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House Passes Hastings' Amendment to Expand the Use of Clean, Renewable Hydropower

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the House of Representatives unanimously passed an amendment by House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings (WA-04) to ensure that the Bureau of Reclamation has the necessary resources to begin the installation of six new hydropower facilities in the West. The amendment was passed as part of the 2009 Energy and Water Appropriations Act. [Click here to watch Ranking Member Hastings' floor speech.](#)

“For almost a century, hydropower has provided our western communities with low-cost, renewable and emissions-free electricity,” **said Ranking Member Hastings.** “In today’s environment – where talk centers on the need to provide clean and environmentally friendly energy – we must continue to promote and expand the use of hydropower. The use of this clean, renewable resource is an essential part of the Republicans’ all-of-the-above energy plan to improve the environment and meet our country’s energy needs. My amendment will ensure that bureaucratic excuses are not used to delay the implementation of these new hydropower projects.”

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 authorized the Bureau of Reclamation to conduct a report to determine where new hydropower projects could be added to the agency’s existing water supply facilities. The agency found six opportunities for new hydropower production facilities that would generate almost 300 megawatts, enough electricity to power 300,000 homes. To date, the Bureau of Reclamation has not implemented one aspect of this report. Hastings’ amendment would ensure that the Bureau of Reclamation moves forward with implementation.

Hastings also introduced two additional hydropower amendments that Democrat leadership wouldn’t allow him to offer on the House floor:

- An amendment that would have decreased carbon emissions by keeping more hydropower resources on-line. When the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation are forced to divert water from hydropower production, carbon-based energy in the form of coal and natural gas is most often used as the form of replacement power. By allowing for more hydropower production, we could significantly reduce carbon emissions.
- An amendment that would have prohibited the reduction of federal hydropower if that hydropower is used to back up other renewable energies, like wind and solar.