
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8010

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senator Boehnke

1 TO THE HONORABLE DONALD J. TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
2 AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF
3 THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF
4 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO
5 THE HONORABLE J.D. VANCE, THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF
6 AMERICA:

7 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
8 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled,
9 respectfully represent and petition as follows:

10 WHEREAS, The United States Army Corps of Engineers was authorized
11 to construct, operate, and maintain four dams on the lower Snake
12 River for navigation, hydropower, fish and wildlife conservation, and
13 recreation; and

14 WHEREAS, The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is responsible
15 for marketing and transmitting the hydroelectric power generated by
16 the dams on the lower Snake River; and

17 WHEREAS, The lower Snake River dams' electricity output accounts
18 for a significant percentage of BPA's peaking capacity, according to
19 BPA; and

20 WHEREAS, The electricity produced by the lower Snake River dams
21 is essential to meeting the goals set forth in Washington's Clean
22 Energy Transformation Act; and

1 WHEREAS, The lower Snake River dams provide for supplies of water
2 that are used for irrigating vast tracts of land in Washington,
3 thereby supporting the state's critical agricultural sector; and

4 WHEREAS, The lower Snake River dams facilitate the transport of
5 an average of 4,200,000 short tons of commodities, including exports,
6 each year; and

7 WHEREAS, Breaching the lower Snake River dams would eliminate all
8 barge navigation between the Tri-Cities and Clarkston, causing the
9 transportation of commodities to shift to rail and trucking networks;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Barging on the Snake River is the most efficient and
12 environmentally friendly mode of commodity transportation because a
13 typical four-barge tow can move the same amount of cargo as 140
14 railcars or 538 semi-trucks; and

15 WHEREAS, The flatwater reservoirs and locks system resulting from
16 the lower Snake River dams provides a diverse range of recreational
17 opportunities and enables cruise boats to navigate between Tri-Cities
18 and Clarkston; and

19 WHEREAS, Continuous configuration and operations improvements,
20 including enhanced fish passage, have led to progressively higher
21 salmon and steelhead counts at the dams over time; and

22 WHEREAS, The federal agency responsible for operating the dams
23 published a Record of Decision in 2020 identifying a preferred
24 alternative operation strategy that would benefit fish without
25 breaching the four lower Snake River dams; and

26 WHEREAS, Breaching any dam on the lower Snake River would
27 severely diminish hydroelectric power generation, irrigation,
28 navigation, recreation, agriculture, tourism, and fish and wildlife
29 benefits the dams currently provide to the people of Washington; and

30 WHEREAS, S.182, "A bill to provide for operations of the Federal
31 Columbia River Power System pursuant to a certain operation plan for
32 a specified period of time, and for other purposes," also known as
33 the Northwest Energy Security Act, was recently introduced in the
34 United States Senate; and

35 WHEREAS, The Northwest Energy Security Act directs that the
36 Federal Columbia River Power System, which includes the lower Snake
37 River dams, must be operated in a manner consistent with the 2020
38 Record of Decision, also known as the Supplemental Opinion; and

39 WHEREAS, The Northwest Energy Security Act prohibits any
40 structural modification, action, study, or engineering plan, that

1 restricts electrical generation at any Federal Columbia River Power
2 System hydroelectric dam, or that limits navigation on the Snake
3 River in Washington, Oregon, or Idaho, unless such proposal is
4 specifically and expressly authorized by a later-enacted federal
5 statute; and

6 WHEREAS, The Washington State Legislature recognizes the
7 importance of the lower Snake River dams and the entire Federal
8 Columbia River Power System for the security and prosperity of the
9 state and expresses its concern that breaching any dam in the system
10 will be to the detriment of the State of Washington;

11 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that you pass
12 and approve S.182, the Northwest Energy Security Act.

13 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
14 transmitted to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United
15 States, the Honorable J.D. Vance, Vice President of the United
16 States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
17 House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State
18 of Washington.

--- END ---