

**Statement of Congressman Scott Tipton**  
**Wednesday March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013**  
**Before the House Committee on Natural Resources**  
**Markup on H.R. 678, the “Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower**  
**Development and Rural Jobs Act”**

Thank you Chairman McClintock for that endorsement and for continuing to work with me on this effort and thank you Chairman Hastings for including this legislation in today’s markup.

At a time when our country needs to focus on domestic energy production and job creation, hydropower can play a critical role in providing clean renewable energy while expanding job opportunities in rural America.

In fact, there is enough capability in Colorado’s existing canals and pipelines alone to generate as much power as the Glen Canyon Dam. H.R. 678 will facilitate some of that development.

Increased conduit hydropower serves a number of purposes: it produces renewable and emissions-free energy that can be used to pump water or sell electricity to the grid; it can generate revenue for the hydropower developer to help pay for aging infrastructure costs and water/power facility modernization; and it can create local jobs and generate revenue to the federal government. Recognizing the benefit of small hydropower development for communities and ratepayers, this year’s legislation has been updated to apply to small units generating five megawatts or less.

For these reasons, I introduced this legislation.

This bipartisan legislation reduces unnecessary and duplicative costs to encourage hydropower development. These existing man-made facilities have already gone through environmental review, so there’s simply no need for another costly review.

While the Bureau of Reclamation has recently attempted to address this by establishing its own categorical exclusion from NEPA, it has yet to implement this new policy and, as with all agency directives, is subject to later change by this administration or future administrations. I’m open to working with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to address their concerns with the NEPA provision, but the bottom line is that we must arrive at a statutory framework that streamlines the project approval process and reduces costs.

H.R. 678 substantially reduces administrative planning costs and protects water users by specifically re-affirming hydropower development as secondary to water supply and delivery purposes.

I'm proud to have the support of the Family Farm Alliance, the National Water Resources Association, the American Public Power Association, and the Association of California Water Agencies among others for this common sense legislation. Last Congress, this legislation passed out of Committee with bipartisan support. The House then passed the bill with considerable bipartisan support. I am honored to have the support of Senator Barrasso who has introduced companion legislation in the Senate. I believe this bill has significant bipartisan momentum in this Congress. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.