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August Declared Columbia River Power System Month State of Oregon Honors BPA Anniversary

Bonneville Power Administration

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, August 1, 1997

PR 32 97

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PORTLAND, Ore. - In honor of the 60th anniversary of the creation of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Oregon Governor Kitzhaber has declared August 1997 to be Columbia River Power System Month. In an official proclamation (attached), the governor called BPA and the federal power system "a fundamental engine of rural and economic development in Oregon" and encouraged "all citizens to join in this observance."

Since 1937, BPA has provided low-cost power to every corner of the state, the proclamation said. BPA, a federal power marketing agency, has directly served 17 rural electric cooperatives, six peoples' utility districts and 11 municipal electric utilities in Oregon. Energy conservation achieved through BPA has saved more than 600 average megawatts of electricity, enough power to serve over 162,000 residents.

The governor's proclamation concludes by recognizing BPA's accomplishments of the last 60 years in developing and protecting the Columbia River system for the benefit of the public. As BPA adapts to the changing needs of the region, the experiences of the past should guide the management of the river system for the next 60 years.

"BPA is one of the key managers of the Columbia River federal power system," said BPA Administrator Randy Hardy. "Preserving and balancing the river and its uses is among our top priorities and responsibilities."

Congress created BPA in 1937 to deliver and sell the power from Bonneville Dam. In the next three decades, Congress authorized BPA to market power from more federal dams on the Columbia and its tributaries to the people of the Northwest. Today about half of the power consumed in the Northwest is supplied through BPA and comes from 29 federal hydroelectric plants and one non-federal nuclear plant.

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