

Thompson named VP of Northwest Requirements Marketing



Administrator Elliot Mainzer selected Garry Thompson as the Bonneville Power Administration's vice president of Northwest Requirements Marketing. Thompson will begin his new position this fall.

"I am thrilled to have Garry Thompson join the Power Services leadership team, where he brings with him years of diverse managerial and leadership experience in power products and

services, energy efficiency and strong customer service," said Mark Gendron, senior vice president of Power Services. "I have known and worked with him for over 20 years and know that BPA and the region will be well served with him in this important role of service to our customers."

As vice president of Northwest Requirements Marketing, Thompson will be responsible for marketing power, primarily from 31 federal dams, to more than 140 Bonneville utility

customers in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, western Montana and parts of Nevada, Wyoming, Utah and Northern California. BPA currently provides about one-third of the electric power used in the Northwest.

"I am excited to work in my new role," Thompson said. "The position will allow me to continue excellent delivery of the value our carbon-free assets provide to our customers. I look forward to leading a dedicated group of individuals working on diverse issues and helping them navigate the changing electricity industry."

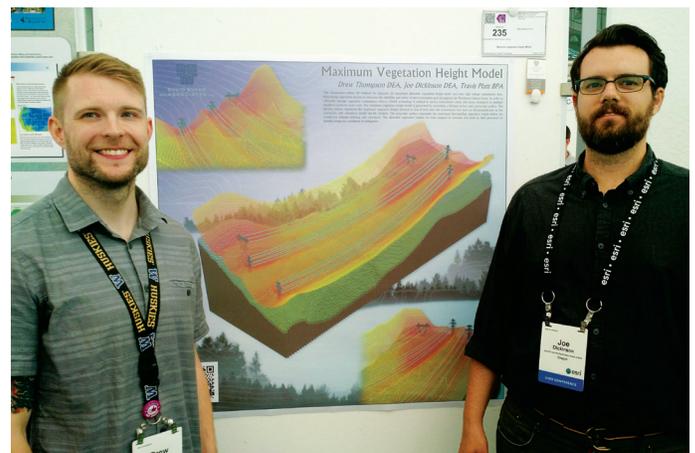
Previously, Thompson was BPA's power customer service manager overseeing account executives who serve BPA's power customers. These customers represent approximately \$2.5 billion in annual energy sales.

Thompson also has served as a senior account executive in BPA's Spokane office, and over the course of several years worked as a power account executive for over 30 customers. After earning a bachelor's degree in urban and regional planning from Eastern Washington University, he worked for the City of Coeur d'Alene, City of Lewiston, Spokane County and Kootenai Electric Co-op. He joined BPA in 1986.

GIS and remote sensing team recognized by industry leaders

The hard work and expertise of BPA staff were on display for industry leaders and peers in July at the 2015 Esri User Conference, in San Diego, Calif. Esri, an industry leader in geographic information system software, facilitated the annual event, which drew over 16,000 attendees this year.

Drew Thompson, Joe Dickinson and Travis Platt from BPA's GIS and Remote Sensing (LiDAR) Team developed a maximum vegetation height model, which utilizes 3-D contours to represent the maximum allowable height of trees, shrubs and other vegetation near high-voltage transmission lines. In order to efficiently manage vegetation maintenance, LiDAR technology is used to survey transmission assets and to assess clearances against models of different load scenarios for the line. The allowable vegetation heights are



GIS Photo Caption: Drew Thompson (left) and Joe Dickinson (right) from BPA's GIS and Remote Sensing (LiDAR) Team present their poster at the 2015 Esri User Conference.



mapped as contours and used by field personnel to identify dangerous conditions requiring action. The tool increases the focus on potential problem areas, improving the reliability of the system.

Out of thousands of maps and models that were presented, BPA's vegetation height model stood out among the attendees and received praise during the keynote address by Jack Dangermond, president of Esri.

"In the world of utilities and telecommunications, GIS has moved beyond asset management to [include] analytics," said Dangermond. "This beautiful map is exceptional in the sense that it's taking LiDAR data and overlaying it with transmission lines to see if there is vegetation conflict."

Reliability is a cornerstone of BPA's vision, and compliance with reliability standards is critical to operational excellence. The new tools created by the GIS and Remote Sensing Team are one example of the work across BPA's business lines to deliver quality and certainty to our customers.

BPA research aids Columbia River white sturgeon



Sturgeon Photo Caption: BPA fish biologist Scott Bettin (left) and Brad Cady of the Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, catch an eight-foot long Columbia River white sturgeon below Bonneville Dam. The scientists are studying sturgeon to help the ancient species thrive.

As Northwest scientists work to understand why 80 large sturgeon suddenly died in the Columbia River last month, a BPA research project focused on sturgeon sexual maturity attempts to gain insight into the reproductive cycle of the ancient fish.

The study, now in its 15th year, examines overall health, impact of sea lions and frequency of capture in the catch-and-release fishery below Bonneville Dam.

As part of the project, each year BPA biologists capture 60 sturgeon with the help of researchers from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The large fish are usually anywhere from five to 10 feet long and can weigh hundreds of pounds.

Once caught, scientists check for tags to see if the sturgeon have been captured before (some have been caught and assessed up to six times). Biologists also biopsy reproductive organs to find out when the fish will spawn. The information is analyzed and catalogued, and over time it paints a picture of how well the river's white sturgeon population is performing.

"One thing we've learned is that female sturgeon do not sexually mature until they're at least 18 to 32 years old," says Dave Roberts, a BPA fish biologist. "We also know females only spawn about once every three years. That's one reason a big die-off of older fish, like we saw this year, is especially troubling."

Scientists also know sturgeon spawning success is best during high-flow years when the river creates turbulence over rough substrate or rocky river bottoms. This year's low, warm water likely means many fish didn't spawn. This became evident during last month's research when scientists found a high number of females that had not spawned.

"The eggs of females will simply be resorbed back into the fish's system. They'll wait for better spawning conditions, hopefully next year," says Roberts.

After capturing the huge fish and taking biopsies, biologists also check out its overall health. They say it's common to find old fish hooks stuck inside the animal.

"We often find fishing tackle that has passed through the digestive track with lines protruding from the vent," says Roberts. "In fact, during the last study we found one fish that had three hooks lodged in its system, but we could only remove two before we released it back to the river."

Today BPA spends about \$1.5 million per year (including this study and others) to evaluate the fish in the lower Columbia River. The research offers insight on how scientists should manage the species that is the largest freshwater fish in America.

Researchers estimate there could be as many as 1 million white sturgeon (all age classes) from Bonneville Dam to the Columbia River's mouth. However, with none of the fish spawning until they are at least 18 years old, protecting the river's older fish seems imperative.

"It's a resource that's not replaceable," says Roberts. "Those big spawners, we know how valuable they really are."

Miller named VP of Engineering and Technical Services



The Bonneville Power Administration has selected Mike Miller to be its vice president of Engineering and Technical Services. He will begin his new position Sept. 6, 2015.

“Mike possesses a unique blend of great technical and leadership skills along with on-the-ground experience in several Engineering and Technical Services arenas that make him an outstanding selection for this role,” said

Richard Shaheen, senior vice president for Transmission Services. “I look forward to Mike positioning this vital part of Transmission for even greater success and delivery of excellence to our customers in the months to come.”

As the leader of BPA’s Engineering and Technical Services organization, Miller will have responsibility for implementing Transmission Services’ \$500 million capital program, providing technical support for the transmission maintenance

program and providing real property services to BPA. Miller also will serve as BPA’s principal engineer and key policy formulator leading the design, material specification, coordination, project management and construction of major transmission infrastructure projects necessary to sustain and improve the reliability of the existing system and incorporate new energy generation facilities.

“I am honored to be selected for this position and excited to lead Engineering and Technical Services,” Miller said. “I love this organization and its people and am eager to provide the long-term stability and leadership we need.”

Miller came to BPA as a student in 1992 in the substation outdoor design group, assisting in purchasing equipment as well as drafting for capital projects. He graduated from Central Washington University, earning a bachelor’s degree in electronic engineering technology. In July of 1994, he became a permanent BPA employee, working in the Protection Engineering Design group as an electrical engineer until 2002. At that time, he became the supervisor of the group, a position he held until 2010. Miller was then selected as the manager of System Control Engineering, a group comprised of eight sub-groups, including Protection Engineering Design. In August 2014, he accepted the role as the acting vice president of Engineering and Technical Services.



Helicopter takes off to assist crews on a line repair earlier this year.

Public Involvement [Updates & Notices]

BPA PROJECTS

BP-16 Rate Case [Regionwide]

BPA conducted a consolidated power and transmission rate proceeding, BP-16, to set rates for the fiscal year 2016–2017 rate period. The formal rate-setting process culminated in the filing of a final rate proposal, including the administrator's record of decision, with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in late July. BPA will request approval for the rates to be effective Oct. 1, 2015. For information, go to www.bpa.gov/goto/BP16.

POWER

Alcoa Remand Public Process [Regionwide]

BPA accepted public input and comment to assist in its response to the decision issued Sept. 18, 2014, by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. The ruling in *Industrial Customers of Northwest Utilities, et al. v. Bonneville Power Administration* related to BPA's contracts with its direct service industry customers. In its decision, the court instructed BPA to address four specific questions regarding service to Alcoa and the recovery of funds. BPA will issue a draft record of decision and open a comment period on Sept. 4, 2015. Comments received during the period will assist BPA in its decision-making before issuing a final record of decision on Dec. 11, 2015. For more information, go to www.bpa.gov/power/pl/regionaldialogue/implementation/Documents/DSI.SHTML.

TRANSMISSION

Midway-Moxee Rebuild and Midway-Grandview Upgrade Transmission Line Project [Benton and Yakima counties, Wash.]

BPA issued a draft environmental assessment for the proposed Midway-Moxee Rebuild and Midway-Grandview Upgrade Project in July. The 115-kV lines, which are deteriorating due to age and exposure to weather, need to be rebuilt to ensure reliable electric service. BPA is the lead agency on the draft EA and the BLM is a cooperating agency. BPA will accept comments on the draft EA through Sept. 29, 2015. For more information, go to www.bpa.gov/goto/MidMoxGrand.

I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project [Cowlitz, Clark counties, Wash.; Multnomah County, Ore.]

BPA published a project update with new information about the projected need for the line, as well as non-wires measures that could be used to relieve some of the congestion that the line is designed to address. BPA continues to conduct surveys and studies to determine the potential impacts of the project. We expect to release a final environmental impact statement in late 2015, followed by a record of decision in 2016. If BPA decides to build the project, we would then focus on negotiating acquisition of the required easements from property owners and obtaining permits. For more information, go to www.bpa.gov/goto/i5.

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

Crooked River Valley Rehabilitation Project [Idaho County, Idaho]

BPA, along with the USDA Forest Service, Nez Perce Tribe and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has issued a final record of decision for the Crooked River Valley Rehabilitation project. The administrator decided to fund Alternative 2, which was published in the June 2015 environmental impact statement for the project. The project will include a variety of restoration activities including construction of a temporary bypass channel, a new stream channel and an access road and levee, in addition to restoring native species. For more information, go to http://data.ecosystem-management.org/nepaweb/nepa_project_exp.php?project=40648.

Wallooskee-Youngs Confluence Restoration Project [Astoria, Ore.]

BPA issued a finding of no significant impact in July, along with the final environmental assessment and response to comments on the proposal to fund this project sponsored by the Cowlitz Indian Tribe. The project will restore and enhance 193 acres of tidal wetlands in the Columbia River estuary near Astoria. For information, go to www.bpa.gov/goto/WallooskeeYoungs.

CLOSE OF COMMENT

- **Sept. 29**, Midway-Moxee Rebuild and Midway-Grandview Upgrade Transmission Line Project
- **Oct. 9**, Alcoa Remand Public Process

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For current meeting information, go to www.bpa.gov/PublicInvolvement/Cal.

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.

