

**Amendment - 1st Reading/2nd House-blue - Requested by: Katie Sullivan - (H) Energy, Technology and Federal Relations**

68th Legislature - 2023

Drafter: Trevor Graff, 406-444-4975

SJ0010.002.001

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 10

2 INTRODUCED BY M. CUFFE

3  
4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF  
5 MONTANA EXPRESSING SUPPORT OF HYDROPOWER AND THE FEDERAL COLUMBIA RIVER POWER  
6 SYSTEM; AND OPPOSING THE BREACH OF THE LOWER SNAKE RIVER DAMS.

7  
8 WHEREAS, organizations throughout the Northwest have made proposals to breach the lower Snake  
9 River dams; and

10 WHEREAS, hydropower is a premier renewable resource that provides reliable, cost-effective, carbon-  
11 free electricity; and

12 WHEREAS, hydropower plays a critical role as our nation works to maintain an affordable, reliable, and  
13 resilient grid, which is an important cornerstone of our domestic energy system; and

14 WHEREAS, hydropower has become increasingly important to the grid as policies are adopted to  
15 increase electrification of other sectors of the economy, such as transportation and heating; and

16 WHEREAS, hydroelectric generation is unique in its ability to instantly increase or decrease generation  
17 to balance generation and electric demand; and

18 WHEREAS, hydropower provides a foundation for reliability that is necessary with decreasing levels of  
19 baseload power and firm dispatchable power and with increasing levels of variable nondispatchable renewable  
20 resources, such as wind and solar; and

21 WHEREAS, the recently concluded Columbia River System Operation environmental impact statement  
22 studied the environmental, biological, power supply, and socioeconomic impacts of the entire Federal Columbia  
23 River Power System, which is marketed by the Bonneville Power Administration. This multiyear, \$50.4 million  
24 analysis concluded the lower Snake River dams play a critical role in the Northwest power system and  
25 economy and their impact on salmon populations has been mitigated successfully through extensive fish and  
26 wildlife programs funded by regional ratepayers; and

27 WHEREAS, on an annual basis, the dams on the lower Snake River provide an average of 1,000  
28 megawatts of electricity, enough to serve over 800,000 Northwest businesses, industries, and households,

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1 including in western Montana; and

2 WHEREAS, the continued operation of the lower Snake River dams is central to reliably meeting the  
3 region's clean energy goals, providing dispatchable capacity to prevent blackouts, and ramping capability to  
4 integrate other renewable resources; and

5 WHEREAS, the lower Snake River dams can provide over 2,600 megawatts of sustained peaking  
6 capacity that represents a quarter of the Federal Columbia River Power System's reserves holding capacity;  
7 and

8 WHEREAS, with weather events like ice storms and extreme cold and heat waves, the lower Snake  
9 River dams have also proved to be critical to maintaining electric grid reliability and public safety; and

10 WHEREAS, breaching the lower Snake River dams and replacing them with other non-emitting  
11 resources could raise Bonneville Power Agency's power supply rates by up to 50%. For most utilities relying on  
12 the agency, that translates to a 25% rate increase for their customers; and

13 WHEREAS, the lower Snake River dams contribute to the region's economy by providing irrigation,  
14 recreation, employment, and inland waterway transportation; and

15 WHEREAS, if successful in breaching the lower Snake River dams, Montana's federally owned dams  
16 and others in the Northwest that produce carbon-free, affordable power could be targeted for breaching; and

17 WHEREAS, breaching the lower Snake River dams or Montana's federally owned hydropower-  
18 producing dams, including Hungry Horse Dam, Libby Dam, Yellowtail Dam, Canyon Ferry Dam, and Fort Peck  
19 Dam, would greatly increase the risk of blackouts and raise power costs for electric cooperative members in  
20 Montana and public power across the Northwest.

21  
22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF  
23 THE STATE OF MONTANA:

24 That the Montana Legislature hereby stands opposed to the breaching of any of the federally owned  
25 hydropower-producing dams, especially those on the lower Snake River, in the Northwest, and in the State of  
26 Montana.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the federal government decides to remove the Snake River dams  
28 because of the need to save runs of wild salmon, honor the treaty rights of any affected tribes, or if the dams

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1 are deemed outdated and require expensive retrofitting, the Montana Legislature calls on the federal  
2 government to ensure that adequate replacement power is available to meet the needs of Montana electricity  
3 consumers.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to the  
5 governors and congressional delegations of all states served by the Bonneville Power Administration, including  
6 California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming, and to EACH MEMBER OF THE  
7 UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE UNITED STATES SENATE the leaders of the United States  
8 House of Representatives and the United States Senate.

9 - END -