

# JOURNAL

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Web site: [www.bpa.gov/corporate/kc/home/journal](http://www.bpa.gov/corporate/kc/home/journal)

## Kangley-Echo Lake construction starts

Construction crews are treading VERY carefully in the woods east of Seattle – BPA's Kangley-Echo Lake transmission line project is underway.

Building began July 21 after BPA Administrator Steve Wright signed his final record of decision authorizing the project. Earlier, the Seattle City Council unanimously approved construction of a five-mile portion of the line on city-owned land in the Cedar River Municipal Watershed. In exchange, Seattle will receive three parcels of land and mitigation funds that will be used to protect the watershed.

Line construction should be completed by December. "Years of growth in the area have overtaxed the existing system," Lou Driessen, project manager, explained. "Crossing the watershed has the least environmental impact of any alternative we studied, and we are using best environmental management practices to minimize potential risk to the natural habitat and drinking water in the area."

"We are being extremely careful to protect the watershed," Driessen said. BPA is using special construction practices to protect the environment, including flying transmission towers and other equipment in and out of the area, controlling erosion, monitoring water quality and planting native vegetation after construction is complete.

The \$33 million project is financed by BPA and completely paid for through BPA sales of transmission services. It is the agency's second transmission project to start this year.

## Safety net rate formula is final

BPA's wholesale power rates would rise about 5 percent this fall, based on current assumptions, but rates could actually decline if Northwest utilities settle litigation over federal Columbia River hydropower benefits. These are the chief conclusions in the final record of decision on BPA's recent power rate case, released July 1.

The record of decision provides the final formula for setting the rates, but the actual rate level won't be set until late August and will reflect updated information such as actual revenue from surplus power sales and whether a lawsuit settlement is reached.

"The biggest remaining issue is whether there will be a settlement of outstanding litigation," said BPA Administrator Steve Wright. "We are optimistic this can be resolved in a way that benefits all parties." The litigation, filed by public agency utilities throughout the Northwest, challenges benefits BPA negotiated with investor-owned utilities in 2001.

BPA had originally proposed a 15 percent wholesale rate increase, but was able to reduce that number due to cost cuts, termination of Enron contracts, an increase in spring runoff and improved markets. This power rate case implements the safety net cost recovery adjustment clause in BPA's power rate structure for fiscal years 2002-2006. BPA will submit the final proposal to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for review. Rates take effect Oct. 1.

## FERC okays BPA's 2001 rate case

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has given its final approval to BPA's power rates for fiscal years 2002 through 2006.

The order says BPA's rates are consistent with the Northwest Power Act and other statutes and are "hereby confirmed and approved on a final basis." This concludes review of the agency's 2002-2006 power rate structure, which features three cost recovery adjustment clauses and a dividend distribution clause. BPA filed the proposed rates with FERC on June 29, 2001. FERC granted interim approval on Sept. 28, 2001; the rates have been in effect since Oct. 1, 2001.

Editor's Note: This FERC action is separate from commission review of BPA's implementation of the safety net cost recovery adjustment clause in the 2002-2006 power rates. (See story left.)



BPA crews replaced two transmission structures on the Murray-Custer 230-kilovolt line in 10 hours, flat. See story on page 2. (Photo by Neil Echols)



## Quick action repairs lightning-struck towers

Lightning struck and severely damaged two BPA transmission structures in the northern Puget Sound area in late June. Fast action by BPA line crews had both structures repaired and the line back in service within a day.

As a result of the damage, BPA triggered the Puget Sound Area Northern Intertie curtailment plan for the first time. The curtailment plan was in effect five hours on June 30, until the system's capacity could be temporarily increased to meet customer needs. Schedules to Snohomish PUD, Seattle City Light and Canada were affected for a short period until negotiations with the British Columbia Hydro & Power Authority to adjust intertie capacity were completed.

When triggered, the plan calls on Puget Sound area utilities to cut schedules and acquire power from suppliers other than BPA. The curtailment was held to only five hours due to BPA crews' rapid and effective response in repairing the structures, said BPA Chief Engineer Vickie VanZandt.

Lightning split open one wood pole on each of two "H-frame" structures on BPA's 230-kilovolt Murray-Custer line, which runs 64 miles between Arlington and Blaine, Wash. BPA line crews from Snohomish, Chehalis and Covington substations massed at the site Tuesday morning with the goal of replacing both structures in a single marathon operation. Limiting the outage for repairs was important for service to utilities in the Puget Sound area and for power deliveries from the Northwest to Canada, noted Fred Johnson, BPA vice president for transmission field services.

"What an incredible job," said VanZandt. "Two H-frames replaced in one day! Their fast work kept a very tough situation to an unbelievable minimum."

One utility directly affected by the outages was Snohomish County PUD. Dave Roberts, Snohomish's senior manager for distribution and construction services, said, "The BPA crews were really impressive - top drawer all the way. They worked hard to reduce the impacts on us. Speaking as a BPA customer, we really appreciate it."

## The shocking truth about forest fires

Fire season is back. And with it comes renewed concern not only for the forests, but for the safety of the firefighters, including and especially those who must work around or under transmission lines. Last year, when fires scorched millions of Northwest acres, BPA line maintenance crews spent many hours on fire lines to help reduce hazards to fire crews.

"We're in constant contact with the fire bosses, their crews and our dispatch center," said Foreman III Walt Banker from The Dalles, Ore. "We're there to ensure no one gets hurt while working under those energized

lines." People or animals can be injured or killed when an energized line shorts to ground in a flashover.

When conditions may threaten fire fighters, BPA works with fire agencies to maintain safety zones. When necessary, it de-energizes the lines until the fires have passed.

## Judge confirms: BiOp stays in effect

U.S. District Court Judge James Redden has confirmed continued use of the NOAA Fisheries\* 2000 biological opinion on Columbia River hydro operations while NOAA considers how to revise the BiOp to address Judge Redden's concerns. "It is inappropriate and unnecessary to vacate or set aside the 2000 BiOp in its entirety while the parties address the deficiencies," Redden said. He said that plaintiffs who had asked to vacate the BiOp failed to show that would help affected salmon.

Redden ruled earlier this spring that the BiOp was flawed because it relied on future federal actions that had not yet completed consultation, and future non-federal actions that were not reasonably certain to occur. He remanded the BiOp to NOAA Fisheries for one year to address these concerns.

Redden has called for regular conferences to ensure that the federal government is making progress toward resolving deficiencies in the BiOp. He said he expects quarterly progress reports from the federal government during the BiOp review. And he asked the government to be prepared to say what it would do if a 2003 check-in due this December showed failure to implement the BiOp. So far, interim progress reports from NOAA Fisheries have indicated general success in BiOp actions.

## Managing to help fish migrate

*Editor's note: The following is a very basic primer on spring-summer Columbia River system operations. It is not intended to be a thorough description of an enormously complex subject.*

The Columbia River system is carefully managed year-round to help juvenile and adult salmon and steelhead migrating through the hydro system. Most of these operations are aimed at providing improved conditions that coincide with natural migrations of anadromous fish such as salmon and steelhead (from early April through August). Anadromous fish are born in fresh water but migrate to the sea where they spend their adult lives until they return to their natal waters to spawn (or to hatcheries in the case of hatchery fish).

The activities embrace a complex set of river operations including spill, barging, enhanced flows and timed releases of water. All are aimed at helping juvenile fish traverse dams and reservoirs and reach the ocean in a timely and safe manner. Activities are targeted for 12 salmon and steelhead populations in the Columbia and Snake rivers listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The operations provide similar benefits to other migrating smolts and some resident (nonmigrating) fish.

Until and if it is replaced or amended, the 2000 biological opinion (BiOp) issued by NOAA Fisheries\* lays out the specific operational steps that are carried out by what are called the “action agencies” — the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and BPA.

The operations are not static. They are carefully choreographed among the action agencies, in coordination with regional fishery managers, to respond quickly to changing water and temperature conditions and to the migratory patterns of the fish. The idea is to provide the greatest benefit when the most fish are in transit in the river.

Here are key actions.

### **Spill**



Spill is designed to help fish pass dams safely. Spill is water that passes over a spillway rather than through the dam's turbines; survival through the spillway is generally higher than through turbines. During spill, many fish “go with the flow” and pass through the spillway rather than the powerhouse. Water is spilled during spring and summer to improve in-river migration conditions. More spill is not necessarily better, as too much falling water can trap nitrogen bubbles that cause a disease in fish similar to “the bends” in humans or can create adverse hydraulic conditions that may injure fish.

### **Transportation**

In addition to those smolts making the journey in the river, other smolts are collected at various dams and transported on specially designed barges through Snake and lower Columbia River dams. They are released

below Bonneville Dam to complete their migration to the sea. There is evidence that transportation improves survival compared to in-river migration, especially in dry years such as 2001. The BiOp provides for juvenile fish transportation in all years, with an increase in the proportion of fish transported during years with below-normal flow and during the summer migration.



### **Flow augmentation**

Flow augmentation is the boosting of river flows with water from storage reservoirs to create an artificial freshet that helps speed fish on their journey between dams and to the sea. Water releases and flow management are also used to improve water temperatures and to minimize water fluctuations to keep redds watered (including from the fall through early spring) and to ensure hatchlings aren't stranded by water that is too low. Other flow operations may not be related to fish; for example, keeping reservoirs at sufficient levels to provide for flood control, power generation, recreation and protection of wildlife. Unlike spill, river flows resulting from flow augmentation may also contribute to power generation.



There are many other fish protection strategies within the hydro system that are not discussed here but are equally important. These include turbine screen systems (to reduce the number of juvenile fish passing through turbines), turbine operating efficiency and other projects for fish passage such as predator control.

*\* NOAA Fisheries is the new preferred name for the agency formerly known as NMFS, the National Marine Fisheries Service. The National Marine Fisheries Service has always been part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. NOAA Fisheries is simply a new short form of address.*

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT** Updates and Notices

### **NEW PROJECTS**

#### **Hanford Reach National Monument CCP/EIS – Benton, Franklin and Grant counties, Wash.**

BPA is participating as a cooperating agency in a land management planning process being led by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The USFWS seeks to develop a Comprehensive Conservation Plan as required by the Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997. BPA is providing information and writing sections of the plan that pertain to transmission facilities, roads, energy facilities and river management within the monument. A DEIS is scheduled for release in June 2004.

#### **Safety Net Cost Recovery Adjustment Clause (SN CRAC) Adjustment to 2002 Wholesale Power Rates – Regionwide**

The Record of Decision under the National Environmental Policy Act is available at [www.efw.bpa.gov/cgi-bin](http://www.efw.bpa.gov/cgi-bin).

#### **Summit/Westward – Columbia County, Ore.**

Westward Energy L.L.C. requested interconnection for the proposed Summit/Westward Project, a 520-MW combustion turbine project to be located in Columbia County, approximately 4.5 miles north of Clatskanie, Ore. The project would interconnect at BPA's Allston Substation. A tiered ROD to the Business Plan EIS is being drafted.

### **ONGOING PROJECTS**

#### **BP Cherry Point Cogeneration Project Interconnection EIS – Whatcom County, Wash.**

BP West Coast Products LLC has requested interconnection of its proposed 720-MW combustion turbine project at its Cherry Point Refinery near the community of Birch Bay, Wash. The project may

require rebuilding an existing single-circuit 230-kV transmission line to double circuit from Cherry Point to Custer Substation and is subject to Washington energy facility siting processes. BPA and Washington EFSEC are developing a joint SEPA/NEPA DEIS, which is scheduled for release this summer.

#### **BPA's Power Supply Role After 2006 – Regionwide**

A regional discussion regarding how BPA will market power and share the costs and benefits of the Federal Columbia River Power System in the Pacific Northwest after 2006 is proceeding at a slower pace. BPA expects to renew its efforts on this project. Please refer to BPA's Web site at [www.bpa.gov/power/regionaldialogue](http://www.bpa.gov/power/regionaldialogue) for up-to-date information, or contact Jenifer Scott at (503) 230-7685.

#### **COB Energy Facility Interconnect EIS – Klamath County, Ore.**

Peoples Energy Resources Corp. has requested interconnection of its proposed 1,200-MW combustion turbine project at a site near Bonanza in Klamath Co., Ore. The project would require a new 500-kV transmission line to BPA's Captain Jack Substation. The project is subject to Oregon Energy Facility Siting Council certification. The DEIS is scheduled for release this summer.

#### **Fish and Wildlife Implementation Plan EIS – Regionwide**

This EIS examines potential impacts of implementing any of the fish and wildlife policy directions being considered in regional processes. BPA has developed a preferred alternative using regional guidance. The three-volume FEIS is available in CD or hard copy format. See <http://www.efw.bpa.gov/cgi-bin/PSA/NEPA/SUMMARIES/FishWildlifeImplementation> for more information.

#### **Grande Ronde and Imnaha Spring Chinook Project EIS – Wallowa and Union counties, Ore.**

Fish trapping, incubation, rearing and release hatchery facilities would be built to help boost spring chinook salmon populations in the Grande Ronde and Imnaha river basins of northeast Oregon. Planned facilities would modify and augment existing Lower Snake River Compensation Plan facilities. The DEIS is available on CD, in hard copy or online at [www.efw.bpa.gov](http://www.efw.bpa.gov) under links to environmental analysis/planning and active projects. Public review and comment period ended July 7, 2003. Responses and an FEIS are being prepared.

#### **Kangley-Echo Lake Transmission Line Project – King and Kittitas counties, Wash.**

BPA has decided to proceed with the Kangley-Echo Lake 500-kV transmission line. The line will connect to an existing transmission line near Kangley to BPA's Echo Lake Substation in western Washington. The project is needed to improve transmission system reliability and to enhance BPA's ability to meet treaty requirements with Canada. BPA has selected Alternative 1, a new nine-mile transmission line that will run parallel to an existing BPA transmission line in central King County, Wash. Five miles of the line will cross the Cedar River Municipal Watershed, which is the source for much of the city of Seattle's drinking water. BPA and the city of Seattle have reached an agreement and will work together to protect the watershed during construction. The FEIS was released on June 18. The ROD was signed on July 21, 2003. Construction is underway and is scheduled to be completed by late December 2003. See <http://www2.transmission.bpa.gov/projects/> for more information.

#### **Plymouth Generating Facility EIS – Benton County, Wash.**

Plymouth Energy requested interconnection of its proposed 306-MW combustion turbine project near Plymouth in Benton County, Wash. BPA prepared a joint NEPA/SEPA EIS with Benton County. A DEIS was released in September 2002, and a FEIS was released in June 2003.

#### **Raymond-Cosmopolis 115-kV Transmission Line EA – Grays Harbor and Pacific counties., Wash.**

BPA proposes to rebuild an existing 115-kV transmission line between Raymond and Cosmopolis, roughly parallel to Hwy. 101. Most of the 18-mile-long line will remain in the existing right-of-way. The preliminary EA was released for public review in February. The comment period ended Feb. 26. Public meetings were held Feb. 11 in Cosmopolis and Feb. 12 in Raymond. The final EA is scheduled for release in August 2003. See <http://www2.transmission.bpa.gov/projects/> for more information.

#### **Salmon Creek EIS – Okanogan County, Wash.**

BPA proposes to fund a project to enhance fish habitat and fish passage and to increase instream flows in 4.3 miles of lower Salmon Creek, a tributary of the Okanogan River. The project would rehabilitate the stream channel, revegetate stream banks and increase streamflows. A DEIS is scheduled for release in fall 2003.

#### **Schultz-Wautoma Area 500-kV Line Project – near Ellensburg to near the Hanford Reservation, Wash.**

BPA proposes to build a new 500-kV line from Schultz Substation to the new Wautoma Substation southwest of the Hanford Monument. An FEIS was released in February. The ROD was released in March 2003. Construction on the new Wautoma Substation began May 5. Energization of the Sickler-Schultz portion of the line began in May 2003. Major line construction is now scheduled to start in the fall of 2004, be completed by winter 2005 and energized by spring 2006. See <http://www2.transmission.bpa.gov/projects/> for more information.

#### **South Fork Flathead Watershed/Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation Program EIS – Flathead National Forest, Mont.**

BPA proposes to fund a project to remove exotic trout species from selected lakes in the South Fork of the Flathead drainage. BPA is preparing an EIS. Additional information is available at [www.efw.bpa.gov/cgi-bin/efw/E/Welcomes.cgi](http://www.efw.bpa.gov/cgi-bin/efw/E/Welcomes.cgi).

#### **Wanapa Energy Center Generation Proj. EIS – Umatilla County, Ore.**

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation requested interconnection of the Wanapa Energy Center, a proposed 1,300-MW gas-fired combined-cycle combustion turbine project, into the transmission grid. The project would be located on tribal trust land. The Bureau of Indian Affairs plans to publish a DEIS in October 2003, a FEIS in March 2004 and a ROD in April 2004. BPA is participating as a cooperating agency.

## **SUPPLEMENT ANALYSES**

### **Watershed Management Program EIS**

- SA-107 Hancock Springs Passage and Habitat Restoration – Okanogan County, Wash.
- SA-108 Klickitat Watershed Enhancement Project – Snyder Canyon Creek Mill Fish Passage Project – Klickitat County, Wash.

### **Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS**

- SA-33 Gooderich Bayou Culvert Replacement (Hungry Horse Fisheries Mitigation Program) – Flathead County, Mont.

**If you have questions or comments, or you want to be added to the mailing list for any project, call (503) 230-3478 (Portland) or 1-800-622-4519.**

To order copies of documents, call: 1-800-622-4520 or (503) 230-7334. Written comments may be sent to: BPA, P.O. Box 12999, Portland, OR 97212. E-mail address: [comment@BPA.gov](mailto:comment@BPA.gov). BPA home page: <http://www.bpa.gov>. For details on BPA environmental reviews listed above, including site maps and documents issued to date, see <http://www.efw.bpa.gov/cgi-bin/PSA/NEPA/Projects>. **Process Abbreviations:** EA-Environmental Assessment, EFSEC-Washington Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council, EFSC-Oregon Energy Facility Siting Council, EIS-Environmental Impact Statement, DEIS-Draft Environmental Impact Statement, FEIS-Final Environmental Impact Statement, FONSI-Finding of No Significant Impact, NOI-Notice of Intent, ROD-Record of Decision, SA-Supplement Analysis.

