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STATEMENT OF ORECA ON GOVERNOR KATE BROWN'S SUPPORT FOR REMOVAL OF LOWER SNAKE RIVER DAMS

Oregon's 18 electric cooperatives are extremely disappointed with Governor Kate Brown's decision to support the breaching of the four lower Snake River dams. The Snake River dams produce over 1,000 average megawatts of reliable, carbon-free energy – enough energy for over 800,000 Northwest homes. Governor Brown's decision, made without any consultation with leaders of consumer-owned utilities, will have severe consequences for our mission of providing affordable, reliable electricity to over a half-million Oregonians.

It is stunning that during a serious legislative debate on carbon reduction, Governor Brown supports a course of action that is estimated to increase CO₂ emissions *by over 2 million metric tons* – every year. This output is the equivalent of adding 421,000 passenger cars to the region's roads each year. If the State of Oregon is serious about addressing climate change, they are now moving in the wrong direction.

Furthermore, the Northwest Power and Conservation Council – for whom Governor Brown has appointed two Oregon members – has concluded that the Northwest power supply becomes inadequate as early as next year. Taking out the lower Snake River dams, which help keep our region's power and transmission systems in balance, could lead to the crashing of the electrical grid and blackouts for Oregonians.

Finally, we disagree with Governor Brown's claim that the removal of the Snake River dams will “simultaneously address both the orca and salmon recovery dilemma” in the region. The region's ratepayers have made significant long-term investments in large-scale structural and operational changes to further improve existing fish passage routes as well as provide new safe passage structures at these dams. The juvenile survival performance standard target is 96 percent for yearling chinook and steelhead. Governor Brown should support building on this success story rather than embracing an extreme position that will harm rural Oregonians.

We urge Governor Brown to reconsider this ill-fated decision.