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House Republicans Seek Transparency on how Bureau of Reclamation will Spend \$1 Billion in Stimulus Funds

H.R. 1 / Bureau of Reclamation Funding – *“For an additional amount for `Water and Related Resources’, **\$1,000,000,000.**” (P.L. 111-5, Title IV)*

Today, House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings (WA-04) and 8 House Republicans sent the attached letter to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar requesting a detailed plan on how the Bureau of Reclamation will prioritize and spend the \$1 billion allocated in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (H.R. 1). The members also asked for monthly updates to promote transparency and ensure that taxpayer dollars are being spent efficiently. Ranking Member Hastings released the following statement regarding the funding:

“Western communities are facing severe water shortages due to aging and incomplete water infrastructure. Repairing and safeguarding infrastructure should be Reclamation’s top priority and completed before unacceptable purchases of hybrid vehicles.”

“The \$1 billion in stimulus funds allocated to the Bureau of Reclamation is more than its entire budget for FY08. We have a responsibility to the American taxpayers and to water and power consumers to ensure that this large sum of money is actually spent on projects that will create jobs and spur economic growth.”

H.R. 1 / Western Area Power Administration Funding – *“If, at the end of the useful life of a project, there is a remaining balance owed to the Treasury under this section, **the balance shall be forgiven.**” (P.L. 111-5, Section 402)*

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (H.R. 1) also contained a provision that would allow the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) to borrow up to \$3.25 billion to create a new program for the primary purpose of integrating more renewable electricity to the grid. Unfortunately, H.R. 1 also contained a clause that could leave American taxpayers footing the bill for failure. Tomorrow, the House Water and Power Subcommittee will hold an oversight hearing entitled the *“Federal Power Marketing Administration Borrowing Authority: Defining Success.”* Subcommittee Ranking Member Cathy McMorris

Rodgers today issued the following statement in advance of tomorrow's hearing:

"Pacific Northwest ratepayers have consistently repaid their energy infrastructure investments with interest. The new borrowing authority for WAPA does not have the same repayment requirement. This hearing will examine why and begin the process of transparency and accountability."

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<http://republicans.resourcescommittee.house.gov>

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