

# JOURNAL

November 1999

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION



*Mt. Bachelor, Oregon*

*photo by A. Morrell*

## **Transmission schedules public workshops this month**

In November the Transmission Business Line is asking customers and constituents for their comments about planned capital spending and the expenses associated with supporting a reliable and safe Northwest federal transmission system. TBL plans to hold workshops to discuss and hear public comment on the level of expenditures necessary to keep the system reliable. The workshops explore a number of actions TBL should take to:

- Maintain system reliability at a level commensurate with federal and regional guidelines;
- Improve areas where transmission constraints diminish the ability of market participants to move their product through TBL's transmission system;

- Continue to expand fiber optic infrastructure for the communications that operate the system;
- Meet local load growth;
- Address an aging workforce and the need to attract new, skilled employees; and
- Replace aging equipment.

These workshops and the programs they discuss, while not a part of the transmission rate case, will inform rate case proceedings and will affect the level of transmission expenses that will be allocated to customers during fiscal years 2002 and 2003. The transmission rate case begins with a proposal in March. (See Calendar of Events and Close of Comment on the back page.)





## **Power rate case update**

BPA has completed eight field hearings around the region and plans one more in the Seattle area on Nov. 9. Over 100 people attended the Spokane, Wash., hearing, offering a range of points of view that BPA will consider as it develops a final rate proposal in the spring. The parties (those groups that have filed to intervene in BPA's rate setting) have filed their own testimony in support of different points of view on what BPA's power rates should be. The next step in the formal legal process consists of the parties asking each other for more information to clarify the details of their testimony. The initial wholesale power rate proposal close of comment for the participants is Nov. 30. Please check the BPA Web site for additional information on BPA's initial proposal and the legal process: <http://www.bpa.gov/power/ratecase>

## **BPA makes annual payment to the U.S. Treasury**

BPA recently paid \$628 million to the U.S. Department of Treasury. This fiscal year 1999 payment includes \$421 million in interest that provides a return to the federal government on its investment in the Federal Columbia River Power System. In addition, \$191 million went to principal and \$16 million went to operations and maintenance at the federal dams primarily for fish hatcheries linked to the lower Snake River dams.

Besides the current treasury repayment, BPA for the first time provided \$141 million in direct funding for the entire operations and maintenance at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation facilities in the Pacific Northwest. In the past, Congress appropriated the money and BPA reimbursed the Treasury at the end of the year.

BPA is entirely self-financed, receiving no appropriations or subsidies from U.S. taxpayers. The agency has repaid the U.S. Treasury over \$4 billion of the federal investment in the power system; \$6.8 billion remains to be paid. BPA does have access to federal loans for fish and wildlife restoration and capital improvements on the federal hydroelectric and transmission system. These loans are being repaid in full by their maturity dates.

## **BPA surpasses energy efficiency goal**

BPA has exceeded its fiscal year 1999 target for providing energy services to power sales customers. The target was to get 50 projects underway that deal with energy efficiency, renewables and new technology for 35 customers. BPA surpassed its goal as 42 customers signed agreements for 70 projects. Some of the projects include energy auditing, meter consulting, solar assessments, technical assistance, lighting, fuel cell demonstrations and power factor workshops. The fiscal year 2000 goal is to support 60 to 75 projects for 40 to 45 customers.

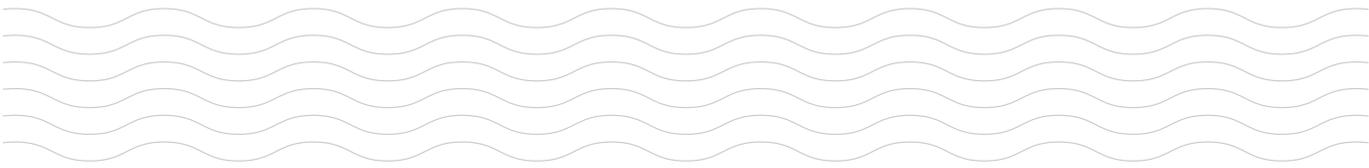
## **BPA and Warm Springs Tribe join to restore wildlife habitat**

BPA recently funded the purchase of 24,304 acres of wildlife habitat in Wheeler County, Ore. The Warm Springs Tribe will manage the site. The Warm Springs Tribe purchased Pine Creek Ranch from its private owner for \$3.2 million using BPA funding from the agency's watershed and wildlife budget. Pine Creek Ranch sprawls over the Pine Creek watershed, an area of approximately 42,000 acres of arid rangeland in northwestern Wheeler County. Pine Creek is a tributary of the main stem of the John Day River and has its confluence near Clarno, Ore.

The watershed is home to at least 36 animal and plant species that are listed as sensitive, threatened or endangered. It provides spawning and rearing habitat for one of the few remaining native steelhead populations in the lower John Day River basin. The watershed also provides wintering habitat for deer and elk. One of the ways BPA restores habitat is by purchasing land and having other organizations own and manage it. All such purchases are credited against a ledger of habitat losses resulting from dam construction.

## **McNary and Austin will lead Fish and Wildlife program**

Sarah McNary is the new manager of BPA's Fish and Wildlife program. Joining McNary will be Bob Austin, who will assume the duties of deputy manager. McNary



and Austin have been co-managing the Fish and Wildlife group since Bob Lohn left in April. McNary, an attorney, has worked on fish and wildlife issues for six years while in BPA's Office of the General Counsel. Austin is a fisheries biologist who has been managing the anadromous, resident fish and wildlife branch of the division for the last six years.

The two plan to continue to share management responsibilities. McNary will take the lead on management in the division, work with Lorri Bodi on the unified fish plan and deal with the Endangered Species Act and decisions affecting the long-term operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System. Austin will also focus on management and BPA's role in implementing the Northwest Power Planning Council Fish and Wildlife program. The two will back up each other and will work together to strengthen external outreach with regional constituents and tribal governments.

### **Rural communities expected to benefit from fiber optics agreement**

BPA and the Washington Public Utility Districts Association (WPUDA) recently signed an agreement to make fiber optic cables available to public and private entities and to the communities they serve.

Greg Marney, director of telecommunications for WPUDA, said the network is expected to be running by early 2000. Interconnection points in every county where BPA fiber now runs are expected within two years. The network will provide access to telecommunication transport between the entities while individual members will operate the network within their own service areas.

WPUDA represents the 28 public utility districts (PUDs) that provide electricity and water service in Washington. The association is organizing a nonprofit corporation to set up and operate the network. Sixteen PUDs will belong to the organization initially. Other utilities and other entities may join in the future.

The utilities will use the network for utility purposes and plan to make excess capacity available to other organizations, including schools, hospitals, emergency

services, museums, libraries, businesses that contribute to rural economic development and federal, state, local and tribal governments. The utilities intend to provide open access to the network at nondiscriminatory, nonprofit, cost-based rates.

Rural communities are not economically attractive to most local and long-haul telecommunications companies because of their low population densities and the remoteness of connections. Rates can be four times higher than that in urban areas. End user costs for rural and remote areas served by the agreement will be roughly comparable to those paid by end users in larger communities in the Northwest. BPA's rates for the public benefits fiber program fully recover BPA's costs to install and operate the fiber network.

### **International conference on clean energy planned**

BPA is among the sponsors of an international conference on "Clean Energy Partnerships: Developing Global Solutions" in Seattle, Wash., from Nov. 14 to 16. The expected 300 U.S. and international attendees will consider ways to foster a rapid transition from fossil fuels to clean, renewable fuels as the solution to global warming. Suppliers, users and financiers of clean, renewable energies and energy efficiencies will examine technology, financing and policy tools to overcome barriers to sustainable resources. Speakers include Dr. Luis Tellez Kuenzler, secretary, Mexican Ministry of Energy; Dr. John Holdren, chair, U.S. President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology; Jefferson Seabright, chair, White House Task Force on Climate Change; David Nemetzow, president, Alliance to Save Energy; and Dr. Aminal Hug, Asian Development Bank. Other sponsors besides BPA include United States Agency for International Development, Northwest Council on Climate Change, U.S. Department of Energy and Export Council for Energy Efficiency. BPA's interest is to promote the formulation of Pacific Northwest partnerships with developed or developing countries to promote the global use of energy efficiency products and services, pollution abatement and sustainable development worldwide. To register for the conference go to <http://www.cultural.org/ace/pt/global.html>

# 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.

**BPA/Lower Valley Transmission Project.** Idaho and Wyo. — To resolve a voltage stability problem in the Jackson and Afton, Wyo., areas. New 115 kilovolt line to be built on existing right-of-way. Mitigation action plan now available. (#DOE/BP-3217) Call to receive a copy.

**Fish and Wildlife Implementation Plan EIS.** Regionwide — To examine the impacts that may arise from implementing one of the fish and wildlife policy directions being considered in the ongoing regional processes. Scoping is underway with a scoping meeting to be scheduled soon. Call to be added to the mail list.

**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.

**IDFG Snake River Chinook Captive Rearing.** Idaho — To fund Idaho Department of Fish and Game's captive rearing project for Endangered Species Act-listed Snake River spring/summer chinook salmon. The EA is being finalized. A FONSI is anticipated.

**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.

**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.

**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 final EIS is being prepared. Call to be added to the mail list.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Power Rate Case Field Hearing — Nov. 9,** Double Tree Inn at South Center Mall, Seattle, Wash., 6:30 p.m.

**TBL Public Workshops —** The Transmission Business Line has scheduled five all-day workshops from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. to brief customers and constituents and to take public comments.

**Nov. 15 —** Cavanaugh's of Columbia Center, 1101 N. Columbia Center Blvd., Kennewick, WA 99336, (509) 783-0611

**Nov. 16 —** Shilo Inn, 780 Lindsay Blvd., Idaho Falls, ID 83402, (208) 523-0088

**Nov. 22 —** Hilton Seattle Airport, 17620 Pacific Highway South, Seattle, WA 98188

**Nov. 23 —** Cavanaugh's Inn at the Park, 303 W. North River Drive, Spokane, WA 99201, (509) 362-8000

**Nov. 30 —** Embassy Suites Portland Airport, 7900 NE 82nd Ave., Portland, Ore. 97220 (503) 460-3000

For more information, contact your transmission account executive or Linda Hunziker at (360) 418-8232 or e-mail [lhunziker@bpa.gov](mailto:lhunziker@bpa.gov) or check the web site at <http://www.transmission.bpa.gov>

## CLOSE OF COMMENT

Net Requirements — **Nov. 30**

2002 Initial Wholesale Power Rate Proposal public comment — **Nov. 30**

EA: Environmental Assessment, EIS: Environmental Impact Statement, FONSI: Finding of No Significant Impact, ROD: Record of Decision

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, call: 800-622-4520 or (503) 230-3478 (Portland). For questions/comments call: (503) 230-3478 (Portland) or 800-622-4519. Written comments may be sent to: BPA, P.O. Box 12999, Portland, OR 97212. Public Involvement, Internet, E-mail address [comment@BPA.gov](mailto:comment@BPA.gov), BPA home page: <http://www.bpa.gov>