

**BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION
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Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2012

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BPA green lights DC Intertie improvements

Replacement of aging equipment would increase capacity and reliability

Portland, Ore. – Newly [proposed](#) upgrades to the Pacific Direct Current Intertie, an electrical superhighway between the Northwest and Southern California, will increase its capacity from 3,100 to 3,220 megawatts, avoid outages and strengthen it against weather and other threats.

The Intertie, one of the world's longest and highest capacity transmission lines, delivers renewable Northwest hydropower and increasing amounts of wind energy to California, while carrying electricity north to meet winter demand in the Northwest.

The improvements, estimated to cost approximately \$428 million, [would](#) modernize equipment that was cutting edge when installed more than 40 years ago but has aged to where BPA now in extreme circumstances locates parts on Ebay. The upgrades beginning in 2015 [would](#) provide jobs and an economic boost in the Columbia River Gorge while replacing aging equipment with a simplified, modern converter terminal. Crews [would](#) also work to upgrade and reinforce BPA's portion of the DC transmission line.

"The Intertie is an engineering and economic legacy and this critical work will expand its value to the Northwest and the entire West Coast," said Brian Silverstein, senior vice president, BPA Transmission Services. "Upgrades to this vital energy link ensures that it will be available when needed. It will also reduce long-term operation and maintenance costs."

Over the past several years, older equipment at Celilo Substation, the northern terminus of the DC Intertie in The Dalles, Ore., has failed with increasing frequency.

"Some of the equipment at our Celilo Substation is so old, finding replacement parts has become a challenge. Some of this equipment should be in the Smithsonian," Silverstein said.

Equipment failures have at times caused BPA to reduce the capacity of the line, impacting customers who rely on it to move energy between the Northwest and California.

The project is subject to environmental review consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act. At the conclusion of that review, BPA will make a decision whether to proceed with the upgrades. If a decision is made to go forward, BPA would identify a contractor for the project by the end of 2012. The contractor would develop a detailed project schedule that allows time for BPA to acquire the specialized equipment for the upgrades. Production lead times can be as long as two years, so timing the orders and product deliveries accurately would be critical to the project's success.

Construction would be scheduled to start in early 2015 and would be expected to be finished in early 2016. For one year during construction, BPA would take some

equipment at Celilo off-line, reducing the DC Intertie capacity from 3,100 to 2,000 megawatts. Increased costs for the upgrade will only be charged to users of the California Intertie.

BPA is a non-profit federal agency that markets renewable hydropower from federal Columbia River dams, operates three-quarters of high-voltage transmission lines in the Northwest and funds one of the largest wildlife protection and restoration programs in the world. BPA and its partners have also saved enough electricity through energy efficiency projects to power four large American cities. For more information, contact us at 503-230-5131 or visit our website at www.bpa.gov.