

C O N G R E S S W O M A N

*Cathy McMorris*  
**RODGERS**

PROUDLY REPRESENTING EASTERN WASHINGTON



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Olivia Hnat

[Olivia.Hnat@mail.house.gov](mailto:Olivia.Hnat@mail.house.gov)

**Reps. McMorris Rodgers, Newhouse Applaud White House Plan to Bring Certainty to Columbia and Snake River System**

**Washington, D.C. (October 19, 2018)** -- Today, Representatives Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA-05) and Dan Newhouse (WA-04) applauded a Presidential Memorandum that moves up the schedule for the new court-mandated Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) Biological Opinion from 2021 to 2020 while mandating increased collaboration among federal agencies.

“I’ve led on legislation to protect the Columbia and Snake River System and encourage widespread collaboration in our region,” said McMorris Rodgers. “Dams and fish coexist, and after more than two decades in the courtroom, we should let scientists, not judges, manage our river systems and get to work to further improve fish recovery efforts. Today, I’m encouraged by President Trump’s action, which also meets those goals.”

“While the Senate fails to act on our House-passed legislation to restore the collaborative framework that operates the Columbia and Snake River Power System, I am grateful to President Trump for speeding up this ongoing process,” said Rep. Newhouse. “Moving up the deadline for the EIS is a procedural win that will give more certainty to the communities whose livelihoods depend on effective operations of our dams.”

The Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) 2014 BiOp was the product of unprecedented collaboration between President Barack Obama’s administration, states, and sovereign Northwest tribes. The BiOp has helped to produce record fish returns

---

through use of modern, innovative technology, and has widespread support in the region. Unfortunately, a U.S. District judge overturned the BiOp in 2016, throwing out sound science and dictating new river operations from behind the bench—including maximum “spill” levels over the dams. The judge’s anti-science court order has thrown the river system’s operations into disarray and forced uncertainty upon the Bonneville Power Administration’s (BPA) ability to manage the power transmission system.

This Congress, the House of Representatives passed two pieces of legislation that would have protected the Snake River Dams and safeguarded low power rates for the people of Central and Eastern Washington. The first bill, [H.R. 3144](#), was introduced by Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA-05) alongside Reps. Dan Newhouse (R-WA), Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA), Greg Walden (R-OR), and Kurt Schrader (D-OR). It codifies the 2014 BiOp while the EIS can be completed. The House also passed a rider in the [Energy and Water Appropriations bill](#) that stops the court mandated spill that has cost ratepayers \$38.6 million. Both were stalled by Democrats in the Senate.

---