

Thank you Chairman Lamborn.

I find it fitting today that we are talking about this legislation on the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). Congress created BPA in 1937 on the heels of the great depression to distribute the power generated from the development of two federally authorized dams; Bonneville and Grand Coulee dam. These marvels of engineering provided the Pacific Northwest with the nation's cheapest and most reliable energy.

During World War II, it was the federal power supplied by BPA that was instrumental in the ramp up of the aluminum industry that went into Boeing's B-17 and B-29 and powered the production of nearly 750 large ships before the end of the war. In the words of President Harry Truman, "Without Grand Coulee and Bonneville dams it would have been almost impossible to win this war."

In 1945, Congress authorized the construction of four large dams along the Snake River—Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose, and Lower Granite to grow what we call the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS). These four dams can power 1.8 million homes, or a city the size of Seattle, and are crucial to meet BPA's peak loads during the hottest days in the summer when the wind doesn't blow or the coldest part of winter when the Pacific Northwest encounters little sunlight.

This year, Eastern Washington had a harsh winter with many days below freezing. During the coldest days, BPA relied on the ability of these dams four dams to ramp up production and meet the demand. Without a reliable base load source, I fear many in Eastern Washington would have lost power and heat.

It is important to look back at this history when we think about BPA, the FCRPS, and the future of energy in our region. Last week, BPA made their 34<sup>th</sup> consecutive payment of \$1.3 billion for FY17 to the treasury. They were able to do this because our region values low cost, carbon free energy that BPA sells as a result of the hydropower production along the FCRPS. In Washington State, hydropower accounts for almost 70% of electricity generation.

Some argue that these four dams in particular have negatively impacted migratory fish. Yet, these dams average fish survival rates of 97%. And while recent ocean impacts—which scientists call a "blob"—have slowed salmon returns recently, more total salmon have returned this year than before many of the dams were in place. Over 600,000 fall chinook are forecasted this year—many times higher than when they were first listed. It is also important to note, that of the 13 fish listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), only four species pass these dams. These fish passage rates are the result of significant federal investments in new technologies like fish friendly turbines, habitat restoration, and local collaboration.

I mention local collaboration because I want to quote the FCRPS Adaptive Management Implementation Plan produced by the Department of Interior, BPA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and NOAA, "the Obama Administration undertook an extensive effort to review the 2008 FCRPS Biological Opinion" and found "the 2008 BiOp is biologically and legally sound, based on the best available scientific information, and satisfies the ESA jeopardy standard." This BiOp is supported by states, tribal entities, utilities, ports, irrigation districts, and other Pacific Northwest water users.

Unfortunately, the Oregon federal district Court ignored these efforts, invalidated the BiOp, and set a course that will likely put BPA's future and the yearly investments of hundreds of millions of dollars in fish recovery funding in jeopardy.

BPA's rates have gone up roughly 30 percent the last few years with an average increase of 5.4% for 2018 and 2019. Unnecessary litigation and unnecessary spill requirements only add on to these untenable costs.

In 2028, BPA has to renegotiate their contracts and their customers are making decisions now. The needless uncertainty that continues to plague the FCPRS and the continued attacks on the Snake River Dams has utilities looking elsewhere—and I don't blame them.

As a result, I introduced bipartisan legislation to provide this certainty. This bill would simply codify the current BiOp until 2022 and prevent unnecessary costs. It also reasserts Congress' authority over the dams.

Fish and dams can coexist but we must get out of the courtroom and allow fish recovery to continue.