



CONNECTING HERE WITH THERE

Port of Pasco Administrative Office  
Phone: 509.547.3378  
Fax: 509.547.2547  
portofpasco@portofpasco.org  
1110 Osprey Pointe Blvd.  
Suite 201  
P.O. Box 709  
Pasco, Washington U.S.A. 99301

Port Commissioners  
Jean Ryckman  
James T. Klindworth  
Vicki Gordon

Executive Director  
Randy Hayden

March 8, 2018

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
1314 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Support Legislative Solution for Dams (H.R. 3144 )

Dear Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers,

Given the ongoing discussions in Congress, the Port of Pasco would like to reiterate our strong support for H.R. 3144. In July 2017, the Port of Pasco Commissioners passed Resolution 1460 supporting the bill and the benefits of the hydroelectric dams on the Federal Columbia/Snake River Hydropower System. A copy of that resolution is attached.

H.R. 3144 will help protect ESA-listed salmon by keeping in place measures that we know are working and will allow a thoughtful, deliberative NEPA process to generate credible information about a full range of possible dam operations and salmon-management strategies for the future. While some may believe that Congress should not be interfering with ongoing court reviews, we believe the bill provides a proper and necessary congressional check on the judicial system that has seen fit to usurp the scientific expertise of our federal agencies with unproven directives from the bench.

Thank you for your leadership and tireless efforts to raise awareness in Congress about the value of the Columbia/Snake River dams, and their significance to safe navigation, irrigation, recreation, and affordable, renewable hydropower to the Northwest region.

Sincerely,

Port of Pasco Commissioners,

  
Jean Ryckman  
President

  
Jim Klindworth  
Vice-President

  
Vicki Gordon  
Secretary

Att: Port of Pasco Resolution 1460

## **RESOLUTION NO. 1460**

### **A RESOLUTION of the Port Commission of the Port of Pasco Supporting H.R. 3144 Federal Legislation Addressing the Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion**

**WHEREAS**, hydroelectric dams on the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) provide many benefits to the Port District and region including river freight navigation, affordable power, flood control, irrigation, and recreation; and

**WHEREAS**, businesses and residents of the Port District receive approximately 80 percent of their electricity from the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS); and

**WHEREAS**, hydropower provides 70 percent of Washington state's renewable, affordable and reliable electricity and 60 percent of the Pacific Northwest's electricity; and

**WHEREAS**, the FCRPS Biological Opinion (BiOp) has successfully improved fish runs including 97% of young salmon successfully making it past the dams proving that both dams and fish can coexist; and

**WHEREAS**, BPA has spent \$15.28 billion in total spending on infrastructure and fish mitigation projects since 1978; and

**WHEREAS**, despite the success of the current FCRPS BiOp, in March 2017, the United States District Court for the District of Oregon (Court) raised concerns on how the FCRPS has been managed; and

**WHEREAS**, the Court directed the federal agencies to undertake a comprehensive review of hydro operations under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and strongly urged the federal agencies to include analysis of the removal, bypass or breaching one or more of the four lower Snake River dams; and

**WHEREAS**, H.R. 3144, "To provide for operations of the Federal Columbia River Power System pursuant to a certain operation plan for a specified period of time", was introduced in the United States House of Representatives to ensure the FCRPS BiOp remains in effect until 2022, and **WHEREAS**, the federal legislation would continue federal hydro operations through September 30, 2022 or until the court-ordered, comprehensive environmental NEPA process concludes and judicial review is complete, whichever is later, and

**WHEREAS**, the federal legislation would allow for limited agency flexibility in hydro operations should there be a need to protect public safety, transmission and/or grid reliability and stability, and

**WHEREAS**, the federal legislation would prohibit studies, plans or structural modifications at the dams which would impair hydroelectric power generation or navigation on the Columbia River;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Port of Pasco Commission that the Commission supports federal legislation H.R. 3144 introduced to provide for operations of the Federal Columbia River Power System pursuant to a certain operation plan for a specified period of time.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Commission supports this legislation as it:

1. Offers a creative solution that is good for both listed salmon and the economy of the Northwest and Franklin County.
2. Provides relief in the endless litigation of federal hydro system operations by directing the federal agencies to implement the current federal salmon plan, known as the 2014 Supplemental BiOp. This BiOp was vetted and supported by the Obama Administration's top scientists and has resulted in wild salmon numbers trending significantly upward due to changes in operations and the installation of new passage technologies.
3. Provides time for the federal agencies to complete the court-ordered NEPA environmental review process analyzing federal hydro system operations and focuses the general agencies limited resources on getting that process right. Without the legislation, the agencies would be compelled to author a new 2018 BiOp without the benefit of the new science and public input provided by the comprehensive NEPA review.
4. Avoids experiments or spill tests at the eight Columbia and Snake River dams (dams), studies and modifications at the dams which would restrict electrical generation, and create uncertainties in BPA's power costs and supply and raise Northwest electric customers' rates.

Adopted this 28<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2017.

PORT OF PASCO COMMISSION

  
Ron Reimann, President

  
Jean Ryckman, Vice-President

  
James T. Klindworth, Secretary