

BPA NEWS

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BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION
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CONTACT: Doug Johnson, BPA, 503-713-7658
or 503-230-5131

BPA holding meetings on new proposed south of Tri-Cities transmission line

Project would address growing electricity consumption and bolster reliability

Portland, Ore. – The Tri-Cities area in southeastern Washington is attracting new businesses and residents, and with that comes growing electricity use. To keep up with that growth and keep the lights on, the Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to build a new 18-mile transmission line south of the Tri-Cities metropolitan area.

“The BPA transmission system is becoming more and more constrained in the Tri-Cities area,” said Jeff Cook, BPA’s vice president of Transmission Planning and Asset Management. “Keeping electricity flowing into the area during extreme hot and cold snaps is becoming increasingly difficult”

Public meetings will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 17 and Wednesday, Oct. 18 at Cottonwood Elementary School located at 16734 Cottonwood Creek Blvd., Kennewick, Washington. BPA project staff will answer questions about the needs that the project will meet and its potential impacts. It is also an opportunity for residents to share information and concerns with project staff.

“This is a two-way conversation,” said Cook. “This is a chance for residents to provide us information about the area we’re considering for the proposed project. We look forward to the opportunity to engage with the community and learn from one another.”

This new proposed transmission line is one of four major projects BPA is proposing in the area, collectively referred to as the Tri-Cities Reinforcement program. The program would significantly increase BPA’s transmission capacity and infrastructure in the area by reinforcing substations and lines.

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The proposed South of Tri-Cities Reinforcement transmission line would run 18 miles connecting a proposed new Webber Canyon Substation near County Well Road to BPA's existing Badger Canyon Substation off Leslie Road between Richland and Kennewick, Washington.

Over the past several years, BPA and its customers in the area have felt the pinch of transmission constraints, especially during the heat dome in summer 2021. During that event, BPA and local utilities worked together to avoid any load shedding plans under which the power would be cut off to selected areas to protect the broader system. Those cuts were narrowly avoided with local utilities making appeals to residents and businesses to lower electricity use.

"BPA provides 100% of Benton PUD's connections to the regional power grid. We are counting on them to complete construction of the Webber Canyon Substation and South of Tri-Cities Reinforcement transmission line which, are critical to Benton PUD's ability to support economic development opportunities and the expected doubling of electricity demand being driven by Washington's aggressive clean energy requirements," said Rick Dunn, Benton PUD general manager.

"The City of Richland is supportive of BPA's South of Tri-Cities Reinforcement project to bring additional transmission capacity serving existing June through August peak loads, as well as additional transmission capacity to serve new economic development in the Tri-Cities," said Joe Schiessl, deputy city manager, City of Richland.

Additional information about the project is available [here](#).

About BPA

The Bonneville Power Administration, headquartered in Portland, Oregon, is a nonprofit federal power marketer that sells wholesale, carbon-free hydropower from 31 federal dams in the Columbia River Basin. It also markets the output of the region's only nuclear plant. BPA delivers this power to more than 140 Northwest electric utilities, serving millions of consumers and businesses in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, western Montana and parts of California, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming. BPA also owns and operates more than 15,000 circuit miles of high-voltage power lines and 261 substations and provides transmission service to more than 300 customers. In all, BPA provides nearly a third of the power generated in the Northwest. To mitigate the impacts of the federal dams, BPA implements a fish and wildlife program that includes working with its partners to make the federal dams safer for fish passage. It also pursues cost-effective energy savings and operational solutions that help maintain safe, affordable, reliable electric power for the Northwest. www.bpa.gov