

May 18, 2008

The Honorable Henry Waxman  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Oppose Wild & Scenic River amendments to the American Clean Energy & Security Act

Dear Chairman Waxman:

On behalf of American Rivers' 65,000 members and supporters around the country, I urge you to strongly oppose amendments to the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES) that would allow hydropower construction on National Wild & Scenic Rivers. The stated purpose of Amendment 205 (HYD\_003) is to end restrictions on incremental hydropower construction on Wild and Scenic Rivers. One of the fundamental protections the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Act) explicitly provides is a prohibition of new hydropower development. Amendment 205 would undermine the purpose of the Act itself and four decades of bi-partisan congressional action to protect a precious few of the country's most outstanding rivers and from hydropower dams and other development.

This past year marked the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Act), the United States' strongest conservation tool for providing lasting protection for the best rivers, their free-flowing qualities and outstandingly remarkable values. The law reads:

*It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Congress declares that the established national policy of dams and other construction at appropriate sections of the rivers of the United States needs to be complemented by a policy that would preserve other selected rivers or sections thereof in their free-flowing condition to protect the water quality of such rivers and to fulfill other vital national conservation purposes.*

After the recent passage of the Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009, the total number of rivers in the Wild and Scenic Rivers nationwide now stands at 247. Congress agreed to designation for each of these special rivers only after thousands of hours of local deliberation, stakeholder involvement and years of collaboration. By allowing new hydropower development Amendment 205 would do away with the most fundamental protections under the Act, to preserve these select few rivers in their free-flowing condition.

I urge you to strongly oppose this amendment and any similar amendments that would allow hydropower development on National Wild and Scenic Rivers offered during the markup of the American Clean Energy and Security Act. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue. For more information, please do not hesitate to contact David Moryc, Senior Director, River Protection Program of my staff at [dmoryc@amrivers.org](mailto:dmoryc@amrivers.org) or (202) 347-7550.

Sincerely,

*Rebecca R. Wodder*

Rebecca R. Wodder  
President