

## Land conservation boosts Oregon fish

Four land acquisitions in the Willamette Valley funded by BPA played a role in the successful recovery and recent delisting of the Oregon chub from the Endangered Species Act.

On Feb. 17, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced that the diminutive minnow became the first fish to join 28 other species that have successfully emerged from an endangered status under the Act.

Richard Hannan, the deputy director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Pacific Region, noted that it took a little more than two decades of “partner-driven conservation” in a concerted effort by state, federal and tribal entities and private organizations.

“Today is a great day for the Oregon chub, but it’s also a great day for the Endangered Species Act,” Hannan said, speaking at the announcement ceremony in the William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge in Corvallis, Ore.

The Oregon chub was listed under the ESA in 1993 with a population estimated to be only 1,000. Since then, the population has exploded to more than 140,000.

“Collaborating and applying the best possible science helped recover the Oregon chub and benefited many other species as well,” said Curt Melcher, director of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. “Our success here is a good reminder that by working together species recovery is possible.”

One of the main reasons for the decline of chub was loss of suitable habitat in the Willamette Valley. Since the early 2000s, BPA has worked with the McKenzie River Trust to secure four parcels of land in Oregon chub habitat areas for conservation purposes. BPA also helped fund major habitat restoration work on the lands in recent years.

“The work we do with our many partners in the Willamette Valley is focused on an ecosystem-level approach, where we are mitigating for the impacts of federal dams on the Willamette River and its tributaries,” said Dorie Welch, BPA’s coordinator for the Willamette Wildlife Habitat Agreement. “While we’re often focused on wildlife in the Willamette, improved habitat conditions benefit a range



*The Oregon chub was first listed under the Endangered Species Act in 1993, when the population had plummeted to an estimated 1,000. Since then, the minnow has rebounded to more than 140,000, leading to the decision to delist the fish. (Courtesy of Rick Swart, ODFW)*

of species. And maintaining or improving riparian- or stream-adjacent habitat has direct benefits for fish, too, including the Oregon chub.”

The McKenzie River Trust formed in 1989 to protect the biological integrity and water quality of the McKenzie River, a tributary of the Willamette. Since its inception, the trust has protected more than 4,000 acres in western Oregon.

“Investments from BPA’s Fish and Wildlife Program over the last decade have played a critical role in the conservation of anchor habitats for Oregon chub and chinook salmon,” said Joe Moll, executive director of the McKenzie River Trust. “More importantly, the recovery of Oregon chub signals a healthy watershed, something that benefits all of us on a daily basis.”

In a statement released as part of the delisting announcement, U.S. Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell noted the shared goal among a broad group of interests.

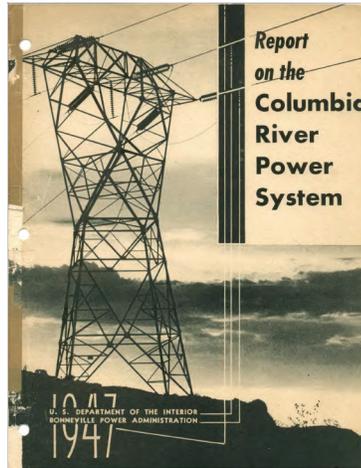
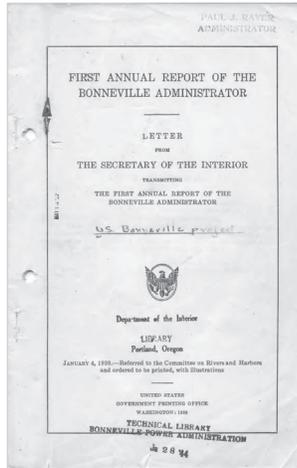
“This effort succeeded because of an extraordinary partnership between federal and state agencies, land-owners and other stakeholders, who brought this species and ecosystem back from the brink of extinction in just over 20 years,” she said.



“We’re now managing the river in a smarter way, which means better opportunities for recreation, a boost for salmon recovery and improved water quality — all of which are good news for Oregon and its economy.”

Efforts to maintain and improve conditions for Oregon chub and other species in the Willamette Basin continue.

“This doesn’t mean that all of a sudden it’s ‘hands off,’ and we never need to do anything for (chub),” said Paul Henson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife’s director for Oregon. “But we can at least put them back in the group of species that need attention but don’t need to go into the emergency room.”



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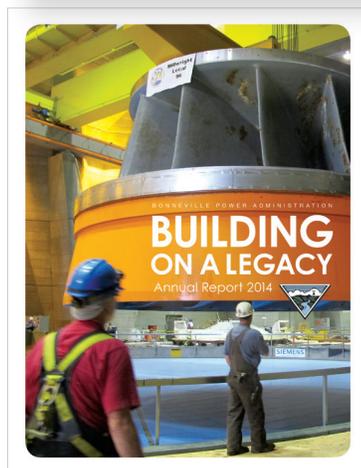
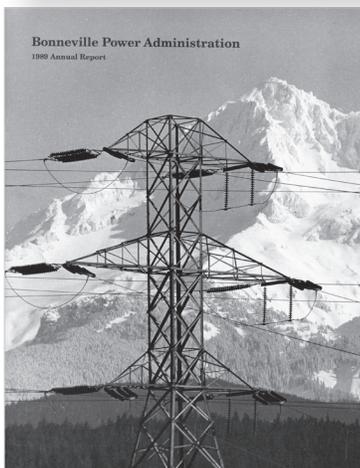
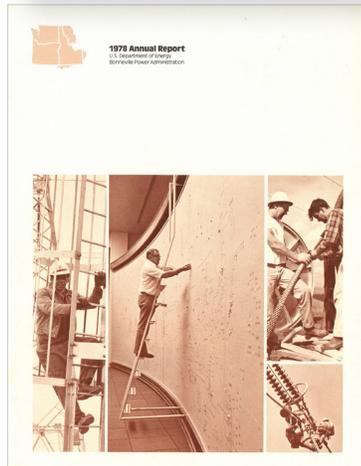
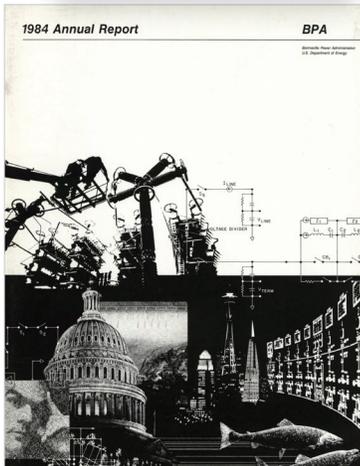
Since President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Bonneville Project Act in 1937, BPA administrators have used the annual report to share their thoughts about the year and describe BPA’s financial performance in detail. Now you can view all 77 reports from your computer at [www.bpa.gov](http://www.bpa.gov).

Each annual report covers BPA’s fiscal year, which today runs from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30, and provides financial highlights, management discussion and analysis, and financial statements. It also provides a letter from the BPA administrator that summarizes the year’s accomplishments.

It’s in these letters from the administrator that BPA’s rich history unfolds. That includes bringing electricity to all corners of the Northwest in the 1930s and ‘40s, supporting the war effort that led to the allies winning World War II; and signing the Columbia River Treaty with Canada in the early ‘60s, which has provided over 50 years of flood control, electricity and other benefits to both nations.

In 1970, BPA completed the Pacific Direct Current Intertie that allowed the region to begin sharing power with our neighbors to the south. In 1980, Congress passed the Northwest Power Act that gave rise to BPA’s development of the largest energy conservation and salmon recovery programs in the country.

More recent annual reports highlight BPA’s effort to sustain and expand the Federal Columbia River Power and Transmission System and connect more than 4,500 megawatts of renewable and carbon-free wind power to our transmission system.





## Westview Team 1 of Portland wins BPA Science Bowl

For the second year in a row, Westview High School Team 1 of Beaverton, Ore., won the BPA Regional Science Bowl and will advance to the National Science Bowl.

Westview went undefeated through 16 rounds in the competition, which was held in early February. Sunset High School Team 1, also of Beaverton, came in second. Jesuit High School Team 1 of Portland came in third.

The previous weekend, Stoller Middle School Team 1 of Beaverton, Ore., won the middle school division of the BPA Regional Science Bowl to advance to nationals. Science Infinity Club Team 1 of Bellevue, Wash., came in second with Xenon Science Group of Bellevue, Wash., taking third.

For 24 years, BPA has hosted the nation's largest regional science bowl as part of its commitment to encouraging young minds to engage in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. This helps to ensure a future pool of engineers, scientists and innovators so critical to the energy industry.

Teams representing both public and private schools traveled from as far as Republic, Wash., and Ashland, Ore., to compete. Many practiced for months, in groups and individually, for the competition, which is as intense as any sporting event.

The morning kicked off with a round-robin contest of eight rounds that whittled the teams from 70 to 16. The advancing teams spent the afternoon competing in a double-elimination contest that could last up to nine rounds. For each match, teams of four students sat opposite each other, using buzzers to field a variety of science-based questions.

The top individual performers in the morning rounds — those who correctly answered the most questions — were recognized as all-stars. See the list of all-stars at [www.bpa.gov](http://www.bpa.gov).

The high school students not only competed for the trip to Washington, D.C., for the National Science Bowl in late April, but also for potential scholarships. Several colleges and universities throughout the region have set aside a total of \$134,000 in scholarships that members of the top three teams may claim.

The BPA Regional Science Bowl is powered by more than 200 volunteers from BPA and partner agencies, many of whom have volunteered for 10 years or more. The event is sponsored by the University of Portland, Google, Vernier Software & Technology, and Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories Inc.

## Watch us work

### DECOMMISSIONING ABANDONED ROADS TO PROTECT FISH

In the winter of 1996, a series of storms and floods damaged abandoned logging roads in the mountainous region of the Clearwater National Forest in Idaho, sending large amounts of fine sediment downhill and fouling critical salmon and steelhead stream habitat.

The abandoned roads that crisscrossed the landscape were thought to be stable since they were overgrown with vegetation. Not only were they unstable, they were harming fish by significantly changing the hydrology of the landscape and allowing sediment into streams.

See how the Nez Perce Tribe, after identifying the problem as one of the key limiting factors for increasing abundance of salmon and steelhead in the area, teamed with the U.S. Forest Service and BPA to address the issue.

**TO WATCH** go to [www.bpa.gov/news](http://www.bpa.gov/news).

# Public Involvement [updates & Notices]

## BPA PROJECTS

### Integrated Program Review 2 [Regionwide]

BPA is seeking input through March 13 on the issues in the IPR2, including the potential to move the Energy Efficiency capital program to expense starting in the 2016–2017 rate period. BPA held a workshop Feb. 24 to examine certain spending levels and various scenarios for making the capital-to-expense transition and the potential implications for Energy Efficiency programs and wholesale power rates. Materials from the workshop can be found on the 2014 IPR webpage. For information: [www.bpa.gov/Finance/FinancialPublicProcesses/IPR/Pages/IPR-2014.aspx](http://www.bpa.gov/Finance/FinancialPublicProcesses/IPR/Pages/IPR-2014.aspx).

### BP-16 Rate Case [Regionwide]

BPA is conducting a 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. The formal rate-setting process will culminate in the filing of 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. For information, go to [www.bpa.gov/goto/BP16](http://www.bpa.gov/goto/BP16).

### 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 scheduled for March 16. For information, go to [www.bpa.gov/goto/MarketAssessment](http://www.bpa.gov/goto/MarketAssessment).

## Power

### Conservation billing credits

In response to customer interest in conservation activities that do not depend on funding through the Energy Efficiency Incentive, BPA plans to offer conservation billing credits during the 2016–2017 rate period, which begins in October 2015. Customers must decide by April 2015 if they want to pursue conservation billing credits. The program focuses on BPA customer conservation activities and their potential to reduce the administrator's need to acquire other conservation resources. For information, go to [www.bpa.gov/power/pl/regionaldialogue/implementation/documents/#CBC](http://www.bpa.gov/power/pl/regionaldialogue/implementation/documents/#CBC).

## Transmission

### Hooper Springs Transmission Project [Caribou County, Idaho]

BPA completed the final environmental impact statement and expects to issue a record of decision in March on the 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. For information, go to [www.bpa.gov/goto/HooperSprings](http://www.bpa.gov/goto/HooperSprings).

## Environment, Fish and Wildlife

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

BPA is accepting comments through March 5 on 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. For information, go to [http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental\\_services/Document\\_Library/BonnersFerry/](http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/BonnersFerry/).

### Crooked River Valley Rehabilitation Project [Idaho County, Idaho]

BPA completed the final environmental impact statement (EIS) and a draft Forest Service Record of Decision (ROD) was released to the public on Feb. 25, 2015 on this Nez Perce Tribe proposal to rehabilitate a stream damaged by mining on Forest Service lands. The Forest Service will accept objections to their draft ROD through early April. BPA is a cooperating agency on the final EIS and expects to decide on whether to fund this habitat improvement project in May. For information, go to [http://data.ecosystem-management.org/nepaweb/nepa\\_project\\_exp.php?project=40648](http://data.ecosystem-management.org/nepaweb/nepa_project_exp.php?project=40648).

## CLOSE OF COMMENT

- **March 5**, Kootenai River restoration at Bonners Ferry, Idaho
- **March 13**, Integrated Program Review 2

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### BPA's NWPP MC SCED Public Meeting

- **March 16**, 1 to 4 p.m., BPA Rates Hearing Room  
1201 N.E. Lloyd Blvd., Suite 200, Portland, Ore.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Information on other projects under environmental review is available at [www.bpa.gov/goto/NEPA](http://www.bpa.gov/goto/NEPA).

For information about the National Environmental Policy Act in general, go to [www.bpa.gov/goto/environmentalplanning](http://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](mailto:comment@bpa.gov). BPA home page: [www.bpa.gov](http://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](http://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.

