

IN THE SENATE

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 103

BY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

A JOINT MEMORIAL

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2 TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION REPRESENTING THE STATE OF IDAHO IN THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.
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6 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and the House of Representatives of
7 the State of Idaho assembled in the Second Regular Session of the Sixty-seventh Idaho Legislature, do hereby respectfully represent that:
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9 WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Idaho recognizes the Columbia-Snake River and its tributaries are a multiuse system providing navigation, transportation, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, hydropower generation, and irrigation to the citizens, municipalities, and industry of the Pacific Northwest; and
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14 WHEREAS, the Columbia-Snake River System and its tributaries are a vital part of the state's economic well-being and the quality of life of its citizens; and
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17 WHEREAS, the State of Idaho asserts and confirms sovereign control over all water resources within the state; and
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19 WHEREAS, the decline of anadromous fish is due to many factors, including increased predation, unfavorable ocean conditions, and harvest; and
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21 WHEREAS, due to the efforts of the state, the Nez Perce Tribe, and Idaho water users in entering into the 2004 Snake River Water Rights Agreement, up to 487,000 acre feet of Idaho's water is used for flow augmentation for salmon and steelhead in the lower Snake and Columbia Rivers, with water being released through a willing buyer, willing seller arrangement. The 2004 agreement provides protections to Idaho in the form of a 30-year biological opinion; and
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28 WHEREAS, agricultural and industrial applications of water have a legal priority within the state; and
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30 WHEREAS, the Port of Lewiston, Idaho's only seaport, is part of the collective Columbia-Snake River System and is an asset to the state and to the inland Northwest region, providing global competitiveness and connectivity for regional products, economic development investment, and multimodal transportation; and
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35 WHEREAS, the Columbia-Snake River System is a top wheat export gateway in the United States, with approximately ten percent of all United States wheat exports barged through the four dams on the Snake River and about fifty percent of all Idaho-grown wheat barged from Lewiston to Portland and then to export markets around the world; and
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40 WHEREAS, barging is the most fuel-efficient, environmentally friendly mode of transportation; and
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42 WHEREAS, hydropower is the most efficient, environmentally favorable form of electrical generation, with the combined lower four Snake River dams
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1 producing 1,000 megawatts of carbon-free, renewable energy annually and
2 3,000 megawatts for peak power emergencies and providing electricity to 22
3 rural Idaho utilities serving more than 140,000 Idahoans; and

4 WHEREAS, the recent agreement between the United States government and
5 certain plaintiffs to the ongoing Columbia-Snake River litigation was de-
6 veloped without adequate Idaho stakeholder input; and

7 WHEREAS, the agreement attempts to create a pathway to removing the four
8 lower Snake River dams, despite Congress having the sole authority to remove
9 dams; and

10 WHEREAS, the Public Power Council's assessment of the proposed agree-
11 ment shows major cost risk and uncertainty for Northwest communities and
12 businesses with potentially significant rate increases of five to forty
13 percent or more if the agreement is implemented; and

14 WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Idaho opposes any actions to
15 degrade the functionality, in whole or in part, to remove or breach any dams
16 on the Columbia-Snake River System or its tributaries, or to take water from
17 the state for anadromous fish enhancement efforts. Such actions would in-
18 flict on Idaho citizens a loss in economic and trade opportunities, a loss
19 of recharge waters for the state's aquifers, a loss of navigation and trans-
20 portation, an increase in electrical rates, a shortfall in power generation,
21 a loss of recreational opportunities, and a threatened quality of life.

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the Second Regular Ses-
23 sion of the Sixty-seventh Idaho Legislature, the Senate and the House of Rep-
24 resentatives concurring therein, that Idaho opposes the removal or breach-
25 ing of the dams on the Columbia-Snake River System and its tributaries, has
26 sovereignty over its water resources, prohibits contributions of water from
27 Idaho's reservoirs for flow augmentation except those expressly authorized
28 by state law, contends that efforts for further recovery of anadromous fish
29 must be science-based, and supports the maintenance and multiple-use bene-
30 fits of the Columbia-Snake River System. Additionally, the Idaho Legisla-
31 ture recognizes and supports the international competitiveness, multimodal
32 transportation, and economic development benefits provided by the Port of
33 Lewiston.

34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate be, and she is
35 hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of this Memorial to the
36 President of the United States, the President of the Senate and the Speaker
37 of the House of Representatives of Congress, and to the congressional dele-
38 gation representing the State of Idaho in the Congress of the United States.