



CITY OF PORTLAND  
*OFFICE OF HEALTHY WORKING RIVERS*



1120 SW Fifth Ave., #1000, Portland, OR 97204 ♦ Charlie Hales, Mayor ♦ Ann Beier, Director

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February 7, 2013

TO: U.S. Entity, Columbia River Treaty

FROM: Ann Beier, Director, Office of Healthy Working Rivers, City of  
Portland *Ann Beier*

SUBJECT: Comments on Columbia River Treaty Review

The City of Portland has been asked to provide our broad perspectives on the potential content and direction of the Columbia River Treaty, post-2024, to help inform the remaining stages of the technical review and the preliminary recommendation on the Treaty. This letter does not represent our final position on this process. We look forward to future opportunities to provide more detailed input prior to a draft recommendation being forwarded to the Department of State in late 2013.

The City of Portland has been engaged in the process since early 2012. We appreciate the efforts by staff from the U.S. Entity to brief key City Bureaus (Office of Healthy Working Rivers, Office of Government Relations, Bureau of Environmental Services, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Bureau of Emergency Management) on the overall review process, the technical framework and key inputs to the models used in Iterations 1 and 2. We have also participated in listening sessions and in a “report out” session on comments received on the first iteration.

The City’s primary interests in the Treaty relate to flood risk management for the Portland area, ecosystem values, and climate change. The following is a high-level perspective of our concerns.

#### Flood Risk Management

The review process involves analyzing modifications in how some Canadian and U.S. dams will be operated resulting in changes in hydropower production and timing and in flood storage. The changes in dam operations are likely to have implications for the Portland/Vancouver area, including changes in the extent and predictability of flooding along the Columbia. We want to assure continued flood protection for the City of Portland and would welcome greater involvement in weighing flood risk management alternatives.

## Ecosystem Values and Salmon Recovery Efforts

The City of Portland is committed to meeting our obligations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Ecological values and ESA requirements related to salmon and other endangered species need to be reflected in the Sovereign Review Team's recommendation to the U.S. Department of State. While not addressed in the original 1964 Treaty, it is critical that ecosystem impacts be fully understood and future management alternatives identified as part of this process.

### Climate Change

Finally, the City is also concerned about how the technical analysis incorporates the most recent climate change modeling. Because of Portland's location low in the watershed, where both tides and high flows on the Columbia can influence the Willamette, we want to make sure that the results of the climate change models are fully integrated into the other topic areas – particularly flood risk and ecosystem impacts.

While the City has yet to take a formal position on the Treaty recommendation, we will continue to be involved in the process. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with the Technical Review Teams on our specific concerns related to flood risk management, ecological values and integration of climate change scenarios.

Thanks for this opportunity to comment. Please contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at 503-823-5463 or [ann.beier@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:ann.beier@portlandoregon.gov).

cc: Bill Bradbury, Northwest Power and Conservation Council  
Henry Lorenzen, Northwest Power and Conservation Council