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A PUBLICATION FROM THE BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION

Journal

[Click here for past Journals.](#)**June 1996****Table of contents:**[BPA releases draft ROD](#)[Hearing officer recommends approval of settlement](#)[Fish MOA negotiations continue](#)[BPA awards education grants](#)[Transfer of Satsop site underway](#)[Idaho meetings planned](#)[High water levels affect fish](#)[Comprehensive Review update](#)[BPA testifies to Congress](#)[Status reports](#)[Calendar of events](#)[Close of comment](#)[How you can get involved](#)**BPA releases draft ROD**

On May 14, BPA released its draft record of decision on the 1996 Wholesale Power and Transmission

Rate Proceeding. The average priority firm power rate, or preference rate, agreed to in the settlement is 2.44 cents per kilowatt-hour, a reduction from the current average rate of 2.81 cents per kilowatt-hour. BPA's residential exchange program, which benefits primarily the region's investor-owned utilities, would increase by approximately \$60 million over the five-year rate period compared to the earlier supplemental rate proposal. BPA's rate proceeding, scheduled to be completed on June 17, will propose final power and transmission rates effective from Oct. 1, 1996, through Sept. 30, 2001. The draft record of decision is an analysis of the issues presented during the course of the rate proceeding and adopts the proposed partial settlement that was agreed to by parties to the rate proceeding on April 4. (*See [next story](#).*) The average industrial firm power rate would meet the rate test of 2.26 cents per kilowatt-hour established in BPA's contracts with its direct-service industrial customers. As a courtesy to all its customers, BPA has prepared draft rate schedules based on the decisions contained in the draft ROD. The rates are preliminary and are subject to change as BPA responds to the parties' exceptions and prepares its final studies. Parties to the rate proceeding have a final opportunity to comment by May 30. After reviewing the parties' comments, BPA will complete its final studies and revise the record of decision as required. BPA's final rates, which are subject to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission approval, are due on June 17. New rates will go into effect Oct. 1, 1996.

[\(return to table of contents\)](#)

Hearing officer recommends approval of settlement

Hearing Officer Helen Edwards has recommended that BPA Administrator Randy Hardy adopt the April 4 proposed partial settlement agreement reached between BPA and parties to its transmission rates, terms and conditions proceedings. She concluded that BPA's transmission terms and conditions not only comply with, but in some respects are superior to, the proposed tariffs issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The hearing officer's recommended decision concludes that, under the agreement, third parties have access to BPA's transmission system under the same terms and conditions as BPA applies to itself. Edwards decision applies to the transmission terms and conditions. Edwards has no authority over BPA's proposed rates. On April 4, BPA and the majority of its customers agreed to a five-year proposal that calls for increasing the transmission rate from \$10.58 per kilowatt-year to \$12.01. This increase is approximately half the previously proposed 25 percent increase included in the earlier supplemental rate proposal. The earlier proposal would have increased transmission rates to \$13.28 per kilowatt-year. Administrator Randy Hardy will make the final rate determination in June, which will then be submitted to FERC. New rates would go into effect Oct. 1, 1996.

[\(return to table of contents\)](#)

Fish MOA negotiations continue

BPA, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, in consultation with the Northwest Power Planning Council and the Columbia Basin Tribes, are currently negotiating a fish and wildlife memorandum of agreement. The MOA will establish the budgeting and accounting practices necessary to implement the administrative agreement between the Clinton administration and the Northwest congressional delegation to develop a stable multi-year budget for fish and wildlife. BPA will pay \$252 million per year for six years for all fish and wildlife activities except hydro operations. In addition, BPA will incur the costs to operate the federal hydro system in a manner that conforms to the biological opinions of NMFS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as well as the Power Planning Council's fish and wildlife program. The cost of providing these operations is currently estimated to be between \$90 million and

\$280 million annually. After providing technical briefings for the 13 tribes in the Columbia Basin, BPA is joining with other federal agencies to hold a government-to-government consultation with the tribes on June 3 in Portland, Ore.

(return to table of contents)

BPA awards education grants

Thirteen education programs in the Northwest will receive grants from BPA's Community Education Grant Program. The program is designed to aid community education programs that teach environmental awareness and energy efficiency to elementary, middle and high school students. The recipients are Water Awareness Week 1997 sponsored by the Idaho Department of Water Resources; The Montana Energy Calendar sponsored by the 1997 Montana Energy Education Council; Salmon Camp sponsored by the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry; Plant a Tree, Save a Fish sponsored by the Public Power Council and the Yakama Indian Nation Salmon Corps; the OCEEE Grant Program sponsored by the Oregon Collaboration for Energy, Education and the Environment; Salmon Watch sponsored by Oregon Trout; The Edison Project sponsored by Clallam County Youth 2000; Meet Mr. Electricity sponsored by the Columbia Valley Gardens Elementary School in Longview, Wash.; Classroom Workshops sponsored by Snohomish County Public Utility District #1; Lake Roosevelt Water Festival sponsored by the Lake Roosevelt Water Festival Planning Committee in Colville, Wash.; Energy, Environment and Community sponsored by the Energy Outreach Center in Olympia, Wash.; the Richland Summer Science Camp sponsored by the Columbia River Exhibition of History, Science and Technology; and Salmon Education and Restoration sponsored by the Toppenish School District #202.

(return to table of contents)

Transfer of Satsop site underway

The Washington Public Power Supply System and BPA are negotiating with Grays Harbor County agencies to transfer the Satsop nuclear site to Grays Harbor County, Wash. Recent Washington state legislation authorizes the county agencies to form an intra-county agency for the purpose of acquiring the Satsop site and creating economic development opportunities in the county. Grays Harbor Public Utility District, Port of Grays Harbor, County of Grays Harbor and Grays Harbor Regional Planning Commission have been meeting with the Supply System and BPA to establish principles for implementation of the legislation. Transfer of the site is expected to substantially reduce site restoration costs for the Supply System and BPA while creating jobs and increasing the tax base for the county. Satsop is the site of the Supply System's terminated Washington Nuclear Plants 3 and 5. A transfer agreement is expected in five to six months.

(return to table of contents)

Idaho meetings planned

BPA will be represented at several public meetings in Idaho conducted by the Association of Idaho Cities and the Idaho Council on Industry and the Environment. The public information forums on the Comprehensive Review of the Northwest Energy System are scheduled for June 19 in Post Falls, June 20 in Lewiston, June 25 in Boise, July 2 in Idaho Falls and July 9 in Twin Falls. Issues to be discussed include the impact of the comprehensive review on both private and public power providers, the future

of BPA, the future of public benefits that BPA now provides and how power will be sold to industries, business and residential customers. Todd Maddock of the Northwest Power Planning Council, Jan Packwood of Idaho Power Company and John Williams of BPA are expected to attend. (See calendar on back page.)

(return to table of contents)

High water levels affect fish

Precipitation from October through mid-May has averaged 130 percent of normal in the Columbia River Basin. The record high water levels have resulted in unusually high amounts of spill at the dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers. Spill is water passed over a dam's spillway rather than being sent through the turbines to generate electricity. Spill occurs when river flows exceeds a dam's full turbine capabilities or when generation supply exceeds market demand. When water is spilled over the dams, fish are drawn with it over the spillways. Spill increases the level of supersaturated nitrogen and other gases in the water. When dissolved gas levels get high, they can cause gas bubble disease, a fatal disease in salmon that is similar to the bends in human divers. High water levels are increasing spill levels resulting in gas levels that are considered to be dangerous to fish. Transportation of fish remains an issue as currently about half of the fish pass over the dams and half are barged downstream. More fish could be transported, thereby reducing the numbers exposed to gas bubble disease. BPA funds the fish program. The National Marine Fisheries Service and the Northwest Power Planning Council, in collaboration with tribes and state fish agencies, determine how the funds are allocated. NMFS is deferring to the tribes and state fish agencies to determine if more fish should be barged.

(return to table of contents)

Comprehensive Review update

The four work groups of the Comprehensive Review of the Northwest Energy System are expected to present a final report to the steering committee on July 11 in Seattle. The federal power marketing, transmission, competition and customer choice, and public purposes groups are working on proposals for changes to the Northwest's energy system. A public forum will be held at Seattle Center on July 12. BPA is submitting a proposal in July at the request of the steering committee. Copies will be available in early July. Call BPA's document request line to be added to the mail list. Several other proposals are being submitted from other organizations. Copies of the various proposals are available from the Northwest Power Planning Council. (See [Status Report](#).) The steering committee is expected to submit its draft for public comment by Sept. 19. The public will have until Oct. 17 to comment.

(return to table of contents)

BPA testifies to Congress

The Water and Power Subcommittee of the House Resources Committee, chaired by Rep. John Doolittle from California, held a May 21 hearing on Northwest water and power issues. The hearing focused on the Comprehensive Review of the Northwest Energy System and BPA operations. BPA Deputy CEO Jack Robertson testified. Others testifying included Al Alexanderson of Portland General Electric representing investor-owned utilities, Richard Brown of Ravalli County Electric Cooperative representing public utilities, consultant K.C. Golden representing public interest groups, and John Carr

representing direct-service industries.

(return to table of contents)

Public Involvement

Status reports

1996 Rate Case. The BPA draft ROD was made available on May 14. The final ROD will be available on June 17.

Albeni Falls Wildlife Management Plan/EA. Work on the EA is progressing and the preliminary draft is expected in early June. Call to be added to the mail list.

Billy Shaw Dam and Reservoir EA. This project is proposed as partial mitigation for tribal losses of anadromous fisheries on the Duck Valley Reservation. A preliminary EA will be available for public comment in early June. Call to be added to the mail list.

BPA/Lower Valley Transmission Project. Scoping meetings were held in May. A summary of comments will be available soon. Call to get on the mail list.

Columbia Gorge Project Vegetation Management. The draft EA is expected in June. Call to be added to the mail list.

Comprehensive Review of the Northwest Energy System (Regional Review). The “Putting It All Together” forum will be held at Seattle Center on July 12. For a schedule of public information forums [click here](#). For information, please call the Northwest Power Planning Council's Public Affairs office at 1-800-222-3355 or E-mail comments to comments@nwppc.org. Visit the Comprehensive Review Home Page at <http://www.newsdata.com/enernet/review/review.html>.

Excess Federal Power Statute Implementation Process. The ROD will be available in June. Call to be put on the mail list.

Four Mile Hill Geothermal Project EIS (Glass Mountain). In the preparation of this EIS, the BLM is lead NEPA agency and BPA and the U.S. Forest Service are cooperating agencies. Public scoping is expected to begin in June. Call to be added to the mail list.

Hood River Fisheries Project. The final EIS is expected in July. Call to be put on the mail list.

Hungry Horse Reservation. A final ROD will be issued in June. In March, BPA notified Montana utilities that wholesale electric power from Hungry Horse Reservatiion will be available on Oct. 1, 1996. A proposed method of redistributing that power was available for comment until April 10

Kalispel Tribe Resident Fish Project. The draft EA is expected in mid-June. Call to request a copy.

Lower Red River Meadow Stream Restoration Project. The preliminary EA is available. See Close of Comment.

New Power Sales Contracts. A ROD for the templates and Amendatory Agreement No. 7 is now

available. Call for a copy.

Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery EIS. The draft EIS is expected in early June. An FYI (#2882) and summary of the project are available. Call to get on the mail list.

Northwest Regional Power Facility. The final EIS is expected in June. Call to be added to the mail list or to get a copy.

Oliver Delivery Project. Public scoping meetings are tentatively planned for late June. An FYI (#2879) will be available to address specifics of the project. Call to get on the mail list.

Olympia-South Tacoma Reconductor Project. The EA will be available in June. Call to receive a copy.

Vancouver Lowlands Columbia River Wildlife Mitigation Project EIS. To implement a more efficient NEPA process, we are rolling this EIS into the Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS. A fact sheet will be available in June. Call to get on the mail list.

Washington Wildlife Mitigation Project. A draft programmatic EA (#1096) is now available. Written comments are requested through June 7. Call to be added to the mail list.

Watershed Management Program. Public meetings will continue into early June (see Calendar of Events).

Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS. Work is progressing, and we expect to publish the draft EIS in July. Call to be added to the mail list.

Washington Public Power Supply System Nuclear Plant No. 2. The draft economic evaluation is now available. Call for a copy.

Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project Programmatic EIS. The Bureau of Reclamation and the State of Wash. are preparing an EIS. BPA and the Yakama Indian Nation are cooperating agencies. Public scoping meetings were held in May. Call Roberta Ries at 509-575-5848 ext. 265 to be added to the mail list.

(return to table of contents)

Calendar of Events

Regional Review Public Information Forums:

June 19, 1 - 3 p.m., Templin's Resort, Post Falls, Idaho;

June 20, 2 - 3 p.m., Lewiston, Idaho;

June 25, 7:30 - 9 a.m., Chamber of Commerce Conference Room, Boise, Idaho;

July 2, 12 - 1:30 p.m., Idaho Falls, Idaho;

July 9, 12 - 1:30 p.m., Twin Falls, Idaho. For details, call Pat Barclay at (208) 336-8508.

Regional Review: **June 6, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.,** Sheraton at the Airport, Portland, Ore.

Watershed Management Program: **June 3, 1 - 3 p.m.,** Dept. of Forest, Wildlife and Parks -- Region 2

Office, Missoula, Mont.; **June 4, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.**, Stagecoach Inn, Salmon, Idaho.

(visit BPA's current [public meeting calendar](#).)

[\(return to table of contents\)](#)

CLOSE OF COMMENT

Lower Red River Meadow Stream Restoration: **June 7**

Watershed Management Program: **June 17**

[\(return to table of contents\)](#)

Acronyms:

EA: Environmental Assessment

EIS: Environmental Impact Statement

FONSI: Finding of No Significant Impact

NOI: Notice of Intent

ROD: Record of Decision

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The *Journal* is available on the Internet at <http://www.bpa.gov/Corporate/KC/home/journal/>.

We welcome all comments from you at Journal-CKC, Bonneville Power Administration, P.O. Box 3621, Portland, OR 97208-3621 or enballa@bpa.gov.

For More Information or To Get Involved:

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[\(return to table of contents\)](#)

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