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God's work. Our hands.

THE *Episcopal* CHURCH

To President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Stephen Harper

*June 11, 2015*

We write to you to add our voices to those who are calling for a review of the Columbia River Treaty in order to respect the rights, dignity and traditions of the Columbia Basin tribes and First Nations by including them in the implementation and management of the Treaty, and to include the healthy functioning of the ecosystem as an equal purpose of the Treaty.

On September 23, 2014, you received the [Declaration on Ethics and Modernizing the Columbia River Treaty](#), and the [Columbia River Pastoral Letter](#) upon which the Declaration is based. The Declaration sets forth eight valuable principles to consider in the review of the Columbia River Treaty.

As noted in the Declaration, the original treaty only included flood control and hydroelectric power generation as international management purposes of the Columbia River. We stand at a critical moment in history regarding both the renewal of relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and the addressing of climate change. In fact, Indigenous rights and climate justice are deeply inter-related. The right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent is enshrined in the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The wisdom of Indigenous peoples is vital to addressing the environmental crisis.

We hear in this moment the call of God to work for justice and to deepen our practice of living as treaty people. In this time of climate change, the United States and Canada working together to promote stewardship of shared waters would be a sign of hope for a healthier environment and a fairer world.

Please move forward with negotiations to review the Columbia River Treaty, and thereby provide a respectful, just and sustainable model for stewardship of these vital waters.

Sincerely,

Bishop Elizabeth Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Most Rev. Fred Hiltz  
Primate  
Anglican Church of Canada

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori  
Presiding Bishop and Primate  
The Episcopal Church

Bishop Susan Johnson  
National Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada