

## **Rep. Grace F. Napolitano Opening Statement**

Today's hearing focuses on protecting our existing hydropower resources and restoring production to a time of abundance. Abundance, by definition, describes a plentiful or over-sufficient quantity or supply. An abundance of hydropower in the Pacific Northwest makes some reminiscent of how electricity from the Columbia River powered aluminum plants and shipyards, enabling us to win World War II.

Equally embedded into the Pacific Northwest culture is the role of fisheries in the region. Whether it's through the rites and traditions of a salmon harvest for Native American tribes, or during the abundant times of the 1860s through 1960s, when commercial fisheries annually harvested millions of pounds of fish and salmon. We must also acknowledge what abundance means to everyone: what it means to generations of fishermen, what abundance means to generations of recreational enthusiasts, what abundance means from a water and power perspective, and what it means for preserving our environment. The vision of abundance is not isolated view.

There is no argument about the important role hydropower has played and continues to play in meeting our energy demands all over the west. Hydropower projects like the Hoover Dam generate on average 4.2 billion kilowatt hours annually. At the same time, the Colorado River also provides us with some of the most majestic environmental landscapes that we as a society treasure. We have to face these trade offs and find solutions. As Mr. Fahlund aptly mentioned in his written testimony, "environmental quality is not a luxury good: leaving our children with the burden of an environmental deficit is no less insidious than leaving them with the burden of the financial one." To find that balance requires leadership on all levels.

Leadership exemplified by local stakeholders, like in the Klamath Basin, where farmers, fishermen, tribal leaders, and environmentalists reached a historic agreement that would preserve farming in the region, restore our environment and the commercial fishery, and meet our tribal trust responsibilities.

Leadership like in the Yakima region, where farmers and environmentalists are working together on developing and creating new water supplies while taking into account the needs of the environment.

Leadership in the Lower Colorado Region, where stakeholders and water users work together to implement the Multispecies Habitat Conservation Plan,

while allowing for water and power deliveries to continue in accordance with state and federal laws.

Our local communities must be commended for their courage and their leadership in creating these collaborative partnerships. They are not looking to blame- they are looking for solutions. If we want to preserve hydropower as a resource for the future, we must support these collaborative efforts as well as look at efficiencies and alternate power sources to help meet our future demands.

I know that the NW delegation is actively looking at solutions to support the development of renewables while protecting their hydropower resources and the operational integrity of the BPA grid. The issue of high wind/high water where power supply is exceeding demand is a challenge- but it is a challenge that can be solved. As I've stated at our PMA budget hearing in March, I would like to offer any help in facilitating a solution to this discussion since California depends on renewables generated in the NW region.

Thank you to our witnesses for being here today. We look forward to hearing your testimony.