

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY



TETON RIVER, IDAHO, BOB WICK

### IDAHO VOTER PRIORITIES

- **83%** support protecting public lands along the Teton River
- **59%** oppose rebuilding the Teton Dam
- **58%** favor lower-cost water storage solutions, such as aquifer recharge
- Fish and wildlife habitat ranks as the top concern — above economic, scenic, and recreation values

Source: Peak Insights survey of 300 registered voters in six eastern Idaho counties;  $\pm 6\%$  margin of error.

## PROTECTING THE TETON RIVER CANYON

**The Teton River Canyon is one of eastern Idaho's last intact, free-flowing river landscapes, supporting fish and wildlife and providing world-class recreation. Proposals to rebuild the Teton Dam would permanently flood this irreplaceable river corridor — putting public safety, taxpayer dollars, and a nationally significant river landscape at risk.**

### Concerns about rebuilding Teton Dam

The original dam failed catastrophically in 1976 at essentially the same location now under consideration — due in large part to geologic conditions fundamentally incompatible with a large earthen dam.

Rebuilding would reintroduce these risks while flooding a nationally significant river landscape.

Given the high risk, extreme cost, and limited water yield, rebuilding the Teton Dam is not a prudent or responsible investment. That is why the US Bureau of Reclamation and Idaho Water Resource Board, in their Henry's Fork Basin Study final report issued in January 2015, concluded that rebuilding Teton Dam should not move forward. Congress should reject efforts to resurrect this project and instead focus on safer, more cost-effective water solutions.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Protect critical fish and wildlife

The Teton River Canyon supports important fish and wildlife populations that depend on a free-flowing river and intact habitat. This includes habitat for Yellowstone cutthroat trout, a major migratory corridor for elk and mule deer, and winter range critical for wildlife survival during harsh conditions.

Flooding the canyon would fragment habitat, eliminate migration routes, and degrade aquatic ecosystems.

## Safeguard premier recreation values

The Canyon is a well-known recreation destination that supports local economies and quality of life. This includes high-quality whitewater boating, trout fishing, hunting, hiking, and wildlife viewing.

Its growing reputation as an outdoor destination attracts visitors and supports small businesses. These benefits depend on a free-flowing river and would be irreversibly harmed by dam reconstruction.

# HOW CONGRESS CAN HELP

**We urge the Idaho Congressional Delegation to reject proposals to rebuild the Teton Dam and instead support safer, smarter, and more sustainable water solutions that protect communities, taxpayers, and the Teton River Canyon for future generations.**

## Explore safer, cost-effective solutions

Proposals to rebuild the dam are driven largely by irrigation storage demands — yet projected benefits remain uncertain and costs are extreme. Safer, more cost-effective water solutions are available, including:

- Irrigation efficiency and modernization.
- On-farm water conservation.
- Aquifer recharge and groundwater management.
- Water leasing and voluntary demand management.

These approaches can improve water reliability without sacrificing public safety or irreplaceable natural resources.



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