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A Hell of a Complex: the Miscarriages of the Federal Hydropower Licensing Regime

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What you are about to read is an illustration of systemic racism. Systemic racism is the current effects of statutes and policies developed through a singular and racially-charged narrative. The current hydropower relicensing regime fails to acknowledge the overarching Treaty-reserved rights of American Indian tribes while statutorily granting state and federal authorities the power to prescribe mandatory conditions on hydropower projects. This fact remains constant whether the hydropower project is within or outside a tribe's reservation or aboriginal territory. Specifically, the Hells Canyon Complex, which rests along the Snake River, has had and continues to have enormous impacts on fisheries including blocking all fish migrations. The Hells Canyon Complex is currently under consideration for a new fifty-year operating license. This Complex resides inside the exclusive aboriginal territory of the Nez Perce Tribe and the geographical region that harbors the Tribe's usual and accustomed fisheries.

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