



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON **NATURAL RESOURCES**

H.R. 3144 (Rep. McMorris Rodgers, R-Wash.)

In order to provide certainty over the reliable management of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS or System), H.R. 3144 requires federal agencies to operate the System in a manner that is consistent with the current operations plan, while also protecting existing hydropower resources in the Pacific Northwest. This legislation prevents \$40 million in costs being transferred to Pacific Northwest ratepayers in addition to saving the American taxpayer an estimated \$14 million.

BACKGROUND

In 2014, the National Marine Fisheries Service under the Obama Administration issued a biological opinion providing scientifically developed protections for endangered salmon and steelhead species that allowed the FCRPS to continue operations.

To no surprise, multiple environmental organizations including Earth Justice, National Wildlife Federation sued immediately.

In May 2016, in a monolithic decision, the Courts found the scientifically developed biological opinion was inadequate to protect listed species.

As a result and without any scientific justification, Judge Simon ordered a 24 hour spill bypassing the hydropower turbines, costing ratepayers in the Pacific Northwest \$40 million annually and providing dubious benefit to fish, while directing NOAA fisheries to develop a new biological opinion. The spill order officially went into effect April 3rd, after several appeals.

H.R. 3144 provides certainty by keeping in place the 2014 scientifically developed biological opinion while the agency develops a new one, while also preventing the removal of federal dams without prior Congressional approval.

THE BIPARTISAN LEGISLATION IS SUPPORTED BY:

Stevens County Commissioners, Idaho Water Users Association, Washington State Potato Commission, National Association of Wheat Growers, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Port of Pasco, American Public Power Association, Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative, Tidewater Transportation & Terminals, Northwest River Partners, United Power Trades Organization, Inland Ports and Navigation Group, Cowlitz Public Utility District, Association of Washington Business, Tri-City Development Council, Port Clarkston, Washington Public Utility Districts Association, Port of Morrow, Public Power Council, Clatskanie People's Utility District, Blachly-Lane Electric Co-op, Port of Whitman County, United Electric, Northern Lights, Washington Association of Wheat Growers, Salmon River Electric CoOp, Clearwater Power, Washington Farm Bureau, Mason County Public Utility District