

# JOURNAL

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## **Draft Subscription contracts available**

The Power Business Line is moving toward its goal of completing and signing Subscription contracts by September 2000. Draft versions of these contracts are currently available from account executives, tribal liaisons and constituent account executives. Through Jan. 7, 2000, these BPA representatives are accepting input on the contracts and how BPA power products are captured in the contracts. The September 1999 BPA Power Products Catalog has been updated and will be posted on the BPA Web site at <http://www.bpa.gov/power/psp/products/catalog.shtml>

## **Residential Exchange benefits settlement is out for public comment**

BPA is seeking public comment regarding two issues related to the proposed increase to residential exchange

settlement benefits and the allocation of residential exchange settlement benefits among Pacific Northwest investor-owned utilities (IOUs). They include: (1) whether the amount of the settlement should be increased by 100 average megawatts from 1,800 aMW to 1,900 aMW and (2) how the settlement amounts should be allocated among the individual IOUs.

BPA's Power Subscription Strategy proposes settlements of the Residential Exchange Program with regional investor-owned utilities. The proposed settlements are based on benefits equivalent to power sales at the Residential Load (RL-02) rate or the Priority Firm (PF) Exchange Subscription rate of 1,800 average megawatts for the fiscal year 2002 to 2006 period and 2,200 aMW for the fiscal year 2007 to 2011 period. The rates for the fiscal year 2002 to 2006 period are currently being developed in BPA's fiscal year 2002 to 2006 rate case.





The comment period for this proposal will be open through close of business Jan. 7, 2000. Written comments should be sent to Bonneville Power Administration, P.O. Box 12999, Portland, OR 97232. You may also send comments by e-mail to: [comment@bpa](mailto:comment@bpa). Additional copies of the proposal may be obtained by calling BPA's document request line at 1-800-622-4520. This proposal is also available on the following Web site: <http://www.bpa.gov/Power/subscription>

### **New transmission technology will be used in Europe**

BPA pioneered a new transmission technology that two years later is being put into service in Europe. Siemens AG, a world leader in power and transmission equipment and systems, has announced it will build a 500-megawatt direct-current connection between Northern Ireland and Scotland. The "Moyle Interconnector" will consist of two converter stations connected by two submarine cables and will be completed in late 2001. The project is financed in part by the European Regional Development Fund.

The interconnection uses "thyristors." Thyristors are giant silicon chips that convert power between alternating current and direct current. They were first put into commercial service in 1997 as part of a joint project between BPA and Siemens at BPA's Celilo Converter Station at The Dalles, Ore. Celilo is the northern end of BPA's 846-mile, 3,100-megawatt direct-current transmission line from the Columbia River system to southern California. The success of the BPA installation led to commercial acceptance of the new technology.

### **More BPA employees will be working on New Year's Eve**

BPA will have an expanded staff on the job New Year's Eve ready to respond immediately in the unlikely event that any problems develop.

"We have thoroughly tested our systems, and we are confident that our part of the Northwest's electric system will operate safely and reliably as the new year arrives," said Judi Johansen, BPA's administrator. "Even if problems do arise on our system, we have procedures in place to address them immediately."

BPA operates a major control center and substations throughout the Northwest. The substations are the points of connection between the region's electric utilities and the 15,000 circuit miles of high-voltage transmission lines owned and operated by BPA. Many BPA employees, including schedulers, dispatchers, operators, transmission crews and security personnel, will be on duty at BPA control facilities and substations, monitoring the system and poised to take action if necessary.

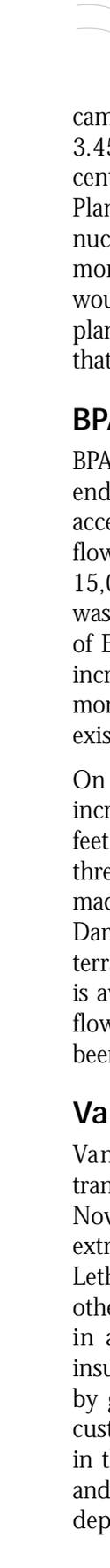
### **BPA is preparing Fish and Wildlife Implementation Plan EIS**

Many groups throughout the Northwest are developing plans and programs for the management, recovery and mitigation of the Columbia River Basin's fish and wildlife resources. These plans and programs will help shape a regional fish and wildlife policy. Since they will also guide BPA's mitigation and recovery efforts for the next decade or more, BPA needs to understand the potential environmental impacts and to ensure timely and efficient funding. In the last two decades, BPA spent over \$2 billion, collected from its ratepayers, on measures to mitigate and recover fish and wildlife in the Columbia River Basin. BPA currently funds over 70 percent of the fish and wildlife mitigation and recovery efforts in the basin. BPA is preparing an environmental impact statement that will examine the impacts that may arise from implementing the several different fish and wildlife policy directions being shaped by the various regional efforts. BPA will coordinate its Fish and Wildlife Implementation Plan EIS with these other ongoing processes.

BPA published a Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS (see *Journal*, November 1999) and plans to hold a scoping meeting in January. Details of that meeting will be announced in the next issue of the *Journal*.

### **BPA and Energy Northwest sign new agreement**

BPA and Energy Northwest executives signed a new memorandum of agreement (MOA) on Nov. 17. The goal of the MOA is to further reduce costs and increase output and reliability of Energy Northwest's Plant 2. The intent is to continue lowering the costs of energy production at the plant and follows a cost-cutting



campaign that has cut the cost of power at Plant 2 from 3.45 cents per kilowatt-hour in 1994 to roughly 2.3 cents today. Reaching a target of 1.78 cents would put Plant 2 in the top ten percent of the best performing nuclear plants and would save the region's ratepayers more than \$30 million annually. Energy Northwest would earn a \$7 million incentive fee. Energy Northwest plans to invest the fees earned into new business units that would further reduce Plant 2 costs.

### **BPA increases flows to help salmon**

BPA recently increased flows from Bonneville Dam so endangered Chum salmon returning to spawn have access to all available spawning habitat. BPA increased flows to 160,000 cubic feet per second, an increase in 15,000 cfs over the previous week's flows. The increase was executed in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which operates the dam. In addition to increasing the amount of spawning habitat, releasing more water raises the river level high enough to keep existing redds (salmon nests) submerged.

On Oct. 1, state fish and wildlife agencies asked BPA to increase flows below Bonneville Dam to 125,000 cubic feet per second. In that request, the agencies outlined three "terraces" of spawning habitat. The first terrace is made available to the fish when flows out of Bonneville Dam are 125,000 cubic feet per second. The second terrace is available at 145,000 cfs. And the last terrace is available at 160,000 cfs. With the latest increase in flows to 160,000 cfs, all usable spawning habitat has been made available.

### **Vandals cause electrical outage**

Vandals shot out insulators on a high-voltage transmission line that caused a one-hour power outage Nov. 8 in Cascade Locks, Ore. Downed power lines are extremely dangerous because they may result in fires. Lethal ground voltages can kill or injure the vandals or others in the area. BPA has spent as much as \$500,000 in a single year just to replace transmission line insulators and other hardware damaged or destroyed by gunshot vandalism. These costs get passed on to customers and ratepayers. Vandalism also may result in the possible disruption of essential services — fire and police departments and ambulance services — that depend on reliable electric service. BPA created the

Crime Witness program in 1994 to involve the public in stopping crime that could potentially cause power outages. In 1999, a total of 202 insulator units were replaced, representing an 88 percent decrease from the 1,723 units replaced in an average year prior to the implementation of the Crime Witness Program.

### **Facts about the electric power system and Y2K**

A recent television movie contained a fictional disaster based on what was characterized as "cascading." A character in the film explained that as one electric power system goes out, it overloads the next system and creates a domino effect. This is not based in reality. While power outages are not expected for Jan. 1, 2000, any that might occur would be contained, not nationwide. There are three main transmission grids in the U.S. — the East, the West and Texas. BPA's grid is part of the Western System's Coordinating Council (WSCC) main grid. Generators in the WSCC instantly help each other when load or generation losses occur. In the worst case, in which one or more control areas fail, the system automatically disconnects them to localize problems. "Safety net" systems drop load at some sites to preserve the bulk transmission and generation and keep the lights on for the majority of WSCC customers. Each portion then reconnects to the larger grid as local problems are solved.

The plot of the same made-for-TV movie centered on a Y2K-caused nuclear plant meltdown. Computers can't cause U.S. nuclear plants to melt down because the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) requires that the plants be manually operated, not computer operated. Computers are used to provide information but do not make decisions. There is no cruise control in a nuclear plant. Water cooling systems, of which there are several, can be manually manipulated. If Energy Northwest's Nuclear Plant 2 lost use of its cooling towers, operators would fall back on spray ponds, which will cool the plant for 30 days. All systems can be run manually. There is extreme conservatism in design and multiple redundancy in safety systems. Like other nuclear plants across the country, Nuclear Plant 2 has been thoroughly checked for Y2K concerns and pronounced ready by the NRC.

# PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

## STATUS REPORTS

**Big Eddy-Ostrander Vegetation Management EA.** Ore. — To control vegetation on two segments of the 500- kV transmission line right-of-way. One segment is from Lolo Pass to near Parkdale. The other segment is east of Parkdale. An EA is being prepared. Call to be added to the mail list.

**Fish and Wildlife Implementation Plan EIS.** Regionwide — To examine the impacts that may arise from implementing one of the fish and wildlife policy directions being considered in the ongoing regional processes. Scoping is underway with a scoping meeting to be scheduled soon. Call to be added to the mail list.

**Fourmile Hill Geothermal Development Project EIS (Calpine).** No. Calif. — A geothermal power plant and new transmission line have been proposed on U.S. Forest Service land in the Klamath and Modoc forests. BLM has the lead. BPA is a cooperating agency. A final EIS and summary are available. Call to receive a copy.

**IDFG Snake River Chinook Captive Rearing.** Idaho — To fund Idaho Department of Fish and Game's captive rearing project for Endangered Species Act-listed Snake River spring/summer chinook salmon. The EA is being finalized. A FONSI is anticipated.

**Johnson Creek Artificial Propagation Enhancement.** Idaho — Development of a native chinook salmon broodstock for rearing of acclimated smolts to preserve and recover the population. An EA is being prepared. Call to be added to the mail list.

**Northwest Regional Power Facility.** Wash. — To construct a combustion turbine near Creston. The final EIS (#2887) and a supplement analysis are available. Call to receive a copy.

**Telephone Flats Geothermal Project EIS (CalEnergy).** No. Calif. — A geothermal power plant and new transmission line have been proposed on U.S. Forest Service land in the Modoc Forest. BLM has the lead and BPA is a cooperating agency. The final EIS (#0298) and summary are available. Call to receive a copy.

**NEW! Tucannon River Spring Chinook Captive broodstock Program EA.** Wash. — To rear and spawn broodstock, raise their progeny and release smolts into the Tucannon River to quickly rebuild the run. An EA is being prepared. Call to be added to the mail list.

**Vegetation Management Program EIS.** Regionwide — To develop a vegetation management program while maintaining a safe and reliable transmission system. The final EIS is being prepared. Call to be added to the mail

## CLOSE OF COMMENT

Residential Exchange Settlement — **Jan. 7, 2000**

EA: Environmental Assessment, EIS: Environmental Impact Statement, FONSI: Finding of No Significant Impact, ROD: Record of Decision

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO GET INVOLVED: The Journal is a monthly newsletter of the Bonneville Power Administration for customers and interested publics. To order documents, call: 800-622-4520 or (503) 230-3478 (Portland). For questions/comments call: (503) 230-3478 (Portland) or 800-622-4519. Written comments may be sent to: BPA, P.O. Box 12999, Portland, OR 97212. Public Involvement, Internet, E-mail address comment@BPA.gov, BPA home page:<http://www.bpa.gov>