

**From:** Scott Levy

**Sent:** Sunday, May 15, 2016 11:52 AM

**To:** O'Toole, Patty; Coles, Kendra

**Subject:** Uncertainties - what are the major headings for this topic?

Patty and Kendra,

Last week, we spoke about the long list of critical uncertainties that have been recognized over the decades of Salmon Recovery efforts.

The first FCRPS Biological Opinion to consider the possible removal of the four Lower Snake River dams was way back in 2000.

This action, which Judge Michael Simon is again asking for the feds to include in a legitimate BiOp, was included in 2000 as a contingency if all else did not bring about recovery of listed species at pre-set check in dates.

Dam breaching was not considered necessary at the time because:

Much of the regional debate has focused on removal of Snake River dams.

- There is continuing scientific uncertainty about whether breaching dams is necessary to achieve recovery and considerable uncertainty about whether it will do the job.
- Only Snake River fish benefit from breaching, with no benefit to eight other listed populations.
- Dam removal would require explicit congressional authorization, and, once authorized, cannot be implemented on a short time frame.
- And its high cost may prejudice other actions needed throughout the Basin.

The option of Snake River drawdown therefore appears to rank as a lower priority at this time than other available options because of the long time to implement, narrow benefits, biological uncertainties and high costs.

*(excerpt from Congressional Testimony of William Stelle, Jr.)*

As you organize your categories of critical uncertainties, one heading that quite obviously pops to the top are the “uncertainties” related to this all important question:

“There is continuing scientific uncertainty about whether breaching dams is necessary to achieve recovery and considerable uncertainty about whether it will do the job.”

I hope that this is useful for your continuing efforts.

Best Regards,

Scott Levy

host of [www.bluefish.org](http://www.bluefish.org)

promoting and open and honest dialogue concerning the plight of Idaho's wild Salmon and Steelhead.