



Update on the Columbia River Treaty

Water Resources Commission Meeting

November 14, 2013

Introduction: Columbia River Treaty

- **Purpose of the 2014/2014 Treaty Review is to make an informed recommendation**
- **Regional stakeholders have been engaged throughout the process**
- **The U.S. Entity released its Draft Regional Recommendation on September 20, 2013**

Background

- **The Treaty has provided significant benefits**
- **Since the Treaty was signed, circumstances have changed**
 - Climate change is likely to significantly alter the basin's hydrology
 - Interest in taking a more holistic approach to management of the Columbia River
- **Treaty Review process is meant to identify recommendations that address today's circumstances**

Background (cont.)

Two primary reasons for a Review of the Columbia River Treaty:

1. The Treaty has no specified end date, although most provisions can be terminated by September 16, 2024, with minimum of 10 years written notice.
2. Canada's obligation to provide assured flood control will expire in 2024, shifting to a process that allows the U.S. to "call upon" Canada for flood storage.

Developing a Regional Recommendation

- In June 2013, the U.S. Entity released a Working Draft Regional Recommendation
- Focused meetings were held with regional stakeholders
- On September 20, 2013, a Draft Regional Recommendation was release for public comment
- Roundtables conducted throughout the region; public comments accepted through October 25th

Developing a Regional Recommendation

September 20, 2013 Draft Regional Recommendation

- **Cover Letter**
- **Introduction**
- **Regional Goals**
- **General Principles**
- **Specific recommendations related to ecosystem based function, hydropower, flood risk management, water supply, navigation, recreation, and climate change**
- **Post 2013 Domestic Matters**

Developing a Regional Recommendation

September 20, 2013 Draft Regional Recommendation

Water Supply

- **Allow the storage and release of water from Canada in the spring and summer for additional in-stream and out-of-stream uses**
- **Such allocations should not adversely affect the operation of upstream reservoirs**
- **Use a future domestic process that is consistent with water rights, including tribal reserved water rights and ecosystem-based function, to make allocation decisions**

Developing a Regional Recommendation

September 20, 2013 Draft Regional Recommendation

A Modernized Treaty that is envisioned will:

- **better address the region's need for a reliable and economically sustainable hydropower system;**
- **continue to provide a similar level of flood risk management to protect public safety and the region's economy;**
- **include ecosystem-based function as a third primary purpose of the Treaty, to ensure a more comprehensive approach throughout the Columbia Basin watershed; and**
- **create the flexibility within the Treaty that is necessary to respond to climate change, changing water supply needs, and other future potential changes in system operations, while continuing to meet authorized purposes such as navigation.**

Conclusion

September 20, 2013 Draft Regional Recommendation

- **The U.S. Entity is recommending that the U.S. Government decide by mid-2014 to renegotiate the Treaty**
- **Complete that effort no later than 2015**

Next Steps

- **The U.S. Entity will deliver its final regional recommendation to the U.S. Department of State in December 2013**
- **Oregon will continue to stay engaged, at both the technical and policy levels**

Columbia River from Rowena Crest



Photo courtesy of McD22

Thank you — Any questions?