



March 3, 2019

FR: Native Fish Society

TO: State Senator Michael Dembrow, Chair, Senate Environment & Natural Resources Committee

RE: Oregon RPS and Opposition to SB 508

Native Fish Society is an Oregon based non-profit organization dedicated to reviving the Pacific Northwest's abundant wild fish, free-flowing rivers, and thriving local communities. On behalf of our 4,000 members and supporters and 89 River Stewards, we submit this testimony in strong opposition to SB 508.

The purpose of Oregon's Renewable Portfolio Standard was to propel Oregon toward a cleaner energy future - as a leader in the fight against global climate change. The underlying concern motivating the RPS is the health of our region's environment and communities. Allowing all hydropower to count toward the RPS would undermine this purpose of environmental stewardship in a number of critical ways:

- Lowers incentives for utilities to develop additional renewables in their energy portfolios. Instead, it would grant utilities the space to continue with the large amounts of hydropower already part of our energy infrastructure. At this critical moment in the global climate crisis, Oregon, as an environmental leader, cannot weaken or slow our response. Oregon needs to press on toward our goal of delivering 50% renewable electricity by 2040.
- Hydropower is not carbon neutral. Researchers found that reservoirs can be large sources of the powerful climate change gas, methane. The gas is produced as a result of biological processes breaking down organic matter underwater. See the attachment for additional information.
- Hydropower is one of the leading causes of decline for native fish species like salmon and steelhead in Oregon. As a result, hydropower facilities are no longer viewed by the public as the long-term sustainable source of power as they once were. If enacted, SB 508 would lock Oregon into an energy source, that's become part of our environmental crisis. See the attached article, "Hearts Like the Mountains" by David James Duncan, which refers to the present challenges hydropower has created for native fish and the communities that call Oregon's special places home.

Thank you for considering our testimony. We strongly encourage you to oppose SB 508.

Warmly,

Mark Sherwood
Executive Director