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For Immediate Release

Legislators introduce bill to promote hydropower development

Washington, D.C. (December 16, 2011) – Recognizing the economic and clean energy benefits of hydropower, two congresswomen introduced bipartisan legislation yesterday that promotes additional development of the nation’s most affordable energy resource.

Representatives Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) and Diana DeGette (D-CO) introduced H.R. 3680, the *Hydropower Regulatory Efficiency Act of 2011* yesterday. The legislation promotes the development of small hydropower and conduit projects and aims to shorten regulatory timeframes of certain types of hydropower projects.

The National Hydropower Association, the industry’s national trade association based in Washington, DC, immediately endorsed the bill.

“NHA appreciates the bipartisan leadership that Reps. McMorris Rodgers and DeGette have demonstrated and looks forward to working with them to get this bill to the President’s desk. With so much untapped potential in the U.S., in terms of both electricity and jobs, hydropower has the ability to be a driving force behind America’s economic recovery,” said NHA Executive Director Linda Church Ciocci.

A 2010 study by Navigant Consulting concluded that with the right policies in place, hydropower could create an additional 1.4 million new jobs and add 60,000 MW of new capacity by 2025. Current hydropower capacity in the United States is approximately 90,000 MW, generating about two-thirds of America’s renewable electricity, and the industry employs 300,000 workers.

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee cleared a similar bill earlier this year. The Hydropower Improvement Act of 2011 was introduced by Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), joined by 8 bipartisan co-sponsors, and garnered the support of both industry and the environmental community. It currently awaits action by the full Senate.

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