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Congress of the United States House of Representatives

February 27, 2012

Mr. Jon Wellinghoff, Chairman
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
888 First Street Northeast
Washington, DC 20426

Dear Chairman Wellinghoff:

I am writing to you in support of the 50-year License Application of Public Utility District No. 1 of Douglas County (Douglas County PUD) submitted for the Wells Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2149-152). Douglas County PUD formally began its relicensing effort on December 1, 2006 and filed its Final License Application with FERC on May 27, 2010. Douglas County PUD has invested over \$9.2 million into the effort to relicense the Wells Project.

To date, Douglas County PUD has completed 25 environmental relicensing studies and worked closely with stakeholders on the development of 12 resource management plans and 6 relicensing settlement agreements. The cities of Pateros, Brewster, and Bridgeport are adjacent to the reservoir upstream of Douglas County PUD's hydroelectric project. The PUD has entered into settlement agreements with these cities that provide substantial financial support for the operation, maintenance and enhancement of recreation facilities. These three recreation related settlement agreements provide support for the issuance of a 50-year FERC license for the Wells Project.

Douglas County PUD worked in close coordination with federal, state and tribal fishery resource agencies to sign an Aquatic Settlement Agreement. The Aquatic Settlement Agreement is a 50-year agreement between Douglas County PUD, USFWS, BLM, Washington State Department of Ecology, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Colville Tribes and the Yakama Nation for the protection, mitigation and enhancement of bull trout, white sturgeon, pacific lamprey and native resident fish. It also contains provisions for the prevention of aquatic nuisance species and ensures continued compliance with state water quality standards.

The Aquatic Settlement Agreement is designed to address all of the aquatic resources not already protected by the Wells Anadromous Fish Agreement and Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). The Wells HCP is a 50-year settlement agreement between Douglas County PUD and the NMFS, USFWS, Colville Tribes, Yakama Nation and WDFW, which addresses project-related impacts to five species of anadromous fish – spring Chinook, summer/fall Chinook, steelhead, sockeye, and coho. Douglas County PUD has far exceeded the survival standards of the HCP incidental take permits, has demonstrated rapid travel times for adult salmon and steelhead ascending the

2421 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-2006
FAX: (202) 225-3392

10 NORTH POST STREET, SUITE 625
SPOKANE, WA 99201
(509) 353-2374
FAX: (509) 353-2412

555 SOUTH MAIN
COLVILLE, WA 99114
(509) 684-3481
FAX: (509) 353-2412

29 SOUTH PALOUSE STREET
WALLA WALLA, WA 99362
(509) 529-9358
FAX: (509) 353-2412

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dam and has been funding efforts to protect and enhance critical spawning and rearing habitat for these fish in the Methow and Okanogan rivers. Douglas PUD has also been providing extensive funding for the operation of conservation hatchery programs in the Methow, Okanogan and Columbia rivers.

Douglas PUD has also entered into a Wildlife and Resident Fish Settlement Agreement that ensures that wildlife and their habitat within and adjacent to the project will continue to be protected and enhanced throughout the term of the next license for the Wells Project. This settlement agreement also provides for the enhancement of recreational fishing opportunities within Douglas, Okanogan and Chelan Counties through the production of rainbow trout, Lahontan cutthroat trout, kokanee, and freshwater Chinook for stocking into Lake Chelan. This Settlement Agreement includes support for a 50-year FERC license for the Wells Project.

The Wells HCP, Aquatic Settlement Agreement, recreation settlement agreements, Wildlife and Resident Fish Settlement and terrestrial resource management plans were all included in the 2010 Final License Application submitted by Douglas PUD. The new environmental measures in the application are extensive and estimated at \$643 million over 50 years, averaging nearly \$13 million per year over 50 years.

Douglas County PUD's Final License Application and associated relicensing settlement agreements are all based on a 50-year license term. Thus, I respectfully request that you carefully evaluate the Final License Application, estimated cost of environmental measures, its broad array of stakeholder support for its settlement agreements and license application when making your decision regarding the term of the next long-term FERC license for the Wells Project.

I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy McMorris Rodgers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cathy McMorris Rodgers

Cc: Philip Moeller, Commissioner
John Norris, Commissioner
Cheryl LaFleur, Commissioner
Kimberly D. Bose, FERC Secretary

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