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City of Bonners Ferry commits to load reduction

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Bonneville Power Administration

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: THURSDAY, June 21, 2001

PR 59 01

*CONTACTS: [Ed Mosey](#) or [Mike Hansen](#), BPA (503) 230-5131
[Mike Woodward](#), City of Bonners Ferry, (208) 267-3105*

BONNERS FERRY, Ida. – The city of Bonners Ferry and the Bonneville Power Administration inked a load reduction agreement on June 19 that will reduce the amount of power that this northern Idaho city plans to buy from BPA by 10 percent, or 0.59 megawatt, for one year starting in October 2001.

"Bonners Ferry is anxious to do as much as we can to assist the region through this power crisis, and we would like to take this opportunity to thank our friends and neighbors in the region for all their help and assistance," said Bonners Ferry Mayor Darrell Kerby. In addition to signing on to the 10 percent load reduction agreement, Bonners Ferry has just completed upgrades to its hydroelectric dam to help assure uninterrupted power production, he added. "The last thing our region and our community needs is triple-digit power rate increases."

Steve Wright, BPA's acting administrator, praised the city's commitment, saying, "The City of Bonners Ferry has taken an important step toward load reduction and by doing so it is helping reduce the rate increase planned for Oct. 1. Bonners Ferry is doing its part, and we hope that other BPA customers will do the same."

BPA's goal is to reduce loads for the next two years so the agency does not have to buy power in the extremely expensive wholesale market, which could result in far higher electricity rates for Northwest ratepayers. BPA expects that within two years sufficient new generation will have come on line so that market prices will stabilize.

"Negotiations are ongoing with all our customer groups," said Wright. "We hope that our recent load reduction agreements with other customers and now with Bonners Ferry will encourage additional commitments – and soon."

On June 6, BPA announced that the region's federal electricity system is headed for wholesale rate increases of 150 percent or more beginning Oct. 1 unless its industrial and utility customers make additional commitments to reduce energy use by the agency's June 22 deadline.

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