

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 23, 2016

The Honorable Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to urge the Administration to prioritize discussion of the Columbia River Treaty during Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau's upcoming state visit to the United States.

The Columbia River Treaty (Treaty) plays an indispensable role in the lives and livelihoods of those in the Pacific Northwest. The agreement between Canada and the United States serves as a framework for the mutual benefit of both countries, providing low-cost hydropower generation, flood control and economic growth. The Treaty has provided benefits to communities in the Columbia River basin for more than 50 years.

The Treaty was signed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964 at the Peace Arch on the border of Washington State and British Columbia. It was the first cross-border water treaty in the world and focused on the cooperative development of water resources. The Treaty has no expiration date, although either country may, beginning in 2024, offer changes or terminate most of its provisions by providing 10-years' written notice.

The upcoming state visit by Prime Minister Trudeau in March will be a significant and important event that will strengthen our relationship with our neighbor to the North and provide an opportunity to discuss topics important to both countries. Renegotiation of the Treaty is a priority for the Pacific Northwest leading up to and during Prime Minister Trudeau's visit.

The Pacific Northwest Sovereign Review Team spent three years thoroughly and thoughtfully reviewing the Treaty. The Team took into account the views of tribal nations, power producers, environmental organizations and others stakeholders, and presented its proposal for modernizing the Treaty to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Bonneville Power Administration (U.S. Entity) as it prepared the Regional Recommendation principles. In December 2013, the U.S. Entity presented its Recommendation to the Administration and Department of State.

In an April 2014 letter, the bipartisan congressional delegations from Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington urged the Administration to complete the Interagency Policy Committee (IPC) review and move toward official negotiation with Canada. A year later, we wrote again expressing our frustration with the lack of progress and communication, and displeasure with the Administration's lack of prioritization of the Treaty. We called on the Administration to promptly begin negotiations with Canada on the future of the Treaty consistent with the Regional

Recommendation. We understand the final IPC review is approaching. The visit by Prime Minister Trudeau gives the United States a prime opportunity to bring the Treaty to the forefront and relay to the Canadians its mutual importance to our two countries.

We appreciate that there are many issues of importance that will be addressed by the Administration and the Canadian government during the March state visit. However, given the 2024 deadline, and the limited time your Administration has to influence the outcome of potential revisions to the Treaty, we urge you to use the Prime Minister's visit as an opportunity to begin high-level negotiations and include its renewal as a main agenda component.

Sincerely,



Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress

Enclosures (3)

cc: The Honorable John Kerry, Secretary, U.S. Department of State
The Honorable Christy Goldfuss, Managing Director, Council on Environmental Quality
The Honorable Susan Rice, National Security Advisor
The Honorable Ernest Moniz, U.S. Secretary of Energy
The Honorable Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall, Deputy Secretary, Department of Energy
The Honorable Sally Jewell, U.S. Department of Interior
The Honorable Mike O'Connor, Deputy Secretary, Department of Interior
The Honorable Penny Pritzker, Secretary of Commerce
The Honorable Elliott Mainzer, Administrator, Bonneville Power Administration
The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works),
U.S. Department of the Army
Brigadier General Scott A. Spellmon, Commander, Northwest Division, U.S. Army
Corps of Engineers
The Honorable Brian Doherty, Department of State Chief Negotiator for the
Columbia River Treaty
The Honorable Kate Brown, Governor of Oregon
The Honorable Jay Inslee, Governor of Washington