

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Scott Simms
Phone: 503-595-9770
Email: ssimms@ppcpdx.org

NOAA Should Follow Senator Murray’s Lead and Realize Infeasibility of Lower Snake River Dam Removal

(PORTLAND, OR) August 26, 2022 -- On August 25, Washington Senator Patty Murray and Governor Jay Inslee issued their final report focused on salmon recovery and the potential removal of the four Lower Snake River Dams (LSRDs). As highlighted in an independent [analysis conducted by Energy GPS for the Public Power Council \(PPC\)](#), the LSRDs are vital for system reliability and breaching these clean, low-cost resources would put the Northwest at risk of frequent and sustained blackouts during increasing “extreme events.” Other recent studies ([Energy GPS for Northwest RiverPartners](#) and [E3 for the Bonneville Power Administration](#)) have concluded that regional climate goals cannot be met without the carbon-free LSRDs, that rapid replacement of these resources is technically infeasible, and that severe rate shock would result from removing these low-cost resources.

“PPC is grateful that the Senator and Governor heard our very clear concerns about the impacts that could come from Snake River Dam removal, and their acknowledgement that Congress has the ultimate authority over those federal sources of clean, renewable power,” said Scott Simms, Executive Director of PPC. “We will continue to engage with Tribes and others to advance feasible solutions that build on our significant progress in fish mitigation. However, it’s unfortunate that the final report keeps dam breaching on the table for possible future action.”

And regrettably, the campaign to remove the LSRDs is not over. Recently, the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) issued a draft proposal calling for removal of the LSRDs. The recommendation is based on a shoddy, unattributed report by the U.S National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) – written in conjunction with two plaintiffs in a federal lawsuit – that seeks dam removal. The report is shockingly out of character for typical NOAA reports that extensively cite qualified research, data and analysis.

Today, [PPC responded to the draft NOAA report](#) highlighting a series of fundamental and debilitating flaws.

“The NOAA report fails to consider real-time salmon returns that this year for many salmon species are the highest since before the dams were constructed,” Simms said. “NOAA also uses outdated, if not biased, assumptions on fish return rates that are a magnitude higher than returns in neighboring, undammed rivers. It is time for CEQ and other single interest critics to follow Senator Murray’s lead and recognize the infeasibility and severe consequences of LSRD dam

removal and focus instead on collaborative, proven, and equitable mitigation efforts that truly involve the region.”

###

About the Public Power Council

The Public Power Council, established in 1966, is an association that represents over 100 consumer-owned electric utilities in the Pacific Northwest. PPC’s mission is to preserve and protect the benefits of the Federal Columbia River Power System for consumer-owned utilities. PPC is a key forum to identify, discuss and build consensus around energy and utility issues. For more information, please visit us on the web at www.ppcpdx.org.