

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 22, 2023

President Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to urge you to make the modernization of the Columbia River Treaty a key goal of your upcoming trip to Canada and a top agenda item in any bilateral discussions with Canadian leadership. For the last six decades, the Columbia River Treaty has provided a framework for international cooperation which has helped deliver irreplaceable energy, irrigation, and fish habitat benefits to the citizens of the Pacific Northwest. Now, after years of negotiations, Presidential level leadership is required to modernize the Treaty and restore the balance and certainty necessary to support the economies of Washington, Idaho, Oregon and Montana and meet the evolving needs of our region.

The Columbia River Basin is one of the greatest natural resources in the western United States, providing immeasurable economic and cultural benefits to the United States, Canada and Indigenous communities. The carbon-free hydropower generated in the Columbia River Basin delivers affordable clean power to over 60 percent of Pacific Northwest homes and businesses, accounts for 90 percent of renewable energy in the region, and increases the reliability and resiliency of the grid throughout the western United States. The Basin facilitates the movement of over \$20 billion in goods from around the country to lucrative and growing international markets. Over 60 percent of wheat produced in the United States travels through the Columbia River Basin. The Basin is critical habitat for a number of fish species, including 12 populations of Endangered Species Act protected salmon and steelhead.

Recognizing the need to strengthen the Columbia River Treaty, the United States and Canadian negotiating teams have held 15 negotiating sessions from 2018 through February 2023. While there has been some progress, the United States and Canada are entering a critical period and need to conclude Treaty negotiations to avoid significant and widespread impacts to the region. Without an agreement, both countries will have to prepare for unwelcome volatility and strains on Columbia River Basin operations, including increased flood risks and economic uncertainty in the United States.

It is important to know that our nations were spurred to enter into the Treaty in the first place, in large part, because of disastrous flooding in the Columbia River Basin in 1948. At the time, the U.S. Geological Survey estimated the cost of the damage at \$102.7 million – nearly \$1.3 billion today. Moreover, the entire Basin is home to more people and businesses now than it was then.

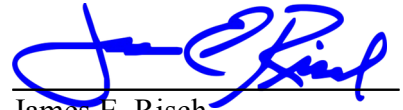
Your visit to Canada provides a rare opportunity to push for the conclusion of Treaty negotiations and a modernization of the Columbia River Treaty. We respectfully request that you prioritize the Columbia River Treaty negotiations in your engagements with the Canadian

government, encourage the Canadian government to negotiate in good faith and in the best interests of both nations, and resist the urge to link Treaty resolution with other pending bilateral issues between our countries.

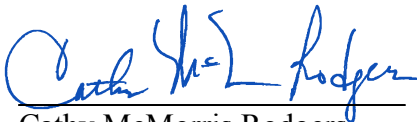
Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



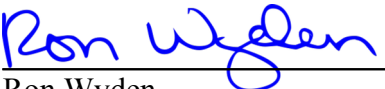
James E. Risch
United States Senator



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



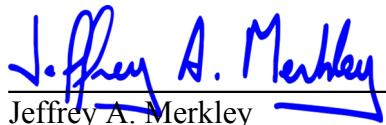
Mike Crapo
United States Senator



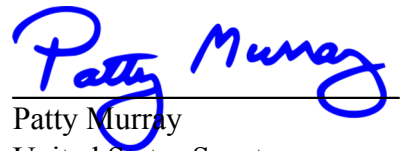
Jon Tester
United States Senator



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Dan Newhouse
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



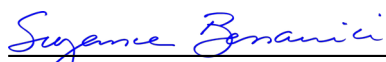
Michael K. Simpson
Member of Congress




Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



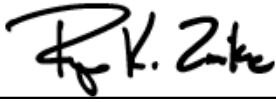
Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress



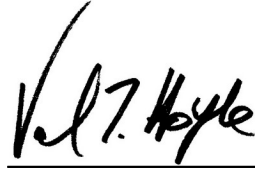
Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress



Ryan K. Zinke
Member of Congress



Val Hoyle
Member of Congress



Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



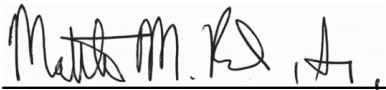
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Russ Fulcher
Member of Congress



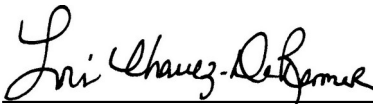
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Matthew Rosendale, Sr.
Member of Congress



Marie Gluesenkamp Perez
Member of Congress



Lori Chavez-DeRemer
Member of Congress



Cliff Bentz
Member of Congress