



March 19, 2025

Hon. Janeen Sollman
Chair
Committee on Energy and the Environment
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Hon. David Brock Smith
Vice Chair
Committee on Energy and the Environment
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Testimony of American Rivers Opposing SB 634: Relating to the Use of Hydroelectric Energy to Comply with a Renewable Portfolio Standard; Declaring an Emergency.

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice Chair Smith, and members of the Committee,

American Rivers appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 634. American Rivers has a long history of engaging in the creation and implementation of the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) and feels strongly that because of its damaging nature, the role of hydropower in RPS standards must be carefully defined. Unfortunately, SB 634 would remove all safeguards that ensure the hydropower included in the RPS standard is minimally damaging and would undermine the whole reason for having an RPS program, which is to incentivize the creation of new renewable energy generation. For these reasons, **American Rivers is opposed to SB 634 and requests the Committee similarly oppose enactment of this bill.**

Including all existing hydropower in the RPS undermines the intent of Oregon's existing RPS: diversifying the state's energy mix with **new** sources of renewable energy. Allowing the energy generated by all hydropower dams to count towards an RPS would not result in a single additional kilowatt of renewable energy. Instead, it would discourage investment in new renewable energy projects and deliver a windfall to utilities. This is not in the public interest.

Hydropower can have significant detrimental impacts on rivers, fish, and the communities that depend on both. Oregon's current RPS law provides minimal safeguards to ensure that hydropower that is unsafe, damaging, or in protected areas does not receive the label "renewable". Much of the hydropower generation that would be allowed into the RPS program under SB 634 has already caused serious damage to Oregon's migratory fish populations. The program should not be weakened to provide incentives to the many projects that have caused this harm.

Climate change will have significant impacts on Oregon's natural resources, underscoring the need for careful consideration of hydropower policies. We believe the current RPS law and its safeguards represent a pragmatic balance. **Please oppose SB 634.**

Sincerely,

Sarah Dyrda
Senior Advisor