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A PUBLICATION FROM THE BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION

Journal

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June 1997



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BPA continues to cut costs

BPA Administrator Randy Hardy recently told the Transition Board of the Comprehensive Review of the Northwest Energy System that BPA is committed to reducing rates to two cents per kilowatt hour by the year 2000. One of the ways BPA expects to meet that goal is to continue to cut costs. BPA expects to reduce operation costs in many ways, including reducing employment levels. Current staff levels are down to 2,919 about a 22 percent reduction since March 1994 when BPA began its cost-cutting efforts. The agency's goal is to reduce BPA full-time equivalent positions to 2,755 by the end of fiscal year 1999. BPA chose to offer voluntary separation incentives to employees to avoid a non-voluntary reduction in force. Another goal is to reduce contractor positions from the current 526 to 254 by the end of fiscal year 1999.

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Crews work to repair mudslide areas

BPA crews continue to repair areas prone to mudslides. In May, BPA applied a total of 24,000 pounds of grass seed in northeastern Oregon and southeastern Washington. The BPA crew used a specially designed seed hopper to seed steep and otherwise inaccessible river canyons. This operation targeted the Grande Ronde Watershed outside of Troy, Ore., and the Touchet Watershed near Dayton, Wash. Both of these areas were hard hit by mudslides attributable to last winter's heavy snow and rain. BPA worked closely with the Oregon and Washington departments of fish and wildlife as well as the Nez Perce Tribe, the Governor's Watershed Enhancement Board, Grande Ronde Model Watershed and private landowners. The objectives of this project were: (1) to stabilize surface soils and limit erosion and siltation, (2) to prevent the invasion of noxious weeds, principally yellow starthistle, a growing problem throughout the West, and (3) to provide valuable forage for wildlife.

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Crime witness program offers up to \$1,000 for information

BPA's crime witness program is offering up to \$1,000 to anyone who provides information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person committing theft, vandalism or illegal dumping on BPA property. Recently, about 5,000 feet of aluminum conductor cable valued at \$13,000 was stolen from a BPA storage yard in Skagit County, Wash. Several weeks earlier 9,000 feet of cable was stolen from the same site. Construction materials are being stored at the site for the new Monroe-Echo Lake 500 kilovolt transmission line. Any more thefts at the site could delay construction of the line. Anyone with information about this theft or any other crime to BPA property may call 1-800-437-2744 to report the information. The caller's identity will be kept confidential. Crime throughout BPA's transmission system cost the agency over \$1 million last year. These costs inevitably get passed on to customers and ratepayers.

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Irrigation season begins soon

One of the many uses of the Columbia River system is irrigation. The summer irrigation season will begin soon at a time when the river system is being operated for flood control. Irrigation and flood control needs can conflict and the challenge is to balance the uses of the river. The irrigation goal is to have reservoirs capture and hold as much water as possible during the fall, winter and early spring so it can be used in the summer. The flood control goal during the same months is to draft reservoirs to make room for the spring runoff. During the summer irrigation season, river operations must keep reservoir levels high so that pump intakes are submerged.

Water releases for irrigation are scheduled locally rather than regionally. The Bureau of Reclamation and local irrigation districts and water companies operate most of the irrigation reservoirs in the Columbia River system.

Diversion projects may be either storage or run-of-river dams. The projects include irrigation canals and pumping systems that take water from the river to irrigate crops. The Columbia Basin Project, for example, uses water diverted from Roosevelt Lake behind Grand Coulee Dam. Water is pumped from Roosevelt Lake up into Banks Lake, constructed by damming both ends of the naturally formed Grand Coulee. The water flows through a system of tunnels and canals to irrigate half a million acres of crops.

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Architecture and energy awards to be held in Seattle

The fifth annual Architecture and Energy Awards program will be held in Seattle June 5 and 6 at the Batelle Conference Center. The Portland chapter of the American Institute of Architects will present awards for nonresidential construction and major renovations in the Northwest region. The AIA awards look for building designs that conserve energy, support the environment, fit in with the landscape and use innovative technology. BPA and Portland General Electric cosponsor the program with the AIA.

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BPA testifies to congress

The Subcommittee on Water and Power of the U.S. House of Representatives recently called two hearings on Northwest issues. The committee invited BPA to testify on May 31 in Lewiston, Idaho, to discuss the impacts the Snake River drawdown proposal would have on BPA's operations and revenues. BPA's Deputy Administrator Jack Robertson testified at the hearing. The subcommittee has called another hearing on June 12 to get an update on the status of the Comprehensive Review of the Northwest Energy System process and BPA's future role in the region. BPA Administrator Randy Hardy will testify at the hearing in Washington, D.C. Representative John Doolittle of California chairs the subcommittee.

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Nez Perce celebrate return to ancestral lands

The Nez Perce Tribe will hold a celebration in the Wallowa Valley near Enterprise, Ore., on June 12 to celebrate returning to their ancestral homeland. BPA provided funds to the tribe to purchase the northeastern Oregon land from The Trust for Public Lands. BPA is funding the 10,300 acre land purchase to mitigate for loss of wildlife habitat caused by development of the hydropower system in the Columbia River Basin. The tribe expects to purchase an additional 6,200 acres with funds provided by BPA.

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Montana passes restructuring legislation

Montana became the first Northwest state to pass retail restructuring legislation when Governor Marc Racicot signed the Electric Utility Industry Restructuring and Customer Choice Act on May 2. The new law authorizes customers of investor-owned utilities with loads greater than 1,000 kilowatts (or separately metered loads of a single customer that are above 300 kW and aggregate to 1,000 kW) to choose their electric supplier on or before July 1, 1998. All other customers are granted choice as soon as administratively feasible, but no later than July 1, 2002, although the state Public Service Commission may extend the latter date up to two years. Rural electric cooperatives may choose to open their systems to competition by these deadlines or open up at a later time. The legislation requires utilities to conduct pilot projects beginning in July 1998 to allow selected smaller customers to experiment with choosing their electric supplier.

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BPA signs deal to help bull trout

BPA is a signatory in a five-year agreement expected to give a boost to protecting bull trout in Montana's Flathead River. The agreement calls for funding to monitor the bull trout population in the South Fork drainage above Hungry Horse Dam. Other signers include the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Bull trout, formerly called Dolly Varden, are Montana's largest native trout.

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Library material available to public

Samuel Moment worked for BPA from 1940 to 1954. He specialized in industrial development and the aluminum industry. His career blossomed into an international one as governments and corporations worldwide tapped into his expertise and services. After he left BPA, Moment worked for the World Bank, the United Nations and many other clients throughout the world. When he retired in 1995, Moment gave BPA his collection of books, periodicals, congressional reports, and government and corporate papers. BPA has developed an archive of historical records on the early days of the agency and its growing role in the economic development of the Pacific Northwest. The files also include historical information about the aluminum industry in the Northwest including its role in World War II. His personal papers reflect international trends, corporate appraisals, strategies and decisions. Moment's files are available to the public by appointment. Please contact BPA's Library Service desk at (503) 230-

4171 for further information.

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Public invited to Bonneville Dam

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers invites the public to visit Bonneville Dam this summer and learn about Northwest salmon issues. The dam was the first federal dam built on the Columbia River. Speakers from the Northwest Power Planning Council, BPA, the Corps of Engineers, National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will discuss fish issues on Sundays in June and July. The Corps owns and operates Bonneville Dam. BPA markets power from the dam.

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Public Involvement

Status Reports

BPA/Lower Valley Transmission Project. Idaho and Wyoming -- To resolve a voltage stability problem in the Jackson and Afton, Wyo. areas; new 115-kV line proposed on existing right-of-way where possible. The draft EIS (#2984) will be available in June. Call to receive a copy.

Bonneville-Hood River Vegetation Management EA. Oregon -- To control vegetation on the 115-kV transmission line right-of-way between Bonneville Dam and Hood River in the Columbia Gorge Scenic Area. The Forest Service is a partner in developing the EA. Call to be added to the mail list.

Columbia Windfarm #1. Washington -- The final EIS (#2682) has been completed. Call to get a copy.

Four Mile Hill Geothermal Project EIS (Calpine). Northern California -- A geothermal power plant and 30 miles of new transmission line have been proposed on Forest Service lands in the Klamath and Modoc Forests. The Bureau of Land Management has the lead. BPA is a cooperating agency. The draft EIS is being prepared. Call to be added to the mail list.

Grande Ronde River Spring Chinook Project. Oregon -- Captive broodstock program. This project is being re-evaluated.

Methow Valley Irrigation District EA. Northern Washington -- A proposal to convert the open canal irrigation system to pressurized pipes and wells. The preliminary EA (#2990) will be available in June. Call to receive a copy. See Calendar of Events.

Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery EIS. Idaho -- Supplementation of anadromous salmonids. The final EIS is being prepared. Call to be added to the mail list.

Northwest Regional Power Facility. Washington -- To construct a combustion turbine near Creston. The final EIS (#2887) is available. Call to receive a copy.

NEW! Telephone Flats Geothermal Project EIS (Calenergy). Northern California -- A geothermal power plant and 30 miles of new transmission line have been proposed on Forest Service lands in the

Modoc Forest. The Bureau of Land Management has the lead. BPA is a cooperating agency. The draft EIS is being prepared. Call to be added to the mail list.

Upper Snake River Fish Culture Facility. Idaho -- A proposal to purchase a tribal hatchery for redevelopment of Yellowstone cutthroat and redband trout. A preliminary EA is being prepared. Call to be added to the mailing list.

Watershed Management Program. Region-wide -- Guidelines for funding watershed improvement projects. The final EIS (#2994) will be available in June. Call to receive a copy.

Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS. Region-wide -- Guidelines for funding wildlife mitigation projects. The ROD (#2993) will be available in June. Call to receive a copy.

Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project Programmatic EIS. Washington -- The Bureau of Reclamation is taking the lead on this project. BPA is a cooperating agency. The draft programmatic EIS will be available in June. For further information or to receive a copy, contact John Tiedeman, BOR, at (509) 575-5848 ext. 238.

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Calendar of Events

Methow Valley Irrigation District Public Meeting: **June 30**, 4 - 8 pm, Twisp Senior Center, Twisp, Wash.

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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:

The *Journal* is a monthly newsletter of the Bonneville Power Administration for customers and interested publics.

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