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## DOE AND BPA CALL FOR REGIONAL REVIEW

U.S. Department of Energy

September 28, 1995

**The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) today called for a regional and comprehensive review of BPA's role and structure in the Pacific Northwest. The review is prompted by dramatic and rapid changes in the wholesale electric market in light of deregulation and utility restructuring.**

DOE and BPA (which is part of DOE) stressed that the review would have a broader focus than BPA alone. The review should include the implications of overall changes in the electric power industry for private and public utilities, ratepayers and national financial interests, fish and wildlife interests, tribal and state governments and their agencies, as well as others.

"Both BPA and the Department of Energy feel strongly that this review must be comprehensive and must involve a broad cross-section of regional interests," said DOE Deputy Secretary of Energy Charles B. Curtis. "We will work with the Northwest Governors and member of the region's congressional delegation to determine the shape and substance of this forum. We do not have preconceived ideas and are open to their suggestions."

Curtis and BPA Administrator Randy Hardy said that BPA would be actively involved in the review, but would not lead the process. "We believe it is up to the region's elected representatives -- governors and member of Congress -- to determine the proper forum," Curtis said.

Both Curtis and Hardy also emphasized that the review process should begin quickly, at least within the next 60 days. "This process should have a goal -- to produce recommendations by the end of 1996 for review by the next Congress," Curtis said.

"BPA clearly needs to re-examine its structure to ensure it can be successful in this new competitive environment," Hardy said. "By successful, I mean that we will meet the needs of the Pacific Northwest and make a significant contribution to its economy and environment. Doing business in a competitive market is simply a means to that end.

Curtis and Hardy said the review should include a re-examination of the Pacific Northwest Power Planning and Conservation Act of 1980. That act, which set down new responsibilities for BPA and created the Northwest Power Council, was written at a time when BPA was the largest source, and for many the only source, of wholesale electric power. With deregulation, utilities and large industries now have a multitude of highly competitive choices for their power supplies. They also called for the review to embrace other organic BPA statutes, including the Bonneville Project Act of 1937, the Flood Control Act of 1944, the Pacific Northwest Regional Preference Act of 1964, and the Federal Columbia River Transmission System Act 1974 (Self-financing Act).

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