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Chairman Hastings' Statement on Judge Redden Ruling

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings released the following statement regarding Judge Redden's ruling on the federal biological opinion and fish recovery plan for the Federal Columbia River Power System:

"As Chairman of the House Committee with jurisdiction over the Northwest's hydropower system and fisheries, I intend to carefully review and address this matter. More thorough comment and action will be forthcoming in the days ahead.

"A preliminary review of this ruling, however, reveals extremely alarming and unacceptable statements and actions by the Portland federal judge. Judge Redden has explicitly ordered federal agencies to consider dam removal. Not only is dam removal an extreme action that would be devastating to the Pacific Northwest's economy and is not proven to recover fish, Judge Redden has zero authority to order the removal of dams and the agencies have no authority to breach dams. Only Congress can authorize removal of the Northwest's federal dams and I can definitively state that this will not happen on my watch.

"With this ruling, Judge Redden has gone farther than ever before in substituting his decades as a lawyer for the combined wisdom of hundreds of biologists and scientists at the federal, state and tribal agencies that joined together to develop this broad, collaborative fish recovery plan.

"Despite broad, collaborative agreement on a recovery plan and years of record, or near record, fish returns, the Pacific Northwest is entrapped in a never-ending circle of litigation and judicial whim. At some point, reason and common sense need to prevail over an activist judge who is intent on keeping dam removal on the table and keeping this issue tied up in his courtroom for years."

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