

journal

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River operations agreement forged

BPA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and five Northwest Indian tribes recently agreed on how the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) should be operated for fish passage in 2007. Participating tribes include the Nez Perce Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation, the Yakama Nation, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Colville Reservation. The agreement will diminish use of barging and increase spill at specific dams compared to recent years. It also provides bridge funding through September 2007 for specific fish and wildlife projects in addition to those recommended by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council.

This is the first hydro operation agreement reached with the tribes in litigation challenging the 2004 Biological Opinion on FCRPS operations to protect Columbia River salmon listed under the Endangered Species Act. BPA anticipates that the agreement will lay the groundwork for a long-term agreement on hydro operations for fish, with negotiation expected to begin soon.

High-tech equipment simplifies work

BPA's Surveying and Mapping Section received a new, high-tech Leica Robotic Total Station in late December. Fast, accurate and easy to use, the robotic instrument can be radio-controlled by one person and can reach objects from up to 1,000 meters away. With Bluetooth wireless technology, surveyors also can transfer data to various hand-held devices such as cell phones, data collectors and personal digital assistants. The new tool will help surveyors complete their measurements for transmission line projects more quickly and more cost efficiently.

Rate case settlement reached

As expected, most of BPA's transmission customers signed a settlement agreement on the agency's transmission rates for fiscal years 2008-2009. Customers should see no change in the aggregate rates they pay

BPA for transmission service, with the exception of a handful of customers who are currently self-supplying reactive supply and voltage control from generation resources. Their rates will decline slightly. BPA will publish a Federal Register notice initiating the transmission rate case in early February.

BPA sponsors science bowls

On Jan. 27, 40 middle school teams competed in BPA's regional middle school Science Bowl at the University of Portland. For the second year in a row, Access Middle School from Northeast Portland will advance to the national championship's in June. On Feb. 3, 64 more high school teams competed in the high school bowl. BPA sponsored both events.



Access Middle School won the regional Science Bowl on Jan. 27. Left to right: Nathaniel Austin, David Kim, Nathan Showell, Caleb Taylor and Edward Ly out-quizzed 51 teams in the math and science competition. Middle: Coach Alfonso Garcia.

Long-Term Regional Dialogue Policy due

In spring 2007, BPA will issue a final Long-term Regional Dialogue Policy and accompanying record of decision based on a review of detailed comments received through October 2006 on the July 2006 policy proposal. The Long-Term Regional Dialogue Policy addresses how BPA will market federal power in the Pacific Northwest after 2011. Through this process BPA



is working with the region to put together 20-year contracts that meet the needs of all regional interests including public utilities, consumers of investor-owned utilities and direct-service industries. The contracts will limit and define the amount of power available to public utilities at BPA's lowest-cost rates. Rates beyond these limits will be based on the cost of new resources, creating incentives for regional investment in infrastructure.

Libby-Troy line rebuild proposed

BPA proposes to rebuild a 17-mile section of the 115-kilovolt Libby-Bonnars Ferry line in Lincoln County in western Montana to improve reliability and meet future load growth in the area. Extensive analysis determined that rebuilding the aging line at its existing 115-kV single circuit is expected to meet load service requirements for the next 40-plus years. This reduces environmental impacts and costs much less than other alternatives. BPA will receive public comments on a draft environmental impact statement this winter.

Northwest wind plan drafted

On Jan. 22, the Northwest Wind Integration Action Plan Steering Committee, co-chaired by BPA and the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, began reviewing the technical work group's draft plan on how to most effectively manage wind development in the Northwest. BPA and the Council are jointly developing the plan, with the active participation of publicly owned and investor-owned utilities, public utility commissions, public interest groups and resource developers. The plan should be finalized for public review sometime next month.

Environmental brochure available

BPA's new environmental brochure, "A Better Environment, A Better Future," is now available online. To view the brochure, go to: www.bpa.gov/corporate/pubs/Environmental_Brochure.pdf. For a hard copy, contact BPA's Public Information Office by phone at (503) 230-7334 or by fax at (503) 230-5911. Anyone out of the area, can call BPA toll free at (800) 622-4520.



ENERGY STAR® Lunch & Learn

If you don't already have lunch plans for Feb. 20, consider joining BPA's "Lunch & Learn" call-in meeting from noon to 1 p.m. Anne Brink from the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance will talk about NEEA's ENERGY STAR® program. Lighting and home construction standards are the major ENERGY STAR® topics.

Lunch & Learn began its first call-in meeting Dec. 19 with more than 40 callers; it now runs from noon to 1 p.m. the third Tuesday of every month. BPA's Energy Efficiency group designed the brown-bag forum after the Utility Sounding Board requested an avenue for customers to explore one topic at a time on a regular basis.

To see future Lunch & Learn program topics, go to the Energy Efficiency website at www.bpa.gov/Energy/N/index.cfm and click on "Utility Brown Bag Series." To request the call-in number and passcode, call Becky Clark at (503) 230-3158.

Crime Witness Program

BPA is stepping up efforts in its Crime Witness program to further deter theft and vandalism on government property. Vandalism on BPA property, including stealing ground wires, cutting cables and shooting out insulators, can be fatal. It also has serious economic consequences by disrupting power to communities, hospitals, police and fire.

BPA offers up to \$25,000 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of people who commit these crimes. BPA is asking its customers to report any known criminal activity on BPA property by calling the Crime Witness Hotline at (800) 437-2744. The toll-free line is managed so that the caller's identity will remain confidential.

BPA forecasts adequate power

BPA's 2006 Pacific Northwest Loads and Resources Study (the "White Book") shows adequate power supplies for the region through 2016. However, adequacy under low water conditions would be true only if the 3,360 megawatts of Northwest generation owned by independent power producers is available to serve Northwest loads, this would be true even under low-water conditions. The study forecasts slight power deficits for the Northwest's federal power system, which BPA expects to meet with power purchases, energy efficiency programs and renewable resource purchases. The White Book will soon be available and will be posted at www.bpa.gov/power/whitebook/.

NEW PROJECTS

Transmission Rate Case – Regionwide

BPA recently negotiated a settlement with its customers and customer representatives for the FY 2008-2009 Transmission Rate Case. BPA transmission customers supported the proposal, enabling BPA to sign the settlement on Jan. 12. BPA will now initiate the rate case hearing process and file an initial rate proposal consistent with the settlement. A pre-hearing conference is scheduled for Feb. 14. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.transmission.bpa.gov/Business/Rates_and_Tariff. (See Calendar of Events)

AGENCY – PROJECTS UNDER REVIEW

ColumbiaGrid – Regionwide

ColumbiaGrid members and Board of Directors hosted a public meeting Jan. 17 and agreed to offer a finalized Planning and Expansion Functional Agreement to regional parties. The agreement will become effective for the initiating parties 60 days after the offer. Other qualified entities may sign later. BPA has already indicated its intention to sign the agreement. ColumbiaGrid members continue to develop additional functional agreements.

BPA and six other utilities supporting ColumbiaGrid are funding this new organization's development. See BPA's Web site: www.bpa.gov/corporate/business/restructuring/ for more information on its participation. For the complete draft ColumbiaGrid Planning and Expansion Functional Agreement, and information about ColumbiaGrid's public process, see www.columbiagrid.org/.

FCRPS Revised Draft Systemwide Programmatic Agreement – Regionwide

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation and BPA (lead federal agencies) have released a Federal Columbia River Power System Revised Draft Systemwide Programmatic Agreement. It covers the management of historic properties affected by the multi-purpose operations of 14 of the dam/reservoir projects within the FCRPS. It provides the systemwide principles and commitments for the lead federal agencies, and compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Comments were accepted through Jan. 19. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/culturalresources.aspx.

Supplement Analysis to the Business Plan EIS – Regionwide

BPA is preparing a Supplement Analysis to its Business Plan EIS, scheduled for release this winter. For a copy of the Supplement Analysis, or for more information, see BPA's Web site: www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/bpsa.

FISH AND WILDLIFE – PROJECTS UNDER REVIEW

Chief Joseph Hatchery Program – Okanogan County, Wash.

The Northwest Power and Conservation Council recommended that BPA study a program sponsored by the Confederated Colville Tribes to assist in conservation and recovery of summer/fall chinook salmon in the Okanogan subbasin and the Columbia River below Chief Joseph Dam. This program would include a new hatchery near the base of Chief Joseph Dam and acclimation ponds throughout the Okanogan River subbasin. The EIS also will consider use of the proposed facilities to reintroduce spring chinook salmon to historical habitats in the Okanogan subbasin on an experimental basis. The program

includes production to augment the ceremonial and subsistence harvest of salmon for the Confederated Colville Tribes. This program would be designed to have no effect on the operational flexibility of Chief Joseph Dam. A draft EIS for public comment is planned for this winter. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/Chief_Joseph/.

Lyle Falls Fish Passage Project – Klickitat County, Wash.

BPA is preparing an EIS for the proposed Lyle Falls Fish Passage Project. The project addresses the modification and upgrade to the existing fishway. The draft EIS is scheduled for release in May 2007. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/Lyle_Falls/.

Northeast Oregon Hatchery Program, Grande Ronde-Imnaha Spring Chinook Hatchery Project – Wallowa County, Ore.

BPA has conducted value engineering, land acquisition and final design according to the ROD signed March 11, 2005. Several minor changes to facility features and sites resulted, so additional environmental analysis was conducted that included Endangered Species Act compliance, cultural resources surveys and hydrologic effects. No substantial new environmental effects or public issues are anticipated by the changes. A Supplement Analysis was completed March 23, 2006, which found that a supplemental EIS was not warranted by the minor changes. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries have concurred that the original ESA consultation remains valid. A ROD authorizing construction is planned for this winter. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/Grand_Ronde/.

POWER – PROJECTS UNDER REVIEW

Regional Dialogue – Regionwide

BPA is preparing the Long-Term Regional Dialogue final policy and ROD. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.bpa.gov/power/regionaldialogue.

TRANSMISSION – PROJECTS UNDER REVIEW

Caribou-Lower Valley Project – Caribou County, Idaho

BPA is proposing to build, own, operate and maintain a new 138/115-kilovolt substation near a proposed PacifiCorp substation near Soda Springs, Idaho. BPA would connect to PacifiCorp's new substation to improve service to Lower Valley Energy. Lower Valley Energy would construct, own and operate a new 20-mile double-circuit 115-kV transmission line from BPA's new substation to a tap on the Lower Valley Energy transmission system between Lanes Creek and Valley substations. Lower Valley Energy would work with BPA to acquire all land and rights-of-way for the 115-kV line. Field work and design are planned for spring 2007. BPA expects to release a draft EA in fall or winter 2007. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission_Projects/.

Hanford Reach National Monument CCP/EIS – Benton, Franklin and Grant Counties, Wash.

BPA is participating in a land management planning process led by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. USFWS is working on a comprehensive conservation plan under the Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997. BPA is helping with sections of the plan that pertain to transmission facilities, roads, energy facilities and river flow management within the monument. A draft EIS was released to the public Dec. 8. BPA is accepting comments through Feb. 23. (See Close of Comment)

Libby (Flathead Electric Cooperative)-to-Troy Section of the Libby-to-Bonniers Ferry 115-kV Transmission Line Rebuild – Lincoln County, Mont.

BPA is proposing to rebuild a 17-mile section of the Libby-to-Bonniers Ferry 115-kilovolt transmission line to improve its reliability and meet future load growth in Lincoln County, Mont. BPA is analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed project and the comments received during the scoping process. BPA expects to issue a draft EIS early 2007. For more information and the latest update to stakeholders, see BPA's Web site: www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission_Projects/.

Olympic Peninsula Reinforcement Project – Thurston and Mason Counties, Wash.

BPA is proposing to remove 14.5 miles of a portion of an existing 115-kilovolt transmission line between Olympia and Shelton substations and replace it with a double-circuit, 230-kV line and add equipment at the two substations. This will improve voltage stability during winter-peak load conditions on the Olympic Peninsula. BPA will complete an EA on the proposed project. The preliminary EA is scheduled to be released in summer 2007. If BPA decides to proceed with this project, construction could begin in late 2007. BPA hosted a public meeting Jan. 11. Comments were accepted comments through Jan. 24. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission_Projects/.

Port Angeles/Juan de Fuca Transmission Project – Port Angeles, Wash.

Olympic Converter LP has requested interconnection to the Federal Columbia River Transmission System of a 550-MW transmission cable across the Strait of Juan de Fuca from Vancouver Island, B.C., to Port Angeles, Wash. The draft EIS is expected to be released this winter. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission_Projects/.

Programs in Review – Regionwide

The final letter announcing program levels for FY 2008-2009 is now available. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.transmission.bpa.gov/business/Customer%5FForums%5Fand%5FFeedback/Programs_in_Review/pir2006.cfm.

Shepherds Flat Wind Farm Interconnection Project – Gilliam and Morrow Counties, Ore.

Lifeline Renewable Energy, Inc., requested interconnection of up to 750 megawatts of power generated from the proposed Shepherds Flat Wind Farm that would be located in Gilliam and Morrow Counties, Ore. BPA proposes to interconnect up to 750 MW by expanding the existing Slatt Substation in Gilliam County. BPA will analyze project impacts in a tiered ROD under the Business Plan EIS. The ROD is scheduled to be completed in 2007. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Wind/.

Summer Falls/Main Canal Interconnection Project – Grant and Douglas Counties, Wash.

BPA proposes to interconnect 122 megawatts of generation from Summer Falls and Main Canal hydropower projects to the federal transmission grid. BPA proposes to construct a new 230-kilovolt substation (Pinto Ridge) in Grant County and a new communications site (Banks Lake) in Douglas County to

complete the interconnection by 2008. Seattle City Light and Tacoma Power requested the interconnection. They also requested that BPA construct 6 miles of new 115-kV transmission line between Main Canal and the new Pinto Ridge Substation, three miles of new 115-kV transmission line between Summer Falls and Pinto Ridge, and their new 115-kV substation adjacent to the proposed substation. Seattle City Light and Tacoma Power would own these facilities. BPA, Seattle and Tacoma plan to work cooperatively to complete a combined state and National Environmental Policy Act process and associated environmental compliance. An additional meeting will be scheduled soon in Coulee City, Wash. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission_Projects/. When the date of the meeting has been set, the information will be added to the site.

TRANSMISSION – PROJECTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Klondike III/Biglow Canyon Wind Integration Project – Sherman County, Ore.

BPA will interconnect the Klondike III and Biglow Canyon wind projects in Sherman County, Ore. The ROD was signed on Oct. 25, 2006. Construction has begun on the John Day Substation and construction of the transmission line will begin May 2007. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Wind/.

Rock Creek Substation – Klickitat County, Wash.

Rock Creek Substation is under construction and will be complete in fall 2007. For more information, see BPA's Web site: www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Wind/.

SUPPLEMENT ANALYSES

To view copies of the supplement analyses, visit the link provided.

Transmission Vegetation Management Program

- SA-323 Lower Columbia River, Columbia and Clatsop Counties, Ore. and Wahkiakum County, Wash.
- SA-324 Port Angeles-Sappho No. 1, Clallam County, Wash.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Transmission rate case pre-hearing conference

Feb. 14, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Rates hearing room, 911 N.E. 11th Ave., Portland, Ore.

CLOSE OF COMMENT

Feb. 23 – Hanford Reach National Monument CCP/EIS

The Journal is a monthly publication of the Bonneville Power Administration. If you have questions or comments, or you want to be added to the mailing list for any project, call toll free (800) 622-4519.

To order copies of documents, call: (800) 622-4520 or (503) 230-7334. Written comments may be sent to: BPA, P.O. Box 14428, Portland, OR 97293-4428. E-mail address: comment@BPA.gov. BPA home page: www.bpa.gov. For details on BPA environmental reviews listed above, including site maps and documents issued to date, see www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/nepadocs.aspx. Process Abbreviations: EA-Environmental Assessment, EIS-Environmental Impact Statement, ESA-Endangered Species Act, FONSI-Finding of No Significant Impact, NOI-Notice of Intent, ROD-Record of Decision.

