



**POSITION STATEMENT**  
**of the**  
**WESTERN STATES WATER COUNCIL**  
**in support of**  
**RENEWABLE HYDROPOWER DEVELOPMENT**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**March 22, 2016**

**WHEREAS**, the water and hydropower resources of the West have been developed through partnerships between energy and water users, and continue to be inextricably connected; and

**WHEREAS**, clean, efficient, inexpensive hydropower is a vital part of the energy resources needed to meet our present and future energy demands; and

**WHEREAS**, hydropower is the largest source of renewable electricity in the United States, producing some 259,367 million KWh or about 6.3%<sup>1</sup> of the Nation's electricity needs; and

**WHEREAS**, the potential exists for further public and private development of this valuable resource, including upgrading existing generators, developing small hydro and the power potential from existing man-made conduits and canals, as well as hydroelectric pumped storage projects; and

**WHEREAS**, such development can often be undertaken with little impact on the environmental and important ecological resources, requiring minimal further environmental review; and

**WHEREAS**, permitting requirements may be appropriately minimized and streamlined so as to promote reasonable development while avoiding unnecessary costs; and

**WHEREAS**, the future development of potential hydropower resources should be appropriately undertaken in compliance with substantive and procedural state water law and interstate compacts, and consistent with the States' authority under Clean Water Act Section 401; and

**WHEREAS**, the rights and preference privileges of existing water and power users should be respected; and

**WHEREAS**, federal legislation has from time to time been introduced to further authorize and promote the wise and sustainable development of our renewable hydropower resources, also creating jobs and reducing carbon emissions.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Western States Water Council supports federal legislative and administrative actions to authorize and implement reasonable hydropower projects and programs that enhance our electric generation capacity and promote economic development, through streamlined permitting processes, while appropriately protecting environmental resources.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Western States Water Council also supports the development and implementation of appropriate energy and water conservation programs at all levels to minimize demands placed on our natural resources and ecosystems.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that past, present and future hydropower development and operational changes should recognize and ensure consistency with state law and regulatory authority and delegated authority under federal law.

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<sup>1</sup> 2014, U.S. Energy Information Administration, [www.eia.gov](http://www.eia.gov).