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STATE OF WASHINGTON
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

January 11, 2020

Robert Compton
Northwest Region Regional Office
U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Portland, OR 97232-4169
Submitted via E-Mail only.

Mr. Robert Compton:

On behalf of the Washington Invasive Species Council, I am writing to express strong support for the Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) application for funding to regionally address northern pike through a forum. Beyond support, I am also conveying our commitment to supplementing your funding with in-kind or cash contributions from the council due to the critical importance and immediate need to perform this work.

The Washington State Legislature established the Washington Invasive Species Council in 2006 to develop and implement a strategic approach to prevent and control invasive species that threaten Washington's environment and economy. One such harmful species that has established itself in several areas of the state and threatens the anadromous waters of the Columbia River and its tributaries, including the Snake River, is northern pike (*Esox lucius*). Northern pike is one of the top priority invasive species in the State of Washington. We are also in critically important point in time where the spread could be stopped, or localized eradication of pioneering populations could occur with well-coordinated and executed response actions.

The UCUT organization and five federally recognized tribes in Washington and Idaho are in a unique position to coordinate and ensure knowledge transfer as they were first impacted by northern pike. Sharing this information with Canadian, state of Oregon and Washington, and local organizations upstream and downstream is important to building regional capacity and capabilities as northern pike spread closer to the anadromous portion of the Columbia River—risking a multimillion dollar annual tribal, commercial, and sport fishery; in addition to hundreds of millions of dollars invested in habitat and species recovery.

In summary, the Washington Invasive Species Council strongly supports your funding of this application. Please contact me at justin.bush@rco.wa.gov or 360-902-3088 with any questions you may have regarding our support of this project.

Justin D. Bush, Executive Coordinator
Washington Invasive Species Council