

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

BPA and California ink summer assistance plan

[Click here for other BPA news releases](#)

Bonneville Power Administration

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 2001

PR 57 01

CONTACTS: [Ed Mosey](#) or [Mike Hansen](#), BPA (503) 230-5131

PORTLAND, Ore. –The Bonneville Power Administration, the California Department of Water Resources and the California Independent System Operator have reached agreement on a plan that outlines when and how BPA may be able to help California during this summer's anticipated energy shortages.

"The principles on which the plan is based," said Steve Wright, BPA's acting administrator, "will ensure that all transactions will benefit both the Pacific Northwest and California and that reliability problems will not be shifted from one region to the other. This agreement protects and benefits the Northwest while helping California when it is possible."

According to the plan, BPA and the California Department of Water Resources will share information on each's power supply situation. If California is in imminent danger of rolling blackouts, CDWR will alert BPA and the agency will determine what, if anything, it can do to help. Because of the drought in the Northwest, there may be times when BPA may not be able to help. If the agency can help, CDWR and BPA will agree on the terms.

The transactions are expected to be in the form of energy exchanges with the exchange ratios and the timing of the returns to be mutually agreed upon at the time of the transaction. Instead of the fixed 2-to-1 exchange ratios BPA and California used earlier this year, the ratios will depend on market conditions, the shape of BPA's system and the nature of the request. The ratios will always be better than 1 to 1 for BPA. The exchange energy would be returned to BPA in 24 hours, in seven days or next fall depending on BPA's energy needs.

"We want California to know that we're prepared to help them if we can as long as it does no harm to the Pacific Northwest," said Wright. BPA would only alter the way it operates the hydro system to benefit fish listed as threatened and endangered if California authorities assert that blackouts sufficient to threaten human health and safety are imminent.

Changes to fish operations are possible under the National Marine Fisheries Service biological opinion in order to preserve system reliability. If fish operations must be modified, an environmental premium of 0.5 megawatts would add to the exchange return ratio for those hours in order to fund any needed environmental remediation. This would, for example, change a 1.5 to 1 exchange into a 2 to 1 exchange.

BPA and California officials will continue discussions to arrive at a contingency plan that would determine the conditions under which California may be able to help the Northwest in the event of energy shortages during the winter when Northwest energy usage is at its highest.

###
