

**NEWS RELEASE**  
**For Immediate Release**

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## **Fifteen Washington ports adopt resolutions supporting dams**

### ***Resolutions and letter sent to the Office of Governor Jay Inslee***

Colfax (March 10, 2020) — The Port of Pasco joined 14 other ports across the state in requesting Governor Jay Inslee's support of the hydroelectric dams along the Snake and Columbia Rivers.

Commissioners Ron Reimann, Jean Ryckman, and Jim Klindworth adopted a resolution supporting the federal dam system on July 28, 2017.

The resolution, along with 14 others, was sent to Gov. Inslee on Tuesday, March 10.

Other participating ports include Chelan Douglas Regional Port Authority, Port of Chinook, Port of Clarkston, Port of Columbia, Port of Ephrata, Port of Garfield, Port of Grandview, Port of Ilwaco, Port of Kalama, Port of Othello, Port of Skamania, Port of Sunnyside, Port of Whitman County and Port of Woodland.

The Port of Pasco is pleased to see so many diverse perspectives on port commissions statewide assert the value of the river system to their communities.

"It's imperative that the Port and many others stand up for our dams to keep our barges moving, keep our businesses running, and keep our people employed," stated Randy Hayden, Executive Director of the Port of Pasco.

In particular, the Port highly values the ability to ship fuel and agricultural fertilizer up the river to support our residents and agricultural community. At certain times of the year 50 percent of the diesel and gas used in the Tri-Cities is barged to Pasco. Tri-City residents would see the impact at the gas pump if the dams went away.

Please find the letter to Governor Inslee and the Port of Pasco's adopted resolution attached.

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March 10, 2020

The Honorable Jay Inslee  
Governor, State of Washington  
416 14<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee,

On behalf of 15 Washington port districts, we write to affirm our support for the Columbia-Snake River System and request that you publicly oppose the extreme measure of dam breaching.

Please find enclosed 15 signed and approved resolutions supporting the federal dam system.

Participating ports include the Chelan Douglas Regional Port Authority, Port of Chinook, Port of Clarkston, Port of Columbia, Port of Ephrata, Port of Garfield, Port of Grandview, Port of Ilwaco, Port of Kalama, Port of Othello, Port of Pasco, Port of Skamania, Port of Sunnyside, Port of Whitman County and Port of Woodland.

We represent culturally, politically and geographically diverse communities stretching from the southwest coast where the Columbia River empties into the Pacific Ocean to the sunny Snake River banks of southeastern Washington. We are fishing villages. We are farming communities. We are metropolitan centers. We are all charged with promoting economic and community development within our port districts. And for many unique reasons, we support the Columbia and Snake River dams.

Some of these reasons include barge transportation, crop irrigation, hydroelectricity, flood control, tourism and recreation. Large-scale dam removal, in many cases, would directly counter our responsibility to sustain and grow our regional economies.

In fact, several port districts would face immediate impacts. The Columbia River System Operations Draft Environmental Impact Statement (CRSO DEIS) finds that dam breaching would curtail jobs and income provided by the four primary navigation ports along the Lower Snake River. These ports include the Port of Lewiston, Port of Clarkston, Port of Whitman County and Port of Garfield.

Without commercial access to these ports, increased transportation costs would cripple local industry. The price to ship wheat, which accounts for 87 percent of the cargo transported down the lower Snake River, would increase 10 to 33 percent, according to the DEIS. Family farmers would then be forced into retirement – or bankruptcy – rather than face steep losses.



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The Pacific Northwest Waterways Association finds that more than 1,100 farms would risk bankruptcy if the federal government does not increase farm subsidies. With wheat prices already down near the break-even point, annual direct payments to farmers would need a boost of \$38.8 million to maintain current income levels.

Replacing barge transportation with truck and rail poses a number of other issues. Shipping the amount of wheat that is currently transported by barge would increase emissions by up to 53 percent, according to the DEIS. It would also place significant demand on existing infrastructure in the Tri-Cities and increase both traffic and air pollution in the region. The DEIS estimates an 84 percent increase in truck use and the potential for more highway collisions.

Dam breaching also fails to protect our most reliable form of renewable energy: hydropower. Replacing hydropower with natural gas would add about 3.3 million metric tons of carbon to the atmosphere, according to the DEIS. Even shifting to other renewable energy sources such as solar or wind power would require increased fossil fuel-based power. Because solar and wind power rely on external factors such as sun exposure and wind speed, they must be accompanied by fossil fuels to keep pace with energy demands.

Finally, reservoir-based recreation would completely disappear without the dams in place. The river cruise industry, which thrives on the Columbia and Snake Rivers and provides access to the infamous Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, would cease to exist.

“There could also be a major adverse social effect to the port communities along the lower Snake River (e.g., economics, potential shift in employment, etc.),” the DEIS states, also acknowledging that several communities would lose a collective “river port” identity.

For these and other reasons detailed in our individual resolutions, we urge you to consider the consequences of dam breaching on the communities that will most personally bear the impact. As you listen to diverse perspectives on the river system, please keep Washington’s public ports in mind.

Sincerely,

Port of Whitman County Commissioners  
On behalf of 15 port districts in Washington State

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John E. Love'.

John E. Love  
District 1

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kristine Meyer'.

Kristine Meyer  
District 2

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Kammerzell'.

Tom Kammerzell  
District 3

# RESOLUTION NO. 1460

## A RESOLUTION of the Port Commission of the Port of Pasco Supporting H.R. 3144 Federal Legislation Addressing the Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion

**WHEREAS**, hydroelectric dams on the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) provide many benefits to the Port District and region including river freight navigation, affordable power, flood control, irrigation, and recreation; and

**WHEREAS**, businesses and residents of the Port District receive approximately 80 percent of their electricity from the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS); and

**WHEREAS**, hydropower provides 70 percent of Washington state's renewable, affordable and reliable electricity and 60 percent of the Pacific Northwest's electricity; and

**WHEREAS**, the FCRPS Biological Opinion (BiOp) has successfully improved fish runs including 97% of young salmon successfully making it past the dams proving that both dams and fish can coexist; and

**WHEREAS**, BPA has spent \$15.28 billion in total spending on infrastructure and fish mitigation projects since 1978; and

**WHEREAS**, despite the success of the current FCRPS BiOp, in March 2017, the United States District Court for the District of Oregon (Court) raised concerns on how the FCRPS has been managed; and

**WHEREAS**, the Court directed the federal agencies to undertake a comprehensive review of hydro operations under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and strongly urged the federal agencies to include analysis of the removal, bypass or breaching one or more of the four lower Snake River dams; and

**WHEREAS**, H.R. 3144, "To provide for operations of the Federal Columbia River Power System pursuant to a certain operation plan for a specified period of time", was introduced in the United States House of Representatives to ensure the FCRPS BiOp remains in effect until 2022, and **WHEREAS**, the federal legislation would continue federal hydro operations through September 30, 2022 or until the court-ordered, comprehensive environmental NEPA process concludes and judicial review is complete, whichever is later, and

**WHEREAS**, the federal legislation would allow for limited agency flexibility in hydro operations should there be a need to protect public safety, transmission and/or grid reliability and stability, and

**WHEREAS**, the federal legislation would prohibit studies, plans or structural modifications at the dams which would impair hydroelectric power generation or navigation on the Columbia River;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Port of Pasco Commission that the Commission supports federal legislation H.R. 3144 introduced to provide for operations of the Federal Columbia River Power System pursuant to a certain operation plan for a specified period of time.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Commission supports this legislation as it:


1. Offers a creative solution that is good for both listed salmon and the economy of the Northwest and Franklin County.
2. Provides relief in the endless litigation of federal hydro system operations by directing the federal agencies to implement the current federal salmon plan, known as the 2014 Supplemental BiOp. This BiOp was vetted and supported by the Obama Administration's top scientists and has resulted in wild salmon numbers trending significantly upward due to changes in operations and the installation of new passage technologies.
3. Provides time for the federal agencies to complete the court-ordered NEPA environmental review process analyzing federal hydro system operations and focuses the general agencies limited resources on getting that process right. Without the legislation, the agencies would be compelled to author a new 2018 BiOp without the benefit of the new science and public input provided by the comprehensive NEPA review.
4. Avoids experiments or spill tests at the eight Columbia and Snake River dams (dams), studies and modifications at the dams which would restrict electrical generation, and create uncertainties in BPA's power costs and supply and raise Northwest electric customers' rates.

Adopted this 28<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2017.

**PORT OF PASCO COMMISSION**

  
Ron Reimann, President

  
Jean Ryckman, Vice-President

  
James T. Klindworth, Secretary