



STATEMENT

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For Immediate Release

NHA Applauds Chu Comments on Hydro and Pumped Storage

Energy Secretary shows vision and leadership as a hydro advocate

Washington, D.C. (September 17, 2010) – The following is a statement from National Hydropower Association (NHA) Executive Director Linda Church Ciocci responding to Energy Secretary Steven Chu's comments supporting hydropower and pumped storage at the Montana Economic Development Summit this week:

"NHA applauds Energy Secretary Chu's comments this week on the critical role hydropower and pumped storage must play in the development of a clean, reliable energy infrastructure for the United States. As the Secretary pointed out, hydropower's potential for creating clean, domestic generating capacity -- with minimal environmental impacts -- is considerable. Pumped storage, as he also highlighted, is one of the best ways available to maximize output from variable renewable resources and provide utility-scale storage.

"As he also noted, much work remains on the policy front in Washington to make this happen. The MOU Secretary Chu signed earlier this year with the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a strong step in the right direction, as is the growing support for hydropower and pumped storage initiatives through the DOE waterpower R&D program.

"But, these developments are just a beginning. To develop those clean, domestic hydropower resources the Secretary described, Congress needs to extend necessary tax incentives, such as the Section 1603 grants program and the investment tax credit. Providing hydropower resources full parity with other renewables under the production tax credit is an equally important measure. Support is also needed to spur the pumped storage resources that will help integrate more renewables onto the grid. Congress must pass an investment tax credit for energy storage project development. These tax policies will send a strong market signal about hydropower's potential.

"Through more efficient regulatory policies, we can move projects with a minimal environmental footprint forward more quickly. That, too, will provide more stability and certainty to developers as they work to secure investment in their projects.

"Secretary Chu also noted how climate policy can encourage the growth of renewables. Passing a federal renewable energy standard that recognizes hydropower's contributions and supports the development of new hydropower resources can help make this happen.

"Passing all of these measures will require leadership in Washington. Secretary Chu and Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT), who hosted the summit, are already demonstrating that they have a strong vision on these issues. NHA stands ready to work with them -- and all other stakeholders -- to realize this vision and keep hydropower working for America."