



September 25, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Debrah Marriott, 503-226-1565 x227

Federal Support for Toxics Reduction is Needed for the Columbia River

“The recent release of fish consumption advisories is a strong indicator that the Columbia River needs comprehensive toxics reduction, clean up and monitoring,” said Debrah Marriott, Executive Director of the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership. “This further justifies the need for a Columbia River Restoration Act to directly address toxics in the Columbia and fund restoration efforts here on par with other large water bodies around the country. We have known about the toxics in the Columbia for a long time. This is a wakeup call.”

Since 2008, the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership has advocated for federal investment to address toxics in the Columbia River. In February 2010, U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) introduced the Columbia River Restoration Act of 2010 (H. 4652 and S. 3550). Congress did not act on the Bill before they adjourned that year.

The Estuary Partnership is currently working with partners to reintroduce the Columbia River Restoration Act. The Act will authorize Congress to appropriate funds through a local grants program for toxics reduction, cleanup and monitoring to match federal support of other water bodies of similar significance to the nation.

“Data is clearer than ever: toxic contamination in the Columbia River Basin poses a significant threat to the environment and human health. The Columbia River Restoration Act is an important step towards improving water quality and reducing toxics in the river,” said Marriott.

###

About the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership

The Estuary Partnership was established in 1995 by the Governors of Washington and Oregon and the US EPA to provide regional collaboration, to advance science and to get on-the-ground results in the lower Columbia River and estuary. It is a collaborative program of the states of Oregon and Washington, federal agencies, tribal governments, non-profit organizations, businesses and economic interests and citizens. The Estuary Partnership works to restore and protect habitat, improve water quality and reduce pollution, and provide information about the river to a range of audiences. The lower Columbia River and estuary is designated an “Estuary of National Significance,” one of only 28 in the nation. The US EPA administers the National Estuary Program, created in the 1987 amendments to the Clean Water Act. The Estuary Partnership is a National Estuary Program, a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. For more information, visit www.estuarypartnership.org.