

**Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and
Fisheries Oversight Hearing
1334 Longworth House Office Building
May 16, 2024
2:30 PM**

"Examining the President's FY 2025 Budget Proposal for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Power Marketing Administrations"

Questions from Rep. Westerman for Mr. Mike Wech, Administrator, Southwestern Power Administration

1. In November, you testified before this committee at a legislative hearing on H.R. 4219, the Southwestern Power Administration Revolving Fund, which would create a self-financed fund through Southwestern's power sales receipts. In your testimony, you said that the Administration did not have a position at that time. Do you have a position now? Are SWPA's customers united in wanting this legislation to advance?

Answer: The Administration does not yet have a position on H.R. 4219. Nicki Fuller, Executive Director of Southwestern Power Resources Association (SPRA), testified in support of H.R. 4219 in November 2023. SPRA is the regional trade association that represents the wholesale power customers of Southwestern.

2. In December, the USACE shut down power production at Narrows Dam in my district in order to repair its trash racks. Approximately how much power does Narrows produce? Do you have an estimated timeline for when the repairs will be made so power can be restored?

Answer: Southwestern markets 25.5 megawatts (MW) of power from three turbine-generators at the Narrows hydropower project on the Little Missouri River near Murfreesboro, Arkansas. The full output of Narrows is marketed under Integrated System power rates to a single wholesale power customer who relies on this hydropower as an important piece of their energy resource portfolio.

Southwestern has been working closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on a path forward to complete the repair work given the financial and operational impacts of the outage, including the customer's need to purchase replacement power. It is our understanding that if work proceeds uninterrupted, it will take approximately 15 months to return all units to service once funding is approved. It should be noted that replacement work is dependent on the lake elevation, and that significant rainfall could impact the work schedule and the duration of the outage.