

Kleinschmidt Begins Fish Passage Project for Upper Columbia United Tribes in Partnership with Anchor QEA

Project to restore salmon passage at Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee Dams, marking a critical milestone in regional fish recovery efforts

REDMOND, WA, UNITED STATES, December 11, 2024 / EINPresswire.com/ -- [Kleinschmidt Associates](#), a leading environmental and hydropower consulting firm, in partnership with [Anchor QEA](#), has launched a landmark project for the [Upper Columbia United Tribes](#) (UCUT) to lead the development of fish passage systems at Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee dams.



Chief Joseph Dam, Columbia River

The effort aims to reintroduce salmon into historical habitat blocked by the dams. These dams represent two of the largest hydropower production facilities in the United States and are the last in the Columbia River Hydropower System without fish passage capabilities.

The project marks a significant milestone in UCUT's efforts to reintroduce salmon to the Upper Columbia River. It will focus on feasibility studies, planning oversight, and engineering design services to develop the fish passage systems, marking a significant milestone in UCUT's efforts to reintroduce salmon to the Upper Columbia River.

Kleinschmidt and Anchor QEA will collaborate with UCUT and its member tribes (specifically the Coeur d'Alene, Colville, and Spokane tribes), dam owners, and key regulators to advance the UCUT's Phase 2 Implementation Plan (P2IP), which aims to balance ecological, cultural, and hydropower priorities in restoring salmon to their ancestral habitats.

"As we begin the critical step in our 20-year journey to reintroduce salmon into the Upper Columbia, we are grateful to welcome the expertise of Kleinschmidt and Anchor QEA teams in advancing fish passage solutions. With this partnership, we move closer to restoring a resource vital to the cultural and ecological heritage of the people of the upper Columbia", says Laura



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Robinson, Policy Analyst, Upper Columbia United Tribes, “Together, we will ensure that future generations can once again rely on the resilience and abundance of these waters.”

“We are excited and honored to be a part of such an important project, working in partnership with many stakeholders to develop solutions to fish passage problems which the dams have contributed to since their inception. The fish in this region have an ancestral and spiritual connection to the people who live here, dating back thousands of years. It is a privilege to work together towards restoration,” says Andy Holmes, Project Manager

at Kleinschmidt.

Kleinschmidt’s partnership with Anchor QEA brings together expertise in engineering, biology, stakeholder facilitation, and permitting to lead this high-impact project. The combined team will coordinate with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bonneville Power Administration, NOAA Fisheries, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Avista Utilities, as well as the Indigenous communities.

“This project is a remarkable step toward restoring salmon populations and honoring the cultural and ecological legacy of the Upper Columbia United Tribes,” said Saman Chaudry, Chief Strategy Officer at Anchor QEA. “We are proud to support this transformative effort, which blends science and collaboration to address generations of ecological disruption. Anchor QEA is honored to contribute to work that holds such profound significance for Indigenous communities and the environment.”

The project’s timeline is driven by the natural lifecycle of the region’s salmon. Interim adult fish passage facilities are expected to be operational at Chief Joseph Dam by July 1, 2028, and juvenile facilities at Grand Coulee Dam by March 31, 2030. These milestones will help reestablish salmon populations in the upper Columbia River Basin, marking a significant step forward for fish conservation and ecosystem restoration.

For more information about UCUT’s Phase 2 Implementation Plan, Visit Here.

<https://ucut.org/water/phase-2-implementation-plan-testing-feasibility-of-reintroduced-salmon/>

About Upper Columbia United Tribes

The Upper Columbia United Tribes ensure a healthy future for the benefit of all by protecting

and enhancing the traditional territorial lands of our ancestors. Through the collaboration of five area tribes, we take a proactive, collaborative, and science-based approach to promoting fish, water, wildlife, diverse habitat, and Indian culture in the Northwest. For more information, visit <https://ucut.org/>.

About Kleinschmidt

Kleinschmidt was founded in 1966 with offices throughout North America. Our practice areas include engineering, science, and planning services are provided to power, energy, water, and government clients. Kleinschmidt's team specializes in hydropower and water resource engineering, FERC licensing, fish passage and protection, hydrology and hydraulics, and habitat analysis and restoration. Our mission is to provide practical solutions for renewable energy, water, and environmental projects. For more information, visit www.kleinschmidtgrou.com.

About Anchor QEA

Anchor QEA is a trusted leader in providing environmental science and engineering services. Our diverse expertise allows us to effectively serve industrial, energy, federal, state and local, ports and harbors, and shipyards/maritime clients across the United States. For more information, visit <https://www.anchorqea.com/>.

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