

[in the news](#)[home](#) [site search](#) [org chart](#) [contact us](#) [web comments](#)

---

## BPA Celebrates Six Decades of Serving the Northwest

---

### Bonneville Power Administration U.S. Department of Energy

WEDNESDAY, August 20, 1997

---

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Crystal Ball, BPA, (503) 230-5133

---

**PORTLAND, Ore. - The Bonneville Power Administration celebrated its birthday today. For the past 60 years, the federal power marketing agency has worked with a wide variety of river users to bring the benefits of the Columbia River System to the region.**

Congress created BPA in 1937 to deliver and sell 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 40 percent of the power consumed in the Northwest is supplied through BPA and comes from 29 federal hydroelectric plants and one non-federal nuclear plant.

By law, BPA has the obligation to assure an adequate, economic, efficient and reliable power supply to the Pacific Northwest. Among the benefits BPA provides, are open transmission access, public preference and regional preference to its utility customers. In addition, BPA has environmental and social obligations such as protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife and leadership in conservation and renewables development. As one of the key managers of the federal hydropower system, BPA balances the economic and environmental benefits of this system.

BPA is uniquely positioned to help manage the multiple uses of the hydro system that span international, tribal, state and a myriad of other jurisdictional boundaries, said Administrator Randy Hardy. BPA recognizes the changing needs of the region and will provide reliable service and environmental leadership into the 21st century just as it has for the last 60 years.

No other source of power can replicate the value of the Columbia River system. The sheer size, reliability and flexibility of this system is unique in the nation. BPA will continue to shape and package that value in innovative ways, offering customized power products and helping to creatively manage the other uses of the river to meet the region's needs.

There is no equal to BPA's vast interconnected transmission grid. It is an indispensable network of electricity highways that brings power into every corner of the region and moves power efficiently and

reliably between the Northwest and other regions.

Because BPA exists for public service, specifically with a Northwest focus, these magnificent resources are harnessed for the public good. Public benefits, not profits, are BPA's most important product. Sometimes this is evident in spectacular ways, as in the legacy of the nation's first and largest regional energy conservation infrastructure, which BPA built and which resulted in today's energy codes in the four Northwest states and more than 600 megawatts of energy savings.

Today's and tomorrow's specific roles for BPA may change and BPA's size, structure and governance may change, said Hardy. But the constant will remain public service. Given these unique roles, BPA looks forward to serving the Northwest for decades to come.

