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***MEDIA ADVISORY:***  
***Governing the Columbia River***

Bonneville Power Administration

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

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**Portland Ore.** – Who’s in charge of the Columbia River and its tributaries? Northwest governors, congressional leaders, and a senior White House official are joining Native American tribes, federal agency officials and other stakeholders for a major regional conference about the future of the Columbia River.

**Governance and the Columbia River: Where Are We Going?** is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 15 from 8:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the DoubleTree Inn, Lloyd Center in Portland. Media are invited to attend.

Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber, White House Council on Environmental Quality Chair Katie McGinty, Congressman Rick White (R-Wash.) and Columbia River Basin tribal leaders Antone Minthorn and Bruce Wynne will kick off the conference with a panel discussion about recent proposals regarding Columbia River governance, including the “Three Sovereigns” process. Former Sen. Mark O. Hatfield (R-Ore.) will moderate the panel session.

Regional administrators of the federal agencies that manage the functions of the Columbia River, including Bonneville Power Administrator Judi Johansen, will discuss how the proposals would impact their day-to-day planning and operations.

Sen. Slade Gorton (R-Wash.) and Rep. Elizabeth Furse (D-Ore.), the featured lunch speakers, will describe how the Northwest congressional delegation is positioning itself to represent and protect Northwest interests and discuss the development of the “Northwest chapter” of national utility restructuring legislation.

In the afternoon, various users of the river, including utilities, irrigators, navigators, sports fishers and environmentalists will offer perspectives of non-governmental stakeholders and observers. The final session will provide the perspectives of local governments, state legislators and watershed councils.

The principal conference sponsors are the Mark O. Hatfield School of Government at Portland State University, the Northwest Public Power Association, the Bonneville Power Administration and the Henry M. Jackson Foundation. Forty-five co-sponsors, including federal agencies, state governments,

regional and local government groups, Native American tribes and many of the region's stakeholders join the sponsors.

"As a region, we have been very successful in putting the Columbia River to work as the Northwest's primary power plant, central navigation channel, biggest irrigation ditch and storage reservoir for floodwaters. Unfortunately, the river no longer works well as a natural system, and we are now facing the prospect of a Columbia River without salmon," explained Jeff Hammarlund, conference director.

"This conference gives people an opportunity to learn about and contribute to the complex discussions and debates regarding the Columbia River, its salmon runs and power producing dams. What emerges from this debate will affect our lives for years to come," said Hammarlund. He is an adjunct associate professor at Portland State University and president of Northwest Energy and Environmental Strategies.

Senator Hatfield, a senior advisor to the conference planning committee, said "The Pacific Northwest has a rich tradition of finding ways to resolve difficult issues, particularly when they involves the stewardship of the Columbia River and its tributaries, a great regional resource." Hatfield added that he hopes this conference will "contribute to the region's effort to reach a successful solution to this important policy dilemma."

The October conference is a follow-up to a successful conference that took place last year called "Energy Restructuring in the Pacific Northwest." More than 400 people attended that conference and, in the evaluation process, participants strongly suggested this year's conference focus on Columbia River governance.

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