



National Grain and Feed Association
TRANSFORMING AMERICA'S HARVEST®

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WRITTEN STATEMENT

OF

NATIONAL GRAIN AND FEED ASSOCIATION

JUNE 26, 2023

**NORTHWEST AT RISK: THE ENVIRONMENTALIST'S EFFORT TO DESTROY NAVIGATION,
TRANSPORTATION, AND ACCESS TO RELIABLE POWER | SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER,
WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER, WILDLIFE AND
FISHERIES**



The National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA) thanks the Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries and the Western Caucus for holding a hearing focusing on the benefits of the Columbia and Snake Rivers, and recent actions by environmental activists to breach the dams. The NGFA is opposed to any actions by federal or state governments that could result in breaching the Lower Snake River Dams.

The NGFA consists of nearly 1,000 grain, feed, processing, exporting and other grain-related companies and cooperatives operating more than 8,000 facilities. Our membership includes grain elevators; feed and feed ingredient manufacturers; biofuels companies; grain and oilseed processors and millers; exporters; livestock and poultry integrators; transportation companies and associated firms that provide goods and services to the nation's grain, oilseed, feed, and processing industry. Our industry feeds the world.

Barge transportation moves about half of all grain exports to export elevators and is critical to NGFA members in the Pacific Northwest. The Columbia-Snake River System is the third-largest grain export corridor in the world, transporting nearly 30 percent of U.S. grain and oilseed exports.

Breaching the Lower Snake River Dams in the Pacific Northwest would create severe economic harm to the entire U.S. agricultural value chain. Removing the Lower Snake River Dams will hurt producers and negatively impact the operations and livelihoods of NGFA members who have made investment decisions based on the ability to utilize barge transportation. In addition to the impact on agriculture in the Pacific Northwest and throughout much of the western and northern United States, reduced exports will have a tremendous negative impact on global food security, which has already been affected by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

During a recent listening session held by the Federal Mediation Service, advocates of breaching the dams suggested barge traffic could be replaced by rail or truck transportation. The NGFA would like to clarify that



the required infrastructure capacity simply does not exist, and it is highly unlikely that it could be created in an economically viable amount of time.

Importantly for this discussion, barges are the most environmentally friendly mode of transportation for grains and oilseeds with one four-barge tow moving as much grain as 140 rail cars or 538 semi-trucks. This fact cannot be ignored in the debate about the environmental impacts of breaching the dams.

We thank the subcommittee for the opportunity to offer comments on this issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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