



House Lawmakers Make Big Move Backing Small Hydro

WASHINGTON, July 18, 2017 -- House lawmakers made a big move in approving a bill from Reps. Richard Hudson (R-N.C.) and Diana DeGette (D-Colo.) that would expedite federal reviews of small conduit (or energy-recovery) hydropower projects.

“This broadly-supported bipartisan plan would do big things for small hydro,” ClearPath Action Executive Director Rich Powell said. “There is enormous potential in these projects to provide clean and reliable power.”

The Promoting Conduit Hydropower Facilities Act (H.R. 2786) aims to aid projects that are typically low impact because they are constructed as part of existing water infrastructure, such as irrigation canals and pipes that deliver water to cities and for industrial and agricultural use.

Hydropower has been an overlooked source of clean baseload power despite it serving as the largest source of U.S. renewable electricity. It is also a flexible source of power that can be quickly adjusted to match real-time changes in power demand.

One of the most promising untapped sources for new hydropower is in small and existing man-made structures. The U.S. has 1.2 million miles of water supply mains and there are thousands of hydro generation opportunities just within these water pipes alone. According to a Department of Energy estimate, the potential for conduit hydropower projects could be more than all the new conventional hydropower projects built in the U.S. over the past decade (1.7GW of conventional vs. up to 2GW of energy-recovery hydropower potential).

ClearPath Action is a 501(c)(4) working to create and influence conservative clean energy solutions. Find out more at clearpath.org and clearpathaction.org. Also follow us on Twitter: @powellrich, @JayFaison1 and @ClearPathAction.