

LSRCP STEELHEAD SYMPOSIUM
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Importance of Steelhead Harvest to the Nez Perce Tribe



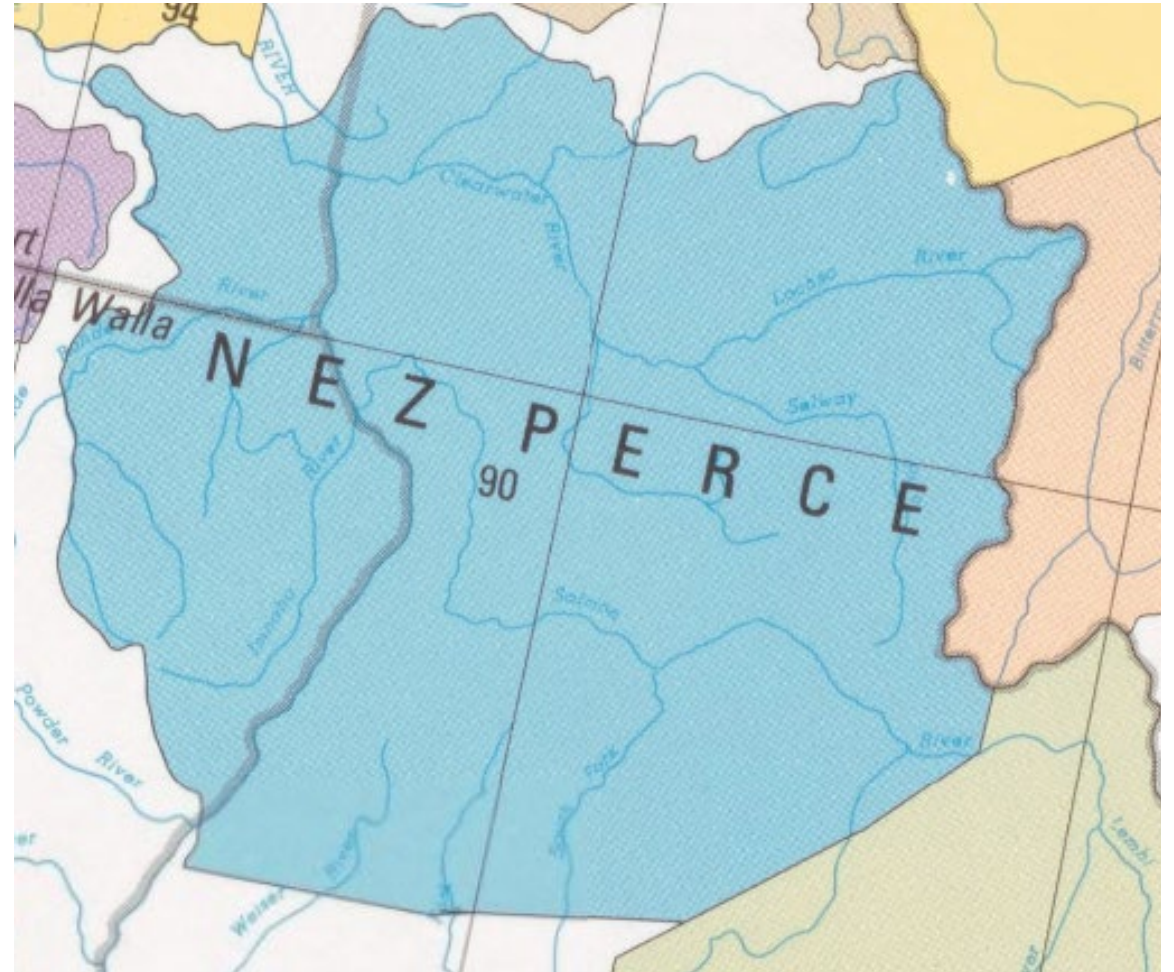
Nez Perce Treaty of 1855

- The exclusive right of taking fish in all the streams where running through or bordering said reservation is further secured to said Indians; as also the right of taking fish at all usual and accustomed places in common with citizens of the Territory...(12 Stats. 957, Article 3). Treaty of 1855.



Nez Perce Overall Vision

- Our vision is to ensure “all species and populations of anadromous and resident fish and their habitats will be healthy and harvestable within Nez Perce U & A areas.”
- NPT guaranteed fair and equitable share of any given run returning to their U&A fishing places.
- Fair share (1969 Belloni Decision) means right to harvest up to 50% of harvestable surplus fish.



Nez Perce View LSRCP Steelhead

- The four Lower Snake River dams impacts adult steelhead returns and our capacity to catch fish in the volumes we used to.
- LSRCP was established in part to mitigate this loss of harvestable salmon and steelhead from operation of these four Lower Snake River Dams.
- LSRCP plays a critical role in producing fish to feed Nez Perce families and to provide opportunity for tribal members to earn some sort of living by fishing for steelhead.



Nez Perce View LSRCP Steelhead

- Maintain the connection between fishing activities and the perpetuation of tribal customs, traditions, and family history of steelhead fishing in Snake River and tributaries.
- Improve access to fishery areas and ability of Tribe to manage our treaty fisheries to attain the treaty harvest share.
- Support the social, cultural, and economic benefits that steelhead provide to our people, by catching and putting food on the table and to acquire other basic goods to support themselves and their families.



LSRCP Mitigation Obligation

- For SY2014-SY2023, LSRCP releases have averaged a return of 47,849 adults, which is 86% of mitigation goal. (Rod Engle email 1/7/25).
- Mitigation goal of 110,200 to downstream fisheries, which NPT participates in Zone 6. B-run steelhead constrain Treaty Indian fisheries in the mainstem Columbia River.

Adult Return Goal above Lower Granite Dam	Hatchery Broodstock Need	Harvestable Fish	NPT Harvest Share
55,100	3,064	52,036	26,018

Nez Perce View Snake River Basin Steelhead Hatchery Adults

- Current NPT harvest of SRB Steelhead has 10 Year average of 2,922 hatchery fish, less than 1 adult fish per tribal member (3,500 tribal members).
- Historically, NPT harvested approximately 61,000 steelhead/year in the SRB, which was roughly 12 adult fish per tribal member.

**SRB HATCHERY
ADULT RETURN
10 YEAR AVERAGE
(2014-2023)**

65,000

**HATCHERY
BROODSTOCK
NEED**

5,000

HARVESTABLE FISH

60,000

**NPT HARVEST
SHARE**

30,000

Nez Perce Harvest: Snake River Basin Steelhead Natural Adults

- For purposes of harvest allocation (between Nez Perce and State fishermen), the Nez Perce Tribe expects that at all return sizes, the Tribe's harvest on natural-origin fish in most cases will be greater than that set forth in the State's fishing regime. The difference in allocation is due to differing fishing methods used by State anglers and members of the Nez Perce Tribe.
- Since ESA coverage was established in 2019, NPT has used approximately 716 of 3,150 allowed impacts (23%) as determined by table below.

MPG	Critical Abundance Threshold*	Proposed natural- origin lethal impact rate (%)	Treaty fisheries natural-origin lethal impact rate (%)	Percent of natural-origin lethal impact rate of total for treaty fisheries
Lower Snake	450	5	3.5	70
Clearwater	1500	10	7.5	75
Grande Ronde	1200	10	7.0	70
Imnaha	300	5	3.5	70
Salmon	2850	10	7.0	70

North Fork Clearwater

- Key historical fishing location and current driver of steelhead harvest in SRB for NPT.
- Primarily harvest of USACOE funded fish.
- Fishery occurs from early September to early April each year.
- NPT needs to develop fisheries that target LSRCP produced fish.

Year	Fishery	Clipped Steelhead		Unclipped Steelhead	
		Caught	Kept	Caught	Kept
2010-11	North Fork Clearwater	2,216	2,167	47	39
2011-12	North Fork Clearwater	2,446	2,344	124	110
2012-13	North Fork Clearwater	1,295	1,258	20	20
2013-14	North Fork Clearwater	1,959	1,917	33	33
2014-15	North Fork Clearwater	2,826	2,525	23	16
2015-16	North Fork Clearwater	2,729	2,480	43	40
2016-17	North Fork Clearwater	3,956	3,888	66	64
2017-18	North Fork Clearwater	1,979	1,946	20	20
2018-19	North Fork Clearwater	2,957	2,925	133	127
2019-20	North Fork Clearwater	1,284	1,251	19	19
2020-21	North Fork Clearwater	1,862	1,785	91	91
2021-22	North Fork Clearwater	778	745	19	19
2022-23	North Fork Clearwater	4,022	3,901	4	4
2023-24	North Fork Clearwater	1,606	1,606	5	5
Average	North Fork Clearwater	2,280	2,196	46	43

Snake River Basin Gillnet Fishery

- Most harvest occurs from late August to early October each fall season.
- In 2024, NPT documented largest harvest to date in gillnet fishery of 2,087 steelhead.
- In 2024, NPT used approximately 534 (42%) of their available natural impacts in gillnet fishery.
- Still leave substantial amount of our hatchery harvest share in the river and unharvested.
- NPT developing other gear types to take advantage of hatchery fish and keep impacts to natural fish within allowable limits.
- Examples: seines, weirs, fish wheels, tangle-net, etc.

Year	Fishery	Clipped Steelhead		Unclipped Steelhead	
		Caught	Kept	Caught	Kept
2010	SRB Gillnet	1,041	1,040	129	129
2011	SRB Gillnet	103	103	32	32
2012	SRB Gillnet	139	139	54	54
2013	SRB Gillnet	177	177	85	85
2014	SRB Gillnet	108	108	53	53
2015	SRB Gillnet	119	119	29	29
2016	SRB Gillnet	123	123	77	77
2017	SRB Gillnet	8	8	0	0
2018	SRB Gillnet	92	92	0	0
2019	SRB Gillnet	34	34	34	34
2020	SRB Gillnet	248	247	127	127
2021	SRB Gillnet	248	247	127	127
2022	SRB Gillnet	1,133	1,129	285	285
2023	SRB Gillnet	516	516	204	204
2024	SRB Gillnet	1,436	1,436	653	651
Average	SRB Gillnet	368	368	126	126

NPT Contributions to LSRCP

- Treaty fisheries do not limit the ability of achieving LSRCP hatchery broodstock needs.
- Strong collaborative process to manage LSRCP adult returns and hatcheries consistent with *US vs. Oregon* commitments, LSRCP production goals, Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans, and ESA consultations.
- Conduct extensive monitoring and evaluation of these programs to evaluate their effectiveness and status and trends.
- Leading efforts to secure hatchery infrastructure funding – Six Sovereigns settlement agreement \$200M for LSRCP facilities.
- Implementation of supplementation programs which help conserve wild runs while supporting “fish to tables”.
- NPT has been accountable to this program. The program needs to be accountable and uphold its part.

LSRCP Should Improve Tribal Capacity to Fully Utilize Available Adult Steelhead Returns

Expand harvest monitoring for steelhead fisheries (expand coverage beyond North Fork and gillnet monitoring, to other fishery areas);

Improved treaty fishery access to remove the total treaty harvest share of hatchery fish from the river; and

Improving storage capacity for steelhead for nutrient enhancement (tribally-caught fish, process fish received for tribal subsistence distributions and spawned out hatchery fish).