



October 16, 2025

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chair
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair
Committee on Environment & Public Works
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment and Public Works
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, Chairman Capito, and Ranking Member Whitehouse:

On behalf of the American Public Power Association (APPA), which represents more than 2,000 community-owned, not-for-profit electric utilities serving over 55 million Americans, I write to express public power's concerns regarding the potential use of water supply studies in the upcoming Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2026 that could have a negative impact on federal hydropower resources.

As Congress considers provisions that address growing demands on our nation's water resources, we urge careful coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and relevant federal Power Marketing Administrations (PMAs) to ensure that hydropower purposes at federal water projects are preserved and not diminished. Many APPA members rely on cost-based hydropower from Corps-managed reservoirs, which deliver affordable and reliable electricity to millions of Americans. At a time when demand and electricity costs are rising across the country, the preservation of cost-based federal hydropower is more important than ever to protect consumers from further financial strain.

Federal hydropower has also played a foundational role in America's energy history. For nearly a century, federal hydropower projects have powered electrification, spurred regional economic growth, and provided communities with a reliable, non-emitting source of power. Maintaining this legacy is critical to ensuring that future generations benefit from the same reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy that has long been a cornerstone of our national infrastructure and national security.

Water supply studies and subsequent water or cost reallocations often result in negative impacts to the availability of water for hydropower generation, alter long-standing operational priorities, or shift project allocations in ways that financially burden power customers. These consequences risk undermining statutory project purposes and threaten the value of a reliable and affordable energy source that has served the nation for decades.

As such, APPA respectfully urges the committees to ensure that:

1. Hydropower is formally maintained as an authorized project purpose at Corps-managed multi-purpose projects;
2. Water supply studies and reallocation actions include early and meaningful consultation with federal hydropower stakeholders, including preference customers and the federal PMAs;
3. Any such actions fully consider the economic, environmental, grid reliability, and national security benefits of federal hydropower;
4. WRDA 2026 does not authorize, or lead to, cost or water reallocations that increase financial or operational burdens on preference power customers or jeopardize the firm energy and capacity benefits historically provided by these projects;
5. The Corps assigns all water supply expenses to water supply rather than joint project purposes; and
6. Hydropower is codified as a renewable resource.

APPA appreciates your continued leadership in developing equitable, forward-looking water infrastructure policy through WRDA. While public power recognizes the need to address evolving water resource challenges, this must not come at the cost of undermining reliable federal hydropower, a critical backbone of public power systems across the country.

We welcome the opportunity to further engage with you and your staff as WRDA 2026 develops and look forward to working together to ensure hydropower continues to contribute meaningfully to our nation's water and energy resilience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Corwin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Scott Corwin
President and CEO