

*in the news*[home](#) [site search](#) [org chart](#) [contact us](#) [web comments](#)

A PUBLICATION FROM THE BONNEVILLE POWER

Journal

May 1999[Click here for past Journal.](#)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

News stories:

- [Electricity bill benefits NW](#)
- [BPA to hold rate case workshops](#)
- [New fiber optics deal promises public benefits](#)
- [Conservation savings increase](#)
- [Spring hydro operations for fish began in April](#)
- [Customers choose energy efficiency](#)
- [BPA to do audits for embassies](#)
- [BPA purchases additional wind power](#)
- [BPA Crime Witness Program expands](#)
- [Consumers care about conservation](#)
- [New technologies](#)

Public Involvement

- [Status Reports](#)
- [How you can get involved](#)

Electricity bill benefits NW

The Clinton administration's Comprehensive Electricity Competition Plan would reinforce regional control of the Federal Columbia River Power System and promote competition in the Northwest's wholesale electric utility business. U.S. Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson released the administration's legislative proposal for restructuring the nation's power industry on April 15. Key provisions for the Northwest include the following:

- It includes a cost recovery mechanism for BPA to give U.S. taxpayers assurance that the Northwest can cover all of BPA's costs, including obligations to the U.S. Treasury. This provision provides a shield against arguments that BPA's rates are subsidized.
- It applies the Federal Power Act to BPA, ensuring that BPA will operate its transmission system as a common carrier network. This should stimulate competition and bring lower rates to consumers.
- It opens the door for BPA to participate in a region-wide integrated transmission system operation when one is formed.

The administration's proposal opens discussions on national and regional utility deregulation. Interest groups from Northeast and Midwest states have been urging Congress to privatize all federal power marketing agencies, including BPA, or at least eliminate their cost-based rates and require them to sell power at market rates. The Northeast and Midwest representatives have alleged that the federal government subsidizes federal power marketing agencies.

In fact, BPA receives no federal appropriations and covers all of its costs through revenues raised by sales of its power and transmission. Northwest ratepayers also are fully repaying, with interest, the federal investment in the Northwest hydropower dams. By 2006, the federal Columbia River hydro system could be worth as much as \$2 billion per year. At question is whether that \$2 billion annual value will stay in the Northwest, driving the region's robust economy and providing jobs, or be funneled outside the region.

(return to table of contents)

BPA to hold rate case workshops

BPA's Power Business Line plans to hold three technical workshops on the rate case in late May or early June. At the meetings, BPA will discuss the Rates Analysis Model, the conservation and renewables discount and RiskMOD. RiskMOD is a computer model that looks at hydro conditions, market conditions and fish scenarios to determine the amount of power that may be needed to meet loads. Please check the BPA Web site for updates on the timing of these meetings and other announcements at www.bpa.gov/power/ratecase

(return to table of contents)

New fiber optics deal promises public benefits

BPA signed an agreement on April 5 that will bring fiber optic technology to rural areas along the southern Oregon coast and expand the Northwest fiber optic communications network. The agreement between BPA and an undisclosed telecommunications firm calls for construction of a 120-mile fiber optic line that will connect the Oregon coastal communities of Bandon, Coos Bay and Florence to Eugene. The project will complete BPA's southwestern Oregon communications loop to upgrade the agency's communications and control system. It will also connect a fiber optic cable that crosses the Pacific Ocean from China to the fiber optic backbone that runs through the Willamette Valley, helping to bring Asia to the Pacific Northwest.

The telecommunications firm will pay for the cost of the project. The cable will be installed on existing rights of way. BPA will own all assets related to the project, including the fiber optic cable. BPA will retain the use of 48 fibers to lease on the route to other telecommunications firms and others. Of those 48 fibers, 12 are pegged for public benefit projects. One potential public benefit is to bring fiber optic technology to rural areas in the same way BPA brought electricity to rural communities. BPA may be

able to work with communities near BPA lines and substations to bring them fiber optic access that might not be economical for telecommunications firms to develop. Construction of the new line will begin in early May; it is expected to be operating by Sept. 15.

(return to table of contents)

Conservation savings increase

BPA's recently released Conservation Resource Energy Data (known as the Red Book) shows total conservation savings on BPA's investments from fiscal years 1982 through 1998 to be about 723 average megawatts, enough power for a city about the size of Tacoma. The savings achieved in 1998 total 34 average megawatts, with almost two-thirds of the savings coming from residential and commercial sectors. More energy efficient building codes in Washington and Oregon accounted for 13 average megawatts of savings. You may request a copy of the Red Book by calling BPA's document request line listed on the back page.

(return to table of contents)

Spring hydro operations for fish began in April

Spill season at the Federal Columbia River Power System dams to help migrating juvenile fish began in April. Spill is just one mitigation measure. The 1999 operations will be guided by the National Marine Fisheries Service 1995 and 1998 Biological Opinions for threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead in the Columbia and Snake rivers. BPA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation are operating the federal power system under a spread-the-risk policy as recommended by the Independent Scientific Advisory Board in 1998.

The policy seeks a balance of measures. In addition to spill and barging to help migrating juvenile salmon get safely past the dams, flow augmentation is used to help speed fish quickly to the sea. Flow refers to the volume of water in a stream, which affects its velocity. Flow is thought to be an important factor in moving smolts downstream through the reservoirs, although flows above certain levels do not increase smolt survival. Flow augmentation is the release of water from storage or headwater reservoirs when natural streamflows alone are not sufficient to meet flow velocity targets.

(return to table of contents)

Customers choose energy efficiency

BPA's Energy Efficiency and Power Business Line are more than 80 percent of the way to their annual goal to get conservation, renewables and new technology projects underway with utility customers. Thirty-one customers have signed agreements with BPA for 41 projects, compared to the annual goal of 35 customers and 50 projects. Projects include metering, fuel cell demonstrations, energy audits and power factor workshops. The proposed BPA conservation and renewables rate discount has provided an incentive for the projects.

Power Business Line account executives offer the services to customers as part of the power sales packages. Depending on the nature and extent of the services, customers pay for them separately or through the established power rates. Engineers and others in Energy Efficiency provide the expert services to find conservation opportunities, and then other Energy Efficiency specialists match the customers up with funding sources and installation contractors.

(return to table of contents)

BPA to do audits for embassies

BPA and the U.S. State Department signed a task order for BPA to do energy audits and make recommendations for efficiency improvements at U.S. embassies and consulates throughout the world. The first assignment will likely be in Buenos Aires in June. In some countries, local energy costs can be as high as 50 cents per kilowatthour. Energy efficiency in the chanceries, single and multi-family buildings and warehouses that make up an embassy “campus” is critical. BPA will also recommend, where appropriate, new technologies such as photovoltaics, wind or fuel cells to help make embassies more independent of local power systems. BPA is expected to be doing audits at a different location every six to eight weeks.

(return to table of contents)

BPA purchases additional wind power

BPA is receiving energy from a 41.4 MW wind farm near Arlington, Wyoming. BPA has a long-term power purchase contract with the wind farm owners, Eugene Water and Electric Board and PacifiCorp, to purchase 37 percent (15.3 megawatts) of the output. The power generated from the wind project first goes to PacifiCorp, and is then sent to BPA’s system. In turn, BPA will sell the power to Salem Electric at a special “green power” rate. Salem Electric’s contract to purchase 37 percent of the output from the project until 2001 becomes effective as soon as the project goes commercial. SeaWest Energy Corp. and Tomen Power Corporation, both of San Diego, Calif., developed the project for the utilities.

(return to table of contents)

BPA Crime Witness Program expands

The Bureau of Reclamation and BPA have become partners in fighting crime. A new agreement between the two agencies will expand the Crime Witness Program from the Pacific Northwest to all of Reclamation’s facilities in 17 western states. The Crime Witness Program offers cash rewards of up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of persons committing crimes against BPA or Reclamation facilities, property or personnel. Signs posted at facilities direct informants to call toll free 1-800-437-2744 to report suspicious or criminal activities.

(return to table of contents)

Consumers care about conservation

Consumers care about energy conservation and renewable resources, and they are willing to pay more for these resources according to a BPA study entitled “Renewable Resources and Conservation: What Consumers Want” that looked at surveys and focus groups conducted throughout the nation in the 1990s, most between 1994 and 1998. The project also included a look at surveys conducted by Northwest utilities, and regional findings largely mirrored the national results.

BPA is interested in factors affecting consumer choice of energy suppliers and willingness to pay for certain resources because the agency is in the process of working with its customers to design a new wholesale rate discount program for investments in conservation and renewables. BPA is exploring the implications for the discount program in a climate in which customers are able to choose their energy supplier and in which new energy resources must compete for market share. You may find the 38-page report at BPA’s Web site at www.bpa.gov/Energy/N/

(return to table of contents)

New technologies

A brief overview of the new technologies Electric Revolution conference held in March is available on BPA’s Web site at www.bpa.gov/Corporate/KCC/electric_rev/summary.htm for your convenience.

Copies of the conference proceedings are available for \$50. Copies of the video are available separately for \$40.

(return to table of contents)

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.

Delivery of the Canadian Entitlement-Supplement to the Record of Decision. — The U.S. entity had previously decided to fulfill its obligations under the Columbia River Treaty by delivering the Canadian Entitlement at existing transmission interconnections between the United States and Canada near Blaine, Wash., and Nelway, B.C. That November 1996 ROD has been supplemented to enable disposal of the Canadian Entitlement in the United States through Sept. 15, 2024, as well as delivery at Blaine and Nelway. A completed supplement to the ROD dated March 31, 1999 is available. Call to receive a copy.

Fourmile Hill Geothermal Development Project EIS (Calpine). No. Calif. — A geothermal power plant and new transmission line have been proposed on 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.

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.

Mid-Columbia Coho Reintroduction Feasibility Project. Wash. — To implement various studies and research projects on the feasibility of restoring coho salmon to the mid-Columbia tributaries. The Yakama Indian Nation and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife are cooperating agencies. A preliminary EA (#1282) is available. Call to receive a copy.

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.

Reedsport-Fairview Transmission Project. Ore. — To improve reliability and limit maintenance costs on a segment of Reedsport-Fairview No. 1, a 115-kV transmission line. Would either replace a segment of the line with a shorter line in a new location or rebuild the segment where it is now. Comments on preliminary EA (#1286) are being addressed. Call to be added to the mail list.

South Oregon Coast Reinforcement EIS. Ore. — To reinforce electrical service to the southern Oregon coast and provide the necessary transmission for Nucor Corp. to build a new steel mill in the Coos Bay/North Bend area. The Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Corps of Engineers are cooperating agencies. A draft EIS is being prepared. Call to be added to the mail list.

Telephone Flats Geothermal Project EIS (CalEnergy). No. Calif. — A geothermal power plant and

new transmission line have been proposed on 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.

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

Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project Programmatic EIS. Wash. — The Bureau of Reclamation has the lead and BPA is a cooperating agency. The ROD for the final programmatic EIS was signed by Reclamation's regional director on March 5 and is available. Call Robert Black, Bureau of Reclamation, 303-445-2704 to receive a copy.

(return to table of contents)

Acronyms:

EA: Environmental Assessment

EIS: Environmental Impact Statement

FONSI: Finding of No Significant Impact

NOI: Notice of Intent

ROD: Record of Decision

An archive of past *Journals* is available to the public on BPA's external Web site at <http://www.bpa.gov/Corporate/KC/home/journal/>.

We welcome all comments from you at Journal-AC, Bonneville Power Administration, P.O. Box 3621, Portland, OR 97208-3621 or enballa@bpa.gov.

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 or to subscribe to a "hard copy" version of the *Journal*: call 800-622-4520 or 230-3478 (Portland) or [click here](#).

For questions/comments, call: 230-3478 (Portland) or 800-622-4519, or E-mail to comment@bpa.gov. Address comments to: P.O. Box 12999, Portland, OR 97212.

BPA Offices:

Boise - 208-334-9137

Missoula - 406-329-3060

Seattle - 206-216-4272

Spokane - 509-353-2515

Walla Walla - 509-527-6225

Washington, D.C. - 202-586-5640

Vancouver, Wash. - 360-418-8600

BPA Public Involvement, Internet, E-mail address: Comment@BPA.gov

(return to table of contents)

DOE/BP-3180 April 28, 1999 6.5M

The *Journal* is edited by [Nicia Balla](#), BPA Communications.

The Web page version of the *Journal* is maintained by [BPA Communication Services](#).
