
**Technology & Economic Development
Committee**

SJM 8004

Brief Description: Requesting that certain federal officials prevent the breaching of any dam in the Columbia River system.

Sponsors: Senators Sheldon, Honeyford, Padden, Rossi, Baumgartner, Brown, Rivers, Schoesler, Becker, Hawkins, Braun and Warnick.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requests that the President, Vice President, Congress, United States Army Corps of Engineers, United States Bureau of Reclamation, and Bonneville Power Administration take any and all action to prevent the breaching of any dam in the Columbia River System.

Hearing Date: 3/21/17

Staff: Nikkole Hughes (786-7156).

Background:

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is a federal nonprofit agency that markets wholesale electrical power from 31 federal hydroelectric projects in the Columbia River Basin, one nonfederal nuclear plant, and several other small nonfederal power plants. The United States Army Corps of Engineers and the United States Bureau of Reclamation operate the dams. About one-third of the electric power used in the Northwest comes from the BPA. The BPA also operates and maintains approximately three-fourths of the high-voltage transmission in its service territory, which includes the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, as well as parts of Montana, California, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming.

On September 30, 2016, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the United States Bureau of Reclamation, and the BPA initiated the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS)

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under the federal National Environmental Policy Act to evaluate and analyze the long-term system operations and configuration of 14 federal multiple-purpose dams and related facilities located throughout the Columbia River Basin. The purpose of the EIS is to consider the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of alternative approaches to long-term system operations and configuration on affected resources, including geology, water quality and quantity, fish and wildlife, floodplains, social and economic resources, and other resources that are identified during the scoping process.

Summary of Bill:

The Senate Joint Memorial recognizes the importance of the Columbia River System for the security and prosperity of the state. It expresses concern that breaching any dam in the System would significantly alter system operations and severely diminish hydroelectric power generation, irrigation, navigation, flood risk management, recreation, and fish and wildlife benefits the System currently provides to the people of Washington.

The Senate Joint Memorial asks the President, Vice President, Congress, United States Army Corps of Engineers, United States Bureau of Reclamation, and BPA to take any and all action to prevent the breaching of any dam in the Columbia River System.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.