

Journal

February 2015

BPA lineman shares life-saving skills in Suriname

Some might have questioned Kurk Shriver's sanity when he signed up to instruct linemen along the outskirts of a dense jungle in the Republic of Suriname.

Shriver, a lineman on the BPA barehand crew, already spends roughly 200 days a year traveling throughout the Northwest. The 12,000-mile round trip to Suriname would mean an additional three weeks away from his wife, Jody, and his voluntary absence from work would consume his paid vacation. Plus, there was the threat of venomous snakes, swarms of disease-carrying mosquitos and the stress of taking rounds of pills to prevent malaria, as well as hepatitis and yellow fever inoculations. Not to mention the challenge of conducting electrical training while negotiating a language barrier.

But when Shriver was asked to join a group of Northwest linemen on a mission to teach a transmission, distribution and safety course to South American utility workers, this seasoned lineman says "no" would have been the crazy answer.

"If I have knowledge that can help someone be a father or husband another day because they didn't get hurt or killed at work, then it is worth it for me to help," says Shriver. "It's worth it to both my wife and me."

The purpose of the training course was to pass along American transmission and distribution practices that have prevented countless deaths and injuries.

The idea for the course came from former BPA foreman III, Brady Hansen, who now works at Avista Utilities in Spokane, Wash. Hansen was working at Avista's lineman school when a group of electrical engineers from Suriname toured the facility. Hansen learned that the safety protocols and equipment that are so common in the U.S. are nearly nonexistent in the small South American country.

Hansen recruited Shriver, as well as Rick Irvine, a retired foreman from Avista and current instructor at the lineman school, and Joe Baker, a lineman from Douglas County PUD in Washington. They organized a train-the-trainers session at the government utility Energiebedrijven Suriname, or EBS, in the nation's capital of Paramaribo.



Shriver holds a bolt from a Suriname transmission tower. During the course of Shriver's training exercise and climbing inspections, the trainers discovered some major reliability issues, including loose and missing bolts like this one.

A large portion of the country does not have electricity service. The urban areas were energized in the early 1900s. But since then, there have been limited funds for expansion to remote areas or improvements to existing infrastructure.

"They've been working with electricity for a long time," says Shriver, but the first few days of training reminded him of what it must have been like 80 years ago in the U.S., when linemen were getting hurt but didn't know why. "I could look at these men and see burns and scars from their accidents. Some of them knew why they got hurt and some didn't."

Shriver and his fellow trainers provided the Surinamese with North American wood-pole climbing gear and fall-protection items.

"They were donated by International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers union members, contractors and North American businesses sympathetic to the plight of the Suriname linemen," says Shriver. "In the past, as fall-protection requirements have changed, people would



destroy the outdated gear. Both individuals and businesses now recognize that you can save a life by getting these items to people who have no protection at all.”

The show-and-tell served as an opportunity for utility workers to see gear and methods that may serve as low-cost, safe alternatives to an unsteady ladder or areas a bucket truck can't access.

The trainers showed local linemen how to replace insulators on the top position of the double-circuit tower. Shriver says they now have what they need to inspect towers for loose steel. They can also assess the condition of the towers and the hardware, and identify inadequate or missing parts.

The Surinamese also learned safe electrical grounding methods.

“One lineman thought the line was safe to work on and didn't understand why his co-worker received a shock and fell from the pole,” says Shriver. After the training, the lineman understood what had gone wrong. “Now, he can protect his co-workers to make sure they're never in that situation again.”

Shriver says over multiple years, EBS workers will continue to receive training from U.S. linemen volunteers. The next session is tentatively scheduled for fall 2015 and will likely cover how to safely rig towers for dead-end tension. They will also cover splicing and adding new conductor.

Already, more than 100 Surinamese completed the training.

Awards celebrate the behind-the-scenes work of managing FCRPS dams

It was a day for recognizing the talent and teamwork that keep the 31 dams of the Federal Columbia River Power System humming safely and reliably for the region.

The top executives of the three agencies — Administrator Elliot Mainzer of the Bonneville Power Administration, Regional Director Lorri Lee of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and Brig. Gen. John Kem of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers — gathered to honor the stars and unsung heroes of 2014 at the Dec. 16 meeting of the FCRPS Joint Operating Committee in Boise.

The JOC is the decision-making body that coordinates the staff and resources of the three agencies to steward the care — from daily operations to major infrastructure improvements — of the federal hydroelectric facilities in the Columbia Basin. Through the committee, which is nearly two decades old, the agencies work together to ensure these valuable resources continue to provide low-cost, reliable power to the Northwest for years to come.

BPA had two winners at the FCRPS Awards: engineers Kathy Hacker and Sandra Takabayashi of the Federal Hydro Projects team in Power Services.

Hacker, who joined BPA in 2000 from the Seattle District of the Corps and retired at the end of December, received the FCRPS Meritorious Service Award for her contributions to the Capital Working Group, which evaluates and recommends major investments to the hydroelectric system.

“In her role as Large Capital Program manager, Kathy worked effectively to build consensus within the group that represents a diverse cross-section of the FCRPS,” Mainzer said. “Her thoughtful expertise and deliberative leadership have maintained a positive meeting atmosphere for all members, while ensuring that needed projects are funded and program execution remains high.”



“Many Uses/Multiple Purpose Mission: Trusted Stewardship,” FCRPS winning photo by Sandra Takabayashi.

Deputy Regional Director Steven Jarsky of Reclamation, one of the original members of the JOC, received the year's top honor, the FCRPS Hydro Hero award.

Jarsky was honored for outstanding contributions, collaborative leadership and superior management of the Grand Coulee Dam World Class Hydro Team initiative. Before his recent retirement after 39 years and nine months of federal service, Jarsky led improvements in processes and business practices, infrastructure rehabilitation and knowledge management at the largest hydroelectric plant in the United States.

Lee said Jarsky's expertise, vision and collaborative skills fit the bill for the king-sized special assignment: “He stepped up and did an amazing job, and today Coulee is on a different path to addressing the things that need to be addressed.”

In the FCRPS photo contest, Takabayashi snapped the winning image in the category of “Many Uses/Multiple Purpose Mission: Trusted Stewardship,” at the navigation locks of The Dalles Dam.

2014: A high-visibility year for BPA's synchrophasor program

2014 was a big year for BPA's synchrophasor program and Dmitry Kosterev — the program's godfather. The Western Electricity Coordinating Council, the federal government, and more recently, the North American SynchroPhasor Initiative recognized BPA's pioneering work with synchrophasors and Kosterev's shepherding of it.

When the calendar turned at the beginning of last year, BPA was celebrating its first Platts Global Energy Award, which it won in December of 2013 for deploying the most sophisticated synchrophasor network in North America. Synchrophasors, or phasor measurement units, are shoe-box sized devices that transmit precise current, frequency and voltage readings that are time-stamped using GPS.

BPA, which owns and operates three-quarters of the high-voltage transmission in the region, now receives power system readings from key substations and large wind-generation sites, which give operators a more dynamic view of the Northwest power system.

And the accolades continued to roll in after the Platts award.

In March, BPA recognized both its synchrophasor team and Kosterev with an Administrator's Excellence Award, its most prestigious honor. Kosterev won a technology innovation award for his technical oversight of synchrophasor deployment and work related to grid optimization, outage assessment, grid modeling and visualization tools. And the more than 100 employees who designed, tested and deployed the synchrophasor network were honored with an "Extraordinary Team Accomplishment" award.

In June, WECC, a regional entity responsible for coordinating and promoting the reliability of the bulk electric system (infrastructure that connects with neighboring systems) in the Western states, named Kosterev an "Outstanding Contributor of the Year" for his technical role in developing and sharing tools for generator, load and system modeling.

"Dmitry has made significant contributions toward our modeling capabilities," says CEO Jim Robb of WECC. "And he continues to play an instrumental role in WECC's modeling success."

Also in June, Kosterev became one of 12 federal employees in the nation to receive a prestigious Arthur S. Flemming Award, which honors outstanding federal employees for their contributions to the government. He was nominated for his overall vision and technical guidance on BPA's nationally recognized synchrophasor project.

"Dmitry's a superstar in our industry," says Vickie VanZandt, synchrophasor program manager for Peak Reliability and former senior vice president of Transmission Services at BPA. "His technical vision, expertise and leadership have helped BPA develop a more reliable, stable and efficient power system. The resulting improvements have been a tremendous benefit to the entire Northwest, North America and the industry as a whole."

But faster than a phasor measurement unit transmits power system data, Kosterev gives credit to his team members and predecessors: "It's unfortunate that most of these awards recognize only one person, as this is truly a team effort."

In October, the North American SynchroPhasor Initiative, a work group dedicated to improving power system reliability through wide-area measurement, monitoring and control, named BPA "Outstanding Utility of the Year" for its accomplishments within the synchrophasor community. NASPI called BPA a pioneer in conceptualizing, developing, adopting and championing the use of synchrophasor technology for greater security and economy on the bulk power system. It also recognized BPA's staff as "visionary about synchrophasor technology use, effective in technology deployment, and generous as leaders and teachers to the utility community."

NASPI is a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Energy, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation and electric utility industry experts, researchers, vendors, consultants and academics.

Public Involvement [Updates & Notices]

BPA PROJECTS

Quarterly Business Review [Regionwide]

The next Quarterly Business Review will be held Feb. 3. To view the draft agenda, go to www.bpa.gov/goto/QBR and click on Financial Overview.

Northwest energy market assessment [Regionwide]

BPA is participating in the Northwest Power Pool's Market Assessment and Coordination Committee, or MC. A collaboration of 19 public and investor-owned utilities from across the NWPP footprint, the MC is considering the design for a within-hour energy market, called a security constrained economic dispatch. BPA is holding a public process to

consider its participation in the SCED design proposal being developed by the MC. BPA's next public meeting is Feb. 18. www.bpa.gov/goto/MarketAssessment.

Integrated Program Review [Regionwide]

BPA will be holding a follow-up workshop to the Integrated Program Review, called IPR2, on Feb. 24. The purpose of this workshop is to provide customers and interested parties an opportunity to weigh in on scenarios for shifting conservation funding from capital to expense starting in FY16. This workshop will be followed by a comment period that will close in early March. A final decision is expected before the BP-16 final proposal is issued.

Meeting materials will be posted prior to the workshop. For more information, contact Mary Hawken at 503-230-3421.

BP-16 Rate Case [Regionwide]

BPA is accepting comments through Feb. 26 on its consolidated power and transmission rate proceeding, BP-16, to set rates for the fiscal year 2016–2017 rate period. BPA is proposing a 6.7 percent average wholesale power rate increase and a 5.6 percent transmission rate increase. BPA expects to file a final rate proposal and the administrator's record of decision with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in late July 2015. BPA will request approval for the rates to be effective Oct. 1, 2015. www.bpa.gov/goto/BP16.

POWER

Conservation billing credits

During BPA's Energy Efficiency Post-2011 Review, customers expressed an interest in pursuing conservation activities that do not depend on funding through the Energy Efficiency Incentive. In response, BPA plans to offer conservation billing credits during the 2016–2017 rate period. The program focuses on BPA customer conservation activities and their potential to reduce the administrator's need to acquire other conservation resources. BPA has concluded a public process to change BPA's conservation billing-credit policy and develop billing-credit contract language for this program. Customers must decide by April 2015 if they want to pursue conservation billing credits. www.bpa.gov/power/pl/regionaldialogue/implementation/documents/#CBC.

Transmission

Hooper Springs Transmission Project [Caribou County, Idaho]

BPA has released the final environmental impact statement for a proposed 115-kilovolt line in Caribou County, Idaho. The line would improve system reliability in the southern portion of Lower Valley Energy's transmission system and address ongoing load growth in southeast Idaho and northwestern Wyoming. BPA accepted comments on the supplemental draft environmental impact statement in summer 2014 and expects to issue a record of decision by the end of February or early March. www.bpa.gov/goto/HooperSprings.

Environment, Fish and Wildlife

Eightmile Ranch coho acclimation pond [Okanogan County, Wash.]

BPA and the U.S. Forest Service are seeking comments on a draft environmental assessment on the proposed construction and operation of a coho acclimation pond at Eightmile Ranch. The proposed pond would be located on the Chewuch River, about eight miles north of Winthrop, Wash. BPA will accept comments through Feb. 9. http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/EightmileAcclimation.

Kootenai River restoration at Bonners Ferry [Boundary County, Idaho]

BPA is hosting an open house in Bonners Ferry, Idaho, on Feb. 18 to discuss the draft environmental assessment on the proposal to fund a project by the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho. The project would restore and enhance portions of the Kootenai River near Bonners Ferry. http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/BonnersFerry/. **SEE CALENDAR**

Crooked River Valley Rehabilitation Project [Idaho County, Idaho]

BPA is cooperating with the Nez Perce Tribe, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to prepare a final environmental impact statement for the Crooked River Valley Rehabilitation Project. The project proposes to move dredge tailings, reconstruct a portion of stream channel, install woody bank structure, replant native plants and construct side channels and wetlands along two miles of the Crooked River to improve fish habitat and water quality. BPA expects the final environmental impact statement will be available in February at http://data.ecosystem-management.org/nepaweb/nepa_project_exp.php?project=40648.

Jordan/Malheur Resource Area Jonesboro Diversion Dam Replacement Project [Malheur County, Ore.]

BPA is cooperating with the Bureau of Land Management to prepare a final environmental assessment for the Jordan/Malheur Resource Area Jonesboro Diversion Dam Replacement Project. The BLM is proposing to grant right-of-way access to the Burns Paiute Tribe and BPA would fund the removal of an aging irrigation diversion dam and replace it with a new one. A functioning diversion dam would help improve fish passage and facilitate continued management of the Burns Paiute Tribe's adjacent wildlife mitigation property. The final assessment can be found at http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/vale/plans/files/DOI-BLM-OR-V040-2013-007-EA_Jonesboro.pdf

Trestle Bay Restoration Project [Clatsop County, Ore.]

BPA is cooperating with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to prepare a final environmental assessment for the Trestle Bay Restoration Project. The Corps is proposing to breach portions of the Trestle Bay jetty to improve habitat for juvenile salmon and steelhead. BPA expects to have a draft of the final assessment posted for a 30-day public comment period beginning in Feb. 13 at www.nwp.usace.army.mil/Media/Announcements.aspx.

CLOSE OF COMMENT

Feb. 9, Eightmile Ranch coho acclimation pond

Feb. 26, BP-16 rate proceeding

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Quarterly Business Review

- **Feb. 3**, 10 a.m. to 2:15 p.m., BPA Rates Hearing Room, 1201 N.E. Lloyd Blvd., Suite 200, Portland, Ore.

BPA's NWPP MC SCED Public Meeting

- **Feb. 18**, 9 a.m. to noon, BPA Rates Hearing Room, 1201 N.E. Lloyd Blvd., Suite 200, Portland, Ore.

Kootenai River restoration open house

- **Feb. 18**, 5 to 7 p.m., Boundary County Extension Office, 6447 Kootenai St., Bonners Ferry, Idaho

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Information on other projects under environmental review is available at www.bpa.gov/goto/NEPA.

For information about the National Environmental Policy Act in general, go to www.bpa.gov/goto/environmentalplanning.

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. Email 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.

