



Citizens for a Healthy Bay

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February 19, 2019
Eleanor Ott, PE
Department of Ecology
Water Quality Program
Post Office Box 47600
Olympia, Washington 98504

Re: Comments on Draft 401 Water Quality Permits for Nine Federal Dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers

Dear Ms. Ott,

Thank you for providing the opportunity to review and comment on Draft 401 Water Quality Permits for Nine Federal Dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers.

Citizens for a Healthy Bay (CHB) is a 28-year-old organization whose mission is to represent and engage people in the cleanup, restoration, and protection of Commencement Bay, its surrounding waters and natural habitat. We are a 501(c)3 nonprofit providing practical, solutions-based environmental leadership in the Puget Sound area. We work side-by-side with residents, businesses, and government to prevent and mitigate pollution and to make our community healthier and more vibrant.

Staff and expert members of CHB's Policy and Technical Advisory Committee have reviewed the permits and related regulations. CHB supports Ecology's authority to regulate water temperature around the nine federal dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers.

Recent reports about the progress of climate change indicate that the planet is experiencing rapid warming. This trend will only further exacerbate warming river water temperatures and scarcity, as much of our precipitation will occur in the form of rain rather than snow. Decreased snowpack will continue to change the timing and magnitude of spring freshet. Warming water temperatures lessons native salmon's ability to fight disease, and widens the range of salmon predators, further increasing their risks of mortality.

Ecology's authority to regulate water temperature around these federal dams to be consistent with State water quality standards is one step of many to recovering our native salmon populations. While CHB does not see this action as the final answer for salmon recovery, it is one step in the right direction.

Please contact me if there are questions regarding my comments. Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft 401 Water Quality Permits for Nine Federal Dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Malott". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melissa Malott
Executive Director, Citizens for a Healthy Bay
mmalott@healthybay.org, (253) 383-2429