

The Columbia River Task Force

“Our Power is Water”

Clark Mather, Executive Director

Columbia Basin Development League | October 29, 2024

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Who we are

"Lead the charge for the Northwest to realize its clean energy potential using hydroelectricity as the cornerstone."



Our mission: Lead the charge for the Northwest to realize its clean energy potential using **hydroelectricity** as the cornerstone

We **educate** the public and policymakers about the important role of hydroelectricity

We **partner** with our members, Native American tribes, communities, agencies and businesses to achieve common goals

We **support** research and analytics so the region can reach informed decisions

We **engage** in public processes to provide balanced insights and suggestions

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A collage of three images. The top image shows a tall clock tower with a red roof and a blue clock face, set against a clear blue sky. The middle image shows a serene lake with a wooden bridge, surrounded by trees with yellow and orange autumn foliage. The bottom image shows a cityscape with a large, white, geodesic dome structure in the foreground, under a cloudy sky.

A brief intro to Clark Mather

- Hydro is my professional ‘why’
- Grew up and worked for Congress east of the Cascades
- 18 years living west of Cascades
- Two decades of public affairs, utility leadership & experience
 - 11+ years as staff in northwest congressional delegation
 - 11+ years at Tacoma Public Utilities

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Columbia Basin Task Force

- **Chaired by Oregon Resident Nik Blosser**
- **Charged with**
 - *Implementing the '12/14' agreement*
 - *Implementing the September 2023 Presidential Memorandum*
 - *Implementing Upper Columbia River fish passage*
- **Regional studies include**
 - *Energy Study (U.S. Department of Energy, PNNL, State of Washington)*
 - *Water Replacement Study (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, State of Washington)*
 - *Transportation Study (State of Washington)*
 - *Recreation Study (State of Washington)*

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Water Supply Replacement Study

- Agencies include U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, State of Washington
- *“The study goal is to obtain a detailed understanding of current water supply and irrigation, municipal and industrial uses near the four Lower Snake River dams...evaluate impacts to water delivery in the event Congress were to authorize breach of the dams....”*
- Study consultant has reported that there’s enough water for irrigation, municipal use, and well function should the LSRD breaching occur.

Water Supply Replacement Study

- A lot of unknowns, including the cost to update pumps and systems, what lowered well levels means for municipalities and personal use, and what impacts are for water and wastewater treatment upgrades.
- Only about 20 entities have been interviewed so far.
- NW RiverPartners's suggestions
 - *Engage now in the process, draft report expected by the end of 2024*
 - <https://www.usbr.gov/pn/fcrps/lrws.html>
 - LSRWSRScomments@usbr.gov

Regional Energy Study

- Agencies include U.S. Department of Energy, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, State of Washington
- *“The study will...examine at least one scenario looking at what infrastructure and resources could be needed to replace the power and services provided by the four Lower Snake River Dams...”*
- **NW RiverPartners’s priorities**
 - *Bring utility experts to all tables*
 - *Follow WA State law: Projections must rely on ‘commercially-available’ energy resources*
 - *Science, facts, holistic view of hydropower must drive the process*

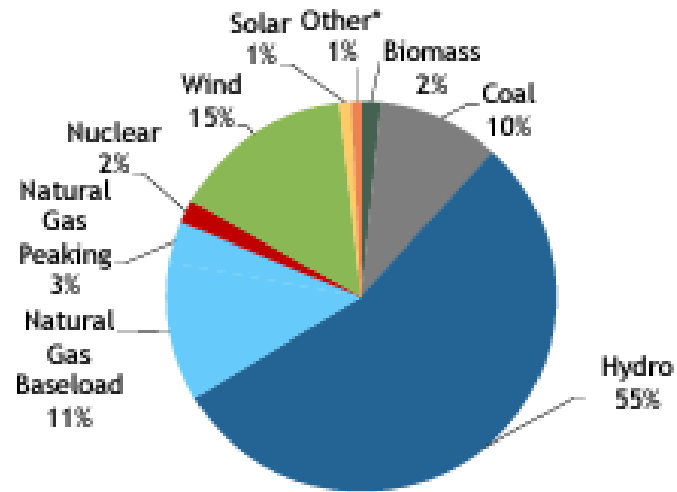
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**Millions of
people benefit**

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Hydropower = PNW backbone

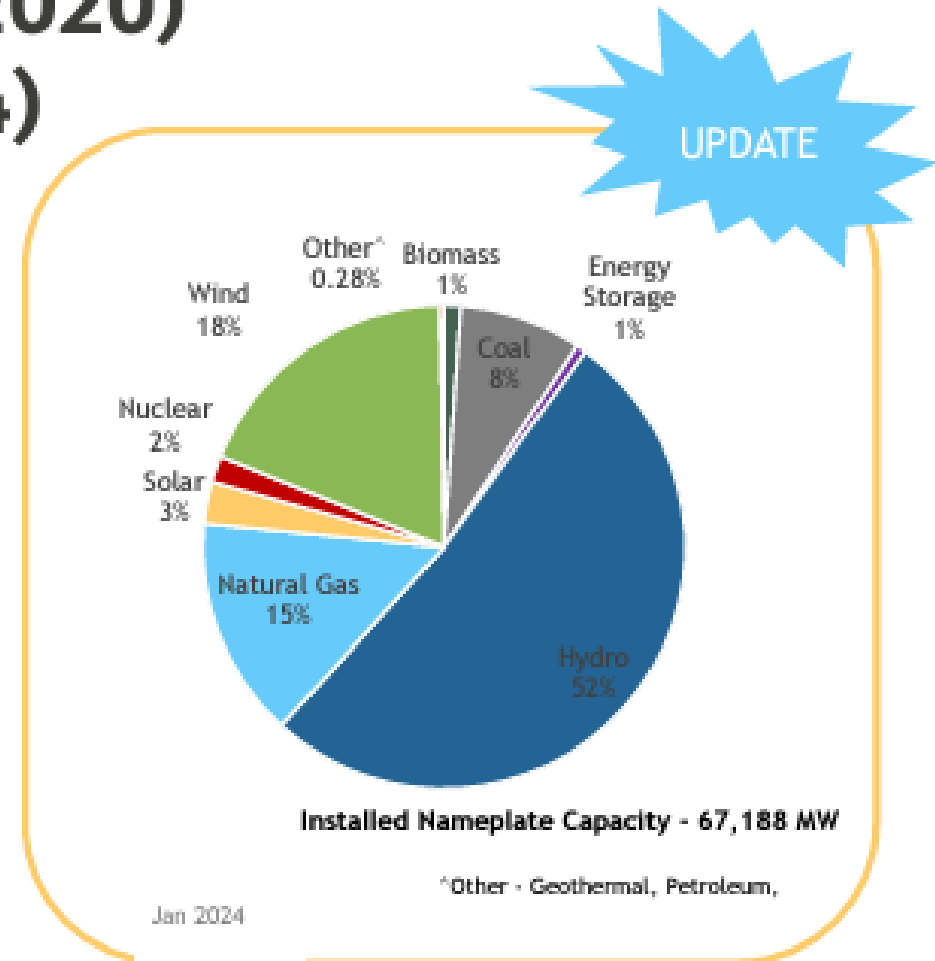
2021 Power Plan (April 2020) vs. Today (February 2024)



Installed Nameplate Capacity - 63,301 MW

April 2020

*Other - Geothermal, Petroleum, Energy Storage (Pumped Hydro + Battery)



Installed Nameplate Capacity - 67,188 MW

Jan 2024

*Other - Geothermal, Petroleum,

UPDATE

Courtesy: Northwest Power and Conservation Council

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Hydropower = Affordable Energy



Courtesy: TVA Community Credit Union

PNW customers pay some of the lowest electricity rates in the U.S.

- WA – 5th cheapest retail cost
- OR – 6th cheapest retail cost
- ID – 2nd cheapest retail cost
- MT – 10th cheapest retail cost

Courtesy: U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Electricity Profile 2022

Hydropower System = Jobs



Courtesy: Getty Images

- Irrigates hundreds of thousands of high-value irrigated ag with more potential
- Companies are locating here for clean, reliable affordable energy
- Our marine highways move 51 million tons of international trade
- Billions of dollars in value
- Supports rural communities and economic development opportunities

Courtesy: Pacific Northwest Waterways Association, Columbia Snake River System Facts

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Hydropower system = Reliable, clean energy



Google prepares for new data center

June 18, 2024, VANCOUVER, WA

[Download Now](#)

Statement from Northwest RiverPartners on establishment of Columbia River Task Force, report from Interior Department

Vancouver, Washington—June 18, 2024—Today, Northwest RiverPartners released the following statement in response to the Biden Administration's creation of a new interagency Columbia River Task Force and a report released by the Department of the Interior on federal hydropower in the Pacific Northwest.



Courtesy: Group14, Seattle Times

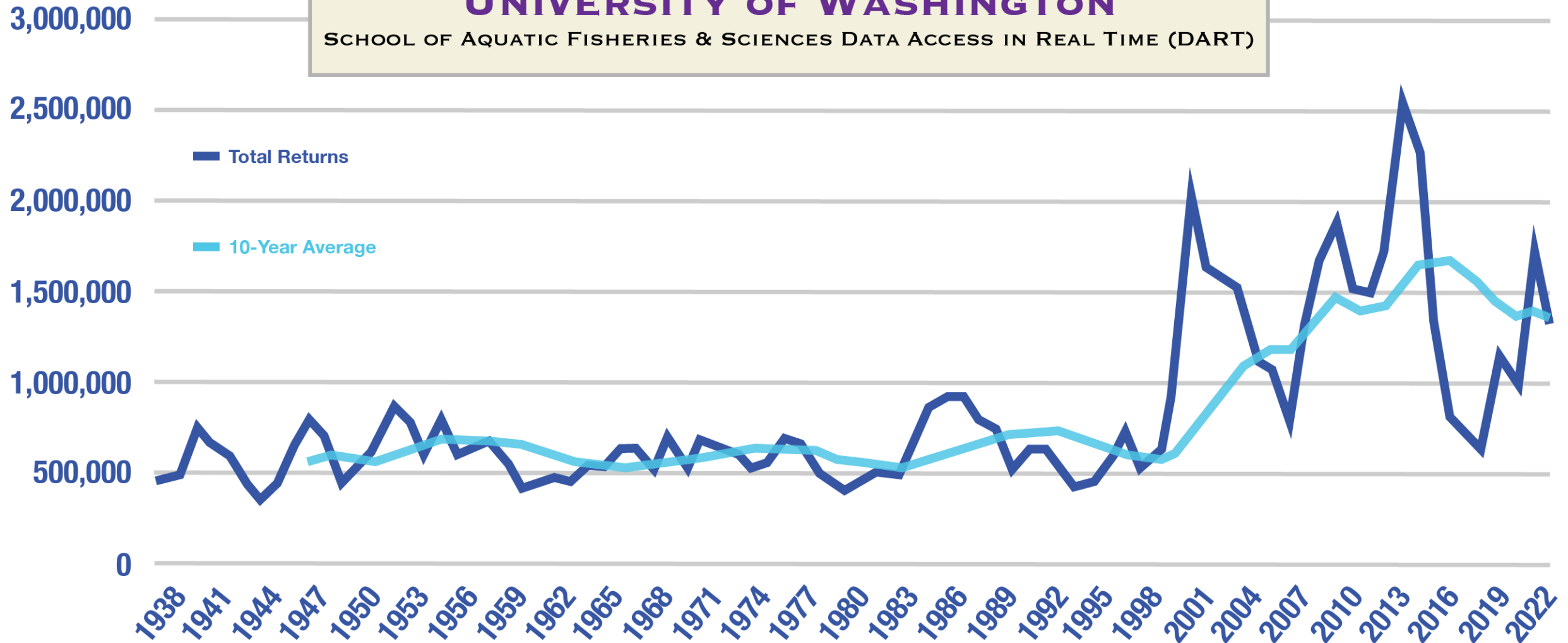
The Seattle Times Surge in electricity demand poses tricky path ahead for PNW

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Bonneville Dam

Total Adult Salmon and Steelhead Returns* 1938-2023

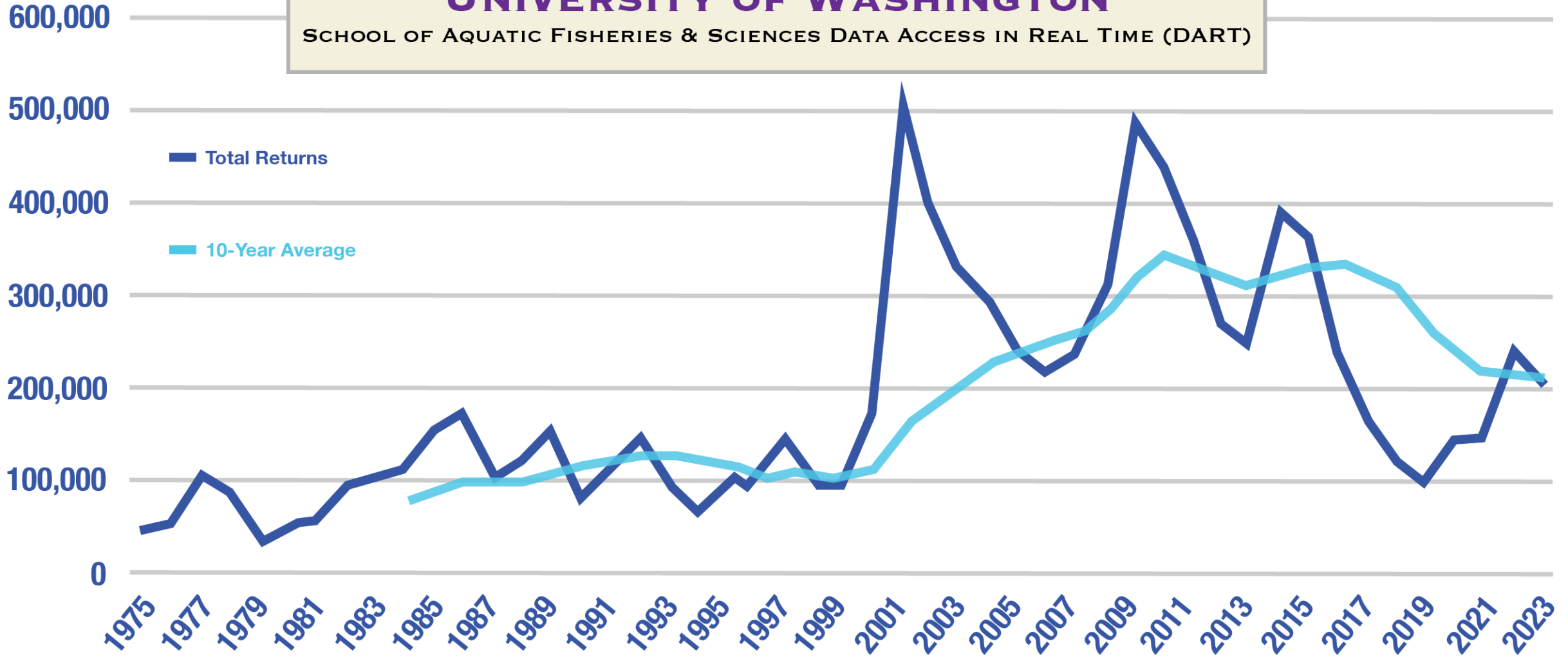
DATA FROM THE
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
SCHOOL OF AQUATIC FISHERIES & SCIENCES DATA ACCESS IN REAL TIME (DART)



*Excludes "Jacks"

Lower Granite Dam Total Adult Salmon and Steelhead Returns* 1975-2023

DATA FROM THE
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
SCHOOL OF AQUATIC FISHERIES & SCIENCES DATA ACCESS IN REAL TIME (DART)



*Excludes "Jacks"

NW RiverPartners supports additional efforts, Upper Columbia River salmon reintroduction

The Northwest RiverPartners' board supports engaging in and exploring opportunities surrounding the study of reintroduction (i.e., P2IP) of salmon above Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee dams...This opportunity has the potential to be the most powerful demonstration to-date that hydropower and salmon can coexist and thrive. This can also demonstrate that hydropower interests and fish interests can work together, outside of courts, to solve problems in a collaborative manner which benefits all of our communities.

-Northwest RiverPartners Board Resolution, June 2023

Hydropower support is strong!

- ✓ **WA residents say hydropower is the ‘most important source’ of energy – double any other energy source.**
- ✓ **81% of WA residents support the use of ‘hydroelectric dams to produce electricity.’**
- ✓ **Only 26% of PNW residents support removing Snake River Dams.**

Source: NWRP Commissioned Public Opinion Survey in Partnership with DHM Research, August 11-25, 2023

We need to engage.

Join us!

Scan the code below to stay informed and you'll be alerted to action items you can take on important issues...



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