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A PUBLICATION FROM THE BONNEVILLE POWER AD



# Journal

*September 1999*

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### Federal system meets flow targets

On Aug. 31, The Federal Columbia River Power System ended summer spill and flow augmentation for migrating juvenile anadromous fish as outlined in the 1995/1998 National Marine Fisheries Service's Biological Opinion. The biological opinion requires a 200,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) summer seasonal average flow, but with this year's delayed runoff, the seasonal average came in at an amazing 234,000 cfs at McNary Dam. Dams on the Upper Columbia and Snake rivers were used to shape to a weekly flow objective while spill occurred at the Lower Columbia River's Bonneville, The Dalles and

John Day dams to pass migrating smolts. Spring flows also exceeded targets. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation and BPA will continue to operate the hydro system for multiple uses and will begin flood control drafts later this fall and will target reservoir refilling for next spring's fish migration.

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### **White Book shows energy deficits**

BPA's 1998 White Book, officially known as the Pacific Northwest Loads and Resources Study, shows that regional demand will outweigh supply for energy from operating year 2000 through 2009 (under the medium load scenario, assuming existing loads). Operating years run from July to June. The study also shows large capacity deficits in winter months assuming critical water conditions and extreme weather conditions. The study presents projections of regional and federal system load and resource capabilities and serves as a data document from which BPA can determine the notice required when customers request to increase or decrease the amount of power they purchase from BPA. It is not a planning guide, nor is it used for inventory planning to determine BPA revenues.

The White Book shows, under medium loads, the federal system is expected to have energy deficits averaging 503 average megawatts per year from 2000 through 2006. The study shows energy surpluses from 2007 through 2009. Capacity shortages exist, assuming critical water and extreme weather conditions, in November, January and February in each year from 2000 through 2004. The study shows BPA can cover the shortages in energy and capacity through power purchases and through exercising options existing in current contracts, such as terminating surplus firm energy sales to the Southwest.

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### **BPA's power rate case update**

BPA has released its initial power rate proposal for the fiscal year 2002-2006 rate period. BPA has proposed rates that are below anticipated market costs. The agency has been able to achieve these low rates by cutting costs, and committing to keeping those costs low for the rate period. The rate proposal also contains funding for BPA's public service obligations, including a conservation and renewables discount and sufficient money to cover a full range of potential fish and wildlife options. To see the initial proposal, visit BPA's rates [website](#).

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### **Robertson to leave BPA**

Deputy Administrator Jack Robertson will retire effective Sept. 30, after 16 years at BPA. Robertson plans to spend a year traveling around the world with his wife, Debra, and their son, Nicholas.

Robertson began his career at BPA in 1983 as assistant to the administrator for External Affairs. Robertson was a major force in creating BPA's public involvement policy and making it work. The Northwest Conservation Act Coalition (now the Northwest Energy Coalition), a federation of environmental and conservation groups, presented BPA with its Eagle Award for opening BPA to the outside world. Robertson became the deputy administrator in 1987 and received the Department of Energy's second highest citation for management excellence, the Meritorious Service Award.

Throughout his BPA service, Robertson spearheaded BPA's and the region's quest for environmentally

friendly power sources. He personally led the successful push to forge the Bonneville Environmental Foundation, a consortium of utilities, public interest groups and commercial enterprises that provides incentives for the purchase of environmentally preferred power. He promoted BPA's green power sales and raised the region's consciousness of and interest in new technologies.

Robertson served as the agency's acting administrator from August 1991 to November 1991 and again from October 1997 until June 1998. Robertson led the agency as it cut costs, reduced staff, fulfilled its obligations to the Northwest's salmon and steelhead, implemented the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review of the Northwest Energy System and dealt with the changing deregulated energy industry.

Administrator Judi Johansen said, "I am personally indebted to Jack. As acting administrator before my appointment, he not only held the agency together in the face of numerous challenges but also advanced it and kept alive the flame of public service." Robertson's position will be filled on an interim basis by a rotating developmental assignment. First to fill the spot will be Chuck Meyer, currently vice president of sales and marketing in the Transmission Business Line.

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### **Utilities to receive first fuel cells**

BPA has announced the public utilities and utility organizations that will test BPA's "alpha" proton exchange membrane (PEM) fuel cells. This brings BPA one step closer to making efficient fuel cell generators available for residential and commercial use. Demand for the test units has been high. Utilities, residents and small businesses across the region are calling BPA to participate in its test. The utilities and utility organizations participating in the alpha test are:

Central Electric Cooperative, Emerald PUD, Energy Northwest, Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB), Fergus Electric, Grant County PUD No. 2, Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Mason PUD #3 & Lewis Co. PUD, and Pacific Northwest Generating Cooperative (PNGC)

Northwest Power Systems (NPS), the Bend, Ore., company that manufactures the fuel cells, is on target to have the first unit ready for testing this fall. BPA and NPS will unveil the first test unit in a special display at the Northcon/99 Conference in Portland, Ore., on Oct. 7. Northcon/99, sponsored by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Inc., is a technical applications conference that will explore embedded systems technology. Other participants will take delivery of their units later this year and on through mid-2000. BPA's fuel cell systems will come in the one-kilowatt to 10 kW range and will be capable of operating on a variety of fuels, including renewable fuels from biomass. The systems are being designed to provide all the electricity needed by a typical home and its occupants, and can heat water using heat from the fuel cell.

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### **Customers, constituents and tribes respond to surveys**

Results are in from BPA's 1999 surveys of constituents, tribes and customers. Constituent satisfaction results were 85 percent extremely satisfied or somewhat satisfied with BPA, up from 73 percent in 1998. Forty-two percent of the Transmission Business Line's customers said TBL's service was better or much better than its competitors, up from 21 percent last year. The Power Business Line's ratings in the same category slipped slightly, from 43 percent in 1998 to 38 percent this year. Energy Efficiency's customers had an 88 percent satisfaction rating with customers rating EE's service as better or much better than

others' service.

Tribal satisfaction has also made steady progress over the four years that the survey has been taken, going from 38 percent who were satisfied in 1996 to 81 percent today. Respondents were consistent in their praise for their BPA representatives, whether they be business line account executives, constituent account executives or tribal liaisons.

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### **South Oregon coast project shelved**

BPA has stopped working on the South Oregon Coast Reinforcement project. The proposed high-voltage transmission line to the southern Oregon coast would have reinforced BPA's system and provided the transmission capacity necessary for a steel mill Nucor Corp. wanted to build. Nucor recently called off talks to purchase land for the steel mill so it is unlikely that the steel company will build the mill at this time. A draft environmental impact statement will not be distributed. BPA will archive all the information it has gathered so that the information can readily be retrieved in case it is needed later. BPA has a continuing obligation to reinforce electric reliability. Current load growth projections and system studies indicate BPA will need to reinforce its existing system by 2004, but it is unlikely that a high-voltage transmission line will be needed. (See [below](#).)

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### **BPA receives awards**

The Good Cents Energy Services Group presented BPA with its Golden Rooftop Award for BPA's Super Good Cents manufactured home program. BPA's program resulted in the construction of over 81,000 manufactured homes that meet energy-efficient standards. The Good Cents Energy Services Group, based in Atlanta, Ga., each year chooses an organization that has made significant contributions to the efficient use of energy. The group designs and licenses energy efficiency programs to utilities nationwide. The award was presented at the National Good Cents Conference and Exhibition on Aug. 4 in Amelia Island, Florida.

BPA, the General Services Administration (GSA) and the U.S. Army will receive a 1999 Federal Energy and Water Management (FEMP) award for contributions made toward the efficient use of energy in the federal sector during fiscal year 1998. The FEMP Small Group Award for Alternative Financing recognizes a joint program developed by GSA and BPA to refinance existing energy and water conservation programs at reduced rates. The funds saved could be restored to operational budgets and allow more conservation work. BPA and GSA refinanced over \$4 million at the Chet Holifield Federal Building in Laguna Niguel, Calif., reducing monthly payments by over \$10,000, freeing-up funds for a water reclamation project at the site. Subsequently, GSA, BPA and the U.S. Army refinanced almost \$6 million at Fort Irwin. The resulting savings were \$14,000 per month.

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### **Tower removed to benefit wildlife**

At the request of wildlife agencies, BPA removed a transmission tower on Duncan Island in the middle of the Siuslaw River about five miles east of Florence, Ore., to help restore habitat for osprey, bald eagles and other wildlife. The transmission line was re-routed over the Siuslaw River valley at a cost to BPA of about \$1.5 million. Crews replaced the towers on either side of the valley with larger, stronger

structures so that the line could span the valley without the need for a third tower on the island. The Siuslaw Soil and Water Conservation District, the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are co-funding work necessary to turn the island into a wildlife estuary.

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Note: A story on page one of the August *Journal* referred to a 30-megawatt sale of power to Commonwealth Energy Corp. in Calif. as "clean, renewable hydropower." The story inappropriately characterized the California renewable energy standard as requiring "clean" hydropower. The California standard only requires that the resources supporting this sale are hydroelectric and have a capacity of less than 30 megawatts. These resources have not been evaluated with respect to other characteristics, such as fish and wildlife, and have not been endorsed by any Northwest public interest group.

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## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

### **Status Reports**

#### **Big Eddy-Ostrander Vegetation Management EA.**

Ore. — To control vegetation on two segments of the 500- kV transmission line right-of-way. One segment is from Lolo Pass to near Parkdale. The other segment is east of Parkdale. An EA is being prepared. Call to be added to the mail list.

#### **Fourmile Hill Geothermal Development Project EIS (Calpine)**

No. Calif. — A geothermal power plant and new transmission line have been proposed on Forest Service land in the Klamath and Modoc forests. BLM has the lead. BPA is a cooperating agency. A final EIS and summary are available. Call to receive a copy.

#### **IDFG Snake River Chinook Captive Rearing**

Idaho — To fund Idaho Department of Fish and Game's captive rearing project for Endangered Species Act-listed Snake River spring/summer chinook salmon. The EA is being finalized. A FONSI is anticipated.

#### **Johnson Creek Artificial Propagation Enhancement**

Idaho — Development of a native chinook salmon broodstock for rearing of acclimated smolts to preserve and recover the population. An EA is being prepared. Call to be added to the mail list.

#### **Northwest Regional Power Facility**

Wash. — To construct a combustion turbine near Creston. The final EIS (#2887) and a supplement analysis are available. Call to receive a copy.

#### **South Oregon Coast Reinforcement EIS.**

Ore. — Work has been stopped on this project. The project was to reinforce electrical service to the southern Oregon coast and provide the necessary transmission for Nucor Corp. to build a new steel mill in the Coos Bay/North Bend area. The Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Corps of Engineers were cooperating agencies.

#### **Telephone Flats Geothermal Project EIS (CalEnergy)**

No. Calif. — A geothermal power plant and new transmission line have been proposed on Forest Service land in the Modoc Forest. BLM has the lead and BPA is a cooperating agency. The final EIS (#0298) and summary are available. Call to receive a copy.

#### **Vegetation Management Program EIS**

Regionwide — To develop a vegetation management program while maintaining a safe and reliable transmission system. The draft EIS (#3193) is available. See Calendar of Events and Close of Comment. Call to receive a copy or see the [EIS](#) on the Web.

### **Yakima Fisheries Project.**

Wash. — Under the Spring Chinook Research Program, BPA, Yakama Nation and Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife are proposing the construction of a natural spawning channel and increased housing for hatchery staff at the Cle Elum Hatchery facility. A Supplement Analysis (DOE/EIS-0669-SA-2) is available. Call to receive a copy.

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## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

### **Vegetation Management Program — Public meeting**

Sept. 15, 2-6 p.m.  
Portland State Office Building  
Willamette River Room — 120C  
800 NE Oregon St., Portland, OR

### **Communication is at Hand — Fiber Optics for Northwest Communities Conference**

Sept. 21-23  
Spokane Center  
334 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.  
Spokane, Wash.  
Contact [Melanie Jackson](#) at (360) 418-2303.

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## **CLOSE OF COMMENT**

Vegetation Management Program Draft EIS: Oct. 9, 1999

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### **Acronyms:**

EA: Environmental Assessment  
EIS: Environmental Impact Statement  
FONSI: Finding of No Significant Impact  
NOI: Notice of Intent  
ROD: Record of Decision

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An archive of past *Journals* is available to the public on BPA's external Web site at <http://www.bpa.gov/Corporate/KC/home/journal/>.

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We welcome all comments from you at Journal-AC, Bonneville Power Administration, P.O. Box 3621, Portland, OR 97208-3621 or [enballa@bpa.gov](mailto:enballa@bpa.gov).

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**For More Information or To Get Involved:**

The *Journal* is a monthly newsletter of the Bonneville Power Administration for customers and interested publics.

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