portion of the fishery harvest, we want to caution against this type of legislated policy action where the agency's collaborative processes and expertise are dispensed with for political considerations.

Last year we asked you to veto a similar provision in the operating budget. After a conference call with us and other Tribal leaders, you responded favorably to that request, and we thank you. Unfortunately, we find ourselves back in the same place as a year ago, but our veto request remains the same. This is a poorly thought-out solution to a problem that is much greater than the type of fishing gear used on the Columbia River. Please veto Sec. 308(65) in the 2022 supplemental operating budget.

Respectfully,

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla
Indian Reservation

N. Kathryn Brigham, Chair Board of
Trustees

Confederated Tribes and Bands of the
Yakama Nation

Delano Saluskin, Chair

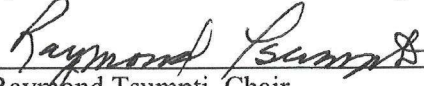
May 25, 2022
Honorable Governer Jay Inslee

Nez Perce Tribe



Sam Penney, Chair

Confederated Tribes of the Warm
Springs Indian Reservation of Oregon



Raymond Tsumpti, Chair

Cc: Jamila Thomas, Drew Shirk, Keith Phillips, Jim Crawford, JT Austin, Jennifer Hennessy