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Resolution 1989-05-09 Withdrawal of the Current U.S. Department of the Interior Hydropower Policy

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Resolution No. 5

WITHDRAWAL OF THE CURRENT U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR HYDROPOWER POLICY

WHEREAS, on September 28, 1988, the Undersecretary of the Interior approved a hydropower policy for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and

WHEREAS, this policy was developed without the benefit of public review and comment, including coordination review and comment by affected state fish and wildlife agencies; and

WHEREAS, the American people have spent and are spending significant amounts of funds to restore fisheries and wildlife resources that have been severely damaged due to past water resource developments, including hydropower development; and

WHEREAS, the use of fish and wildlife resources by the American people contributes billions of dollars annually to the Nation's economy; and

WHEREAS, the Electric Consumers Protection Act of 1986 (Act), is a landmark piece of legislation that requires that fish and wildlife resources receive equal consideration with other project purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Act explicitly provides for the protection mitigation, and enhancement of fish and wildlife resources during licensing and relicensing; and

WHEREAS, the Act clearly provides for addressing present day fish and wildlife resource needs which can be attributed to resource losses resulting from original project development and operation; and

WHEREAS, the Department's policy is inconsistent with the Electric Consumers Protection Act of 1986 to the detriment of the Nation's fish and wildlife resource heritage; and

WHEREAS, the Department's policy is ambiguous and contradictory with regard to mitigation, enhancement, and protection of fish and wildlife resources in connection with federal licensing and relicensing of hydroelectric projects and presumes that the Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will not seek mitigation for replacement of significant fish and wildlife loss attributable to original project development and operations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies recommends that the U.S. Department of the Interior's hydropower policy be retracted and a more responsive policy that is available for review to all appropriate and interested conservation agencies and organizations be developed in consultation with state fish and wildlife agencies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Chairman, U.S. Senate and House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the Committee on Energy and Commerce; and Bob Grady, Associate Director for Natural Resources, Office of Management and Budget.