

**In Support of Legislation to Protect Hydroelectric Generation and Transmission Facilities,
Located in Federal Watersheds, from the Threat of Catastrophic Wildfires**

1 Under Section 10(e)(1) of the Federal Power Act, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
2 assesses annual charges for federal land use by hydropower project licensees. In 2015, FERC collected
3 approximately \$11.5 million. After FERC collects the fees, they are allocated 12.5 percent to the U.S.
4 Treasury, 50 percent to the federal reclamation fund, and 37.5 percent to the states in which the projects
5 are located. There is no direct nexus to the collection of these charges and active management of the
6 federal lands where the hydropower projects are located.

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8 The American Public Power Association (APPA) recognizes that: (1) across the Western U.S., the
9 average annual number of large fires (larger than 1,000 acres) burning each year has more than tripled
10 between the 1970s and the 2010s; (2) the area burned by these fires has shown an even larger increase—
11 in an average year, more than six times as many acres across the West were burned in the 2010s than in
12 the 1970s; (3) the fire season is 105 days longer than it was in the 1970s, and is approaching the point
13 where the notion of a fire season will be made obsolete by the reality of year-round wildfires across the
14 West; (4) the increase in wildfires may double soil erosion in some western U.S. states by 2050,
15 significantly degrading water quality; and (5) Western population is projected to grow by 310 million
16 people by 2100, and will likely increase demand for diminishing water supplies.

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18 **NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED:** That the American Public Power Association (APPA)
19 supports active forest management by federal land management agencies, involving local/regional
20 collaborations, to enhance the reliability of the electricity grid and reduce the threat of wildfires to
21 hydropower facilities, electric transmission, and distribution facilities located on federal lands; and

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23 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That APPA supports efforts in Congress to redirect annual land use
24 charges collected from hydropower project licensees to the licensees, to be used in collaboration with
25 federal land managers, local government, and non-profit organizations, for projects to reduce the threat of
26 catastrophic wildfire to hydropower facilities and to mitigate the adverse impacts to flow and water level
27 management, wildlife, species management, and recreation in these critical watersheds; and

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29 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That APPA believes this approach supports hydropower project
30 licensees with cooperative agreements or contacts with federal land management agencies to execute
31 watershed management, right of way hazard mitigations, habitat protection, and restoration projects to
32 mitigate the risk of wildfire and secure water supplies; and

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34 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That APPA supports efforts by Congress to enact legislation that
35 would provide hydropower project licensees that use federal lands with additional resources to collaborate
36 with federal land managers to protect critical watersheds.