



ISSUE ALERT!

Alliance Requests Ag Secretary to Engage in Columbia River Mediation



Photo credit: ~~U.S. Army Corps of Engineers~~

At the request of its Pacific Northwest members, the Family Farm Alliance earlier this week transmitted [this letter](#) to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, requesting Biden Administration Cabinet-level intervention in mediation talks involving the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS).

Altering operations along the Columbia and Lower Snake Rivers, whether through shifted flow regimes or dam removal, would send ripple effects throughout the broader agricultural community served by this system.

Pacific Northwest irrigators and water managers have a strong interest in these discussions. Unfortunately, their voices have not been fully included in these processes. The Family Farm Alliance's request to speak at a federal March 31 listening session was not granted.

“Our members ‘listened’ in dismayed silence as pro-dam breaching advocates dominated the discussion with their talking points,” Alliance President Patrick

O'Toole and Executive Director Dan Keppen wrote in their April 10 letter to Secretary Vilsack.

Western Farmer-Stockman this week ran this [guest editorial](#) by Mr. Keppen explaining why Pacific Northwest ag interests should be better integrated into the river talks.

“If our representatives had been permitted to speak on March 31, we would have underscored the critical importance of maintaining our country's food security and locally sourced foods,” Keppen said. “The multiple-year drought we have faced in many parts of the West – coupled with other domestic and global developments – has already affected the availability and price of food for many Americans.”

“Any federal action that impacts U.S. food production or distribution means increased reliance on food production in other countries with lesser production standards,” added Mr. O'Toole. “We cannot risk losing control of our reliable and safe U.S.-grown food supply.”

We will continue to keep you informed on this and other developments impacting Western irrigated agriculture.

If you're not a member, join us!



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