



Ethics & Treaty Project

509.939.1290 / john@waterplanet.ws
celp.org/ethics-treaty-project/

Columbia River Treaty Session | PNWER Annual Summit | July 25, 2018

Comments of John Osborn MD

Thank you. I am a physician and help coordinate the Ethics & Treaty Project hosted by Sierra Club, Center for Environmental Law & Policy, and the Columbia Institute for Water Policy.

Working with faith, indigenous, and community leaders, we have organized five international conferences guided by four words: One River, Ethics Matter. Each conference focuses on:

- respectful dialogue and ethics-based decision-making among diverse nations and communities of the river basin;
- the dams' devastation of salmon and Indigenous peoples, their Nations' territories and homelands in the Columbia River Basin that continues to this day;
- righting historic wrongs, encouraging river stewardship during climate change; and
- building a community of the Columbia united by water, recognizing water is life.

The 6th conference will be held May 30-31, 2019, in Castlegar, B.C. We invite the negotiating teams and all of you here to attend.

I share the following Columbia River Treaty convictions with you today:

1. Dams built pursuant to the Treaty have had devastating impacts. The Upper Columbia is a sacrifice zone: the price for flood protection downstream for Portland, Vancouver, and other urban areas and commercial development of the floodplains of the lower river is largely paid by ecologic and economic harm upstream.
2. Dams built pursuant to the Treaty have curtailed flows beneficial for salmon, sturgeon, lamprey, and other fish and wildlife and the maintenance of aquatic habitats in the United States and Canada.
3. The Bureau of Reclamation is pulling more and more water out of the Columbia River, water that would better serve the imperiled salmon runs and the starving orcas of Puget Sound.
4. Climate change is unfolding around us: forests are burning, glaciers melting, river temperatures rising, all with risk of more and worsening massive die-offs of salmon and other river life.
5. We need to rebalance how Canada and the United States manage the Columbia River.
6. Ecosystem-based Function must be an equal 3rd primary purpose of the modernized Treaty.
7. Tribes and First Nations need to be at the Treaty negotiating table.
8. We must keep water in the river to support life.
9. I support the mid-level Arrow reservoir operation proposal developed by British Columbia with input from their stakeholders and review by First Nations because it takes a solid step to address Canadian ecological losses.
10. Both nations should take responsibility for their shared decision to extirpate salmon from the Upper Columbia. Grand Coulee dam-related issues need to be on the table as part of treaty negotiations, including fish passage and restoring salmon to the Upper Columbia.

Finally, for these negotiations to succeed in producing an enduring remedy for shared management of the Columbia River:

- Both nations must work together,
- Transparency in the negotiating process is paramount,
- Shared information and excellent modeling should guide informed choices about the future of the Columbia River. To achieve this, we need to
 - restart the Collaborative Modeling Workgroup,
 - complete a flood risk review of the River, and
 - incorporate the tribes' and NGO's *Value of Natural Capital in the Columbia River Basin*.

One River. Ethics Matter. Thank you.