



## ***MEDIA ADVISORY: Corps, BPA Team Up to Improve Federal Power System***

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Since this spring, 10 of the biggest hydroelectric generators in the United States have had an option. When they're not producing power, they're running as motors. When turbines are used as motors they make the federal Columbia River power system more reliable. That's something for everyone in the west to celebrate.

On Aug. 10 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) will honor efforts to convert hydro generators at The Dalles and John Day dams into "synchronous condensers." T&D Engineering and Construction helped design and build the conversion.

The \$5.5 million project was one of several improvements made to strengthen reliability after the summer of 1996 power outages in the western states. Most of the outages took place in California at the southern end of a huge transmission line called the intertie. The Dalles and John Day dams sit at the northern end of the intertie, feeding it power and keeping it stable.

Synchronous condenser modifications at the dams include the design and installation of a system of pipes, compressors and controls that enable a generating unit to be dewatered while synchronized to the line—in essence the generator becomes a motor.

This type of operation provides reactive generation support, which enhances the intertie rating allowing BPA to send or receive more power over the intertie to or from California. The Corps and the construction contractor pulled out all the stops to complete the work within an extremely constrained timeline to be ready for the spring runoff, a time when BPA typically has extra power it can sell to California.

"Our project engineers and contractors worked well together, completing the project on schedule, overcoming a number of hurdles any project faces when bumping up the completion date," said Portland District Commander Col. Robert Slusar. "It was very satisfying knowing we were able to meet BPA's needs."

Ceremonies will take place at both The Dalles and John Day dams where the generating units were converted. The first ceremony will begin at 9:15 a.m. in Patterson Park at The Dalles Dam. The second ceremony will begin at 10:30 a.m. on the 3rd floor of John Day Dam. A third ceremony will be held at 3

p.m. at the offices of T&D Engineering and Construction.

“This extraordinary team effort deserves formal recognition. It is a prime example of what can be accomplished when the Corps, BPA and contractor roll up their sleeves together and approach a challenge as partners,” said BPA Administrator Judi Johansen.

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**Editors Note:** any reporter/media representative who would like to learn more about synchronous condensing through a private interview and/or tour of a John Day or The Dalles powerhouse may call the Corps’ Heidi Helwig at (503) 808-4510. To learn more about how synchronous condensing will benefit BPA, call Crystal Ball at (503) 230-5133.

**The Dalles Dam** is 192 miles upstream from the mouth of the Columbia River, 2 miles east of the city of The Dalles, Ore. To reach The Dalles Dam, take 87 from Interstate 84 onto Route 197 north, or Route 197 south from Washington State Highway 14.

**John Day Dam** crosses the Columbia River near Rufus, Ore., about 25 miles upstream of The Dalles, just below the mouth of the John Day River. To get to John Day Dam, take exit 109 from Interstate 84 and follow the signs.

The offices of **T&D Engineering and Construction** are in Portland at 9320 SW Barbur Blvd., Suite 200:

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