

June 6, 2022

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Submitted via electronic mail

RE: Support for WRDA 2022 and Section 221

Dear Chairman DeFazio:

I am writing to express the Public Power Council's (PPC's) support for the Water Resources Development Act of 2022 (WRDA 2022), especially Section 221 directing the Corps of Engineers to complete a disposition study on deauthorization of commercial power production at the Willamette Basin projects. As you know, PPC is the regional trade association representing the interests of the consumer-owned, non-profit utility customers of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

Ensuring affordable, reliable and clean power supply for the residents and businesses of the Pacific Northwest is central to the region's economic health and environmental stewardship. The hydropower projects of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) are a critical element of that goal. However, the components of the FCRPS are not all equal.

While some projects – like the Lower Snake River Dams (LSRDs) – provide high operational value and low operating costs, the Willamette Basin projects provide minimal output and operational value, and the cost of production is five times greater than the LSRDs. For that reason, BPA recently decided to suspend all capital investments in the hydropower facilities of the Willamette Basin projects. PPC supports that decision, but it does not go far enough. With roughly \$1 billion in additional capital expenditures looming, the only prudent decision is to deauthorize commercial power production at the Willamette Basin projects.

Section 221 of WRDA 2022 directs the Corps to complete a disposition study within 18 months to determine if hydropower at the Willamette Basin projects should be deauthorized. PPC applauds the efforts of you and Committee staff to include language stipulating that any capital costs assigned to power production during the conduct of this disposition study will be treated as non-reimbursable. As you know, the Corps is studying fish mitigation measures in the Basin and deauthorizing power production will facilitate less costly and more effective measures. The cost

language in this provision will enable those preferred alternatives to be considered, prompt the Corps to promptly complete the disposition, and shield BPA customers from unnecessary costs.

Thank you for your continued efforts to advance language that promotes sound decision-making by the Corps, protects BPA power customers, and facilitates prudent and effective fish mitigation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott Simms". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and "S".

Scott Simms
Executive Director, Public Power Council

CC: NW Congressional Delegation
PPC Members