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News Advisory

For Thursday, November 7, 2013

Senate panel chaired by Ron Wyden to hear about modernizing the Columbia River Treaty

Conservationists will underscore importance of adding environmental health as the third primary treaty purpose

Who: U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, chaired by Oregon Senator Ron Wyden. Washington Senator Maria Cantwell and Idaho Senator Jim Risch are also on the committee

Conservation witness:

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What: for the Senate Committee to consider the Draft Regional Recommendation regarding the Columbia River Treaty. The draft recommendations were written by two federal agencies, Bonneville Power Administration and the U.S Army Corps of Engineers, and are scheduled to be presented in final form to the U.S. Department of State on December 14.

The recommendations will add “ecosystem function” (including the potential to return to salmon to ancestral spawning waters in Canada and Washington State now blocked by Grand Coulee Dam) as a third purpose of the treaty, along with hydropower and flood risk management.

Conservationists will ask Senators Wyden, Cantwell and Risch to support this recommendation, noting that people in the Northwest who are ratepayers also want healthy rivers and fisheries. As climate change takes further hold, a revised treaty that keeps ecosystems healthy will be good for all uses, including power production and flood protection.

Where: SD-366 Senate Dirksen Building

When: Thursday, November 7, 09:30 EST

The hearing will be webcast live on the committee's website, and an archived video will be available shortly after the hearing is complete. Witness testimony will be available on the website at the start of the hearing.

Links:

- Senate Committee website:
<http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2013/11/full-committee-hearing>
- [Include salmon, climate provisions in river treaty](#)
- BPA and ACOE, [Columbia River Treaty: Draft Regional Recommendation](#)