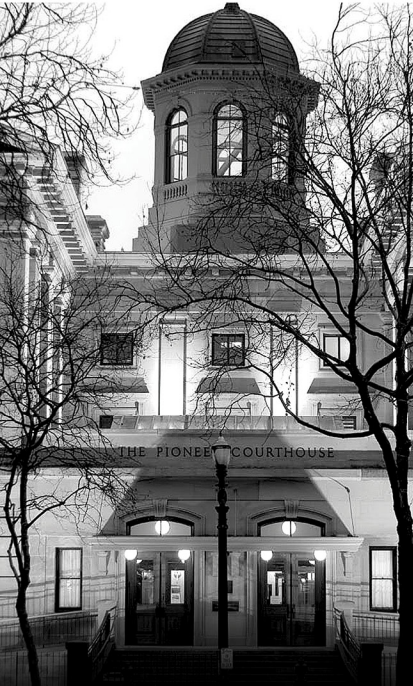




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NORTHWEST POWER & CONSERVATION COUNCIL

TRANSCRIPT OF
NINTH NORTHWEST REGIONAL POWER PLAN
PUBLIC HEARING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2026
4:30 P.M.

NORTHWEST POWER & CONSERVATION COUNCIL
851 SOUTHWEST SIXTH AVENUE, SUITE 1100
PORTLAND, OREGON 97204

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APPEARANCES

NORTHWEST POWER & CONSERVATION COUNCIL:

Peter Cogswell, Executive Director

Margaret Hoffmann, Oregon - Chair of Meeting

Mike Milburn, Chair - Montana

Thomas Les Purce, Vice-Chair - Washington

Jennifer Light, Director of Power Planning

Chad Madron, Senior Division Coordinator

Jeffrey Allen, Member - Idaho

Chuck Sams, Member - Oregon

KC Golden, Member - Washington

Ed Schriever, Member, Idaho

Douglas Grob, Member - Montana

Annika Roberts, Resources Policy Analyst

John Shurts, General Counsel

PUBLIC COMMENTERS:

Patti Kramer, Climate Energy & Environment Team,
Oregon Indivisible Network

Mark Leed

Avalon Gonnerman

Tim Eminieth

Fred Heutte, NW Energy Coalition

Connor Reiten, Northwest Requirements Utilities

APPEARANCES

PUBLIC COMMENTERS:

Abby Dalke, Advocacy & Policy Coordinator, Save Our
Wild Salmon Coalition

Tyler Troelsen, Southwest Washington Organizer,
Sierra Club and Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition

Judy Stevenson

Matt Schulte

Laura Feldman

Ben Brint, Senior Climate Program Director, Oregon
Environmental Council

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MS. HOFFMANN: All right. Thanks,
everybody, for joining us. I'd like to -- to invite
those of you who would like to be up against the
wall to help fill in in the front rows, if you want
to. If not, I totally understand.

I'd like to welcome all my colleagues and
everybody here tonight and call this public meeting
to order. My name is Margy Hoffmann. I'm one of
the council members from the Great State of Oregon.

I'd like to welcome you to today's public
hearing on the council's draft 9th power plan.
Anyone wishing to provide public comments should
sign up on the list provided. When the time comes
to hear your comments, I will call people to testify
in the order in which you signed up.

That includes those of you online. If you
would like to testify online, please sign up so we
know that you would like to speak and not just

1 listen in this evening.

2 As our first order of business, I have a
3 statement to make for the administrative record
4 about this public hearing. The Northwest Power Act
5 of 1980 directs the council to develop a regional
6 conservation and electric power plan and to review
7 that plan every five years.

8 The council's current power plan is its
9 eighth plan, also referred to as the 2021 power
10 plan. The council is now engaged in its latest
11 five-year power plan review. The council released
12 the draft 9th Northwest Power Plan in mid-August for
13 public review and comment.

14 For more information, including the text
15 of the draft plan and technical appendices, please
16 visit the council's website at [www.northwestcouncil,](http://www.northwestcouncil.org)
17 C-O-U-N-C-I-L, dot org.

18 The council will be accepting comments on
19 the draft 9th plan through October 16th, 2026. The
20 Act also requires the council to hold public
21 hearings in every state represented by the council,
22 which includes Idaho, Montana, Oregon and
23 Washington. The full schedule of hearings can be
24 found online.

25 I would like to encourage anyone who is

1 interested in commenting to please sign up on one of
2 the sheets located around the room. We have a court
3 reporter in attendance to record your comments.

4 Thank you so much for being here.

5 The transcript of this hearing will be
6 circulated to all council members and staff and will
7 be included in the administrative record for the
8 power plan review. You can also leave written
9 comments with a staff member today or submit
10 comments online.

11 Instructions for submitting comments
12 online can be found on the council's website. All
13 comments received will be carefully considered by
14 the council in making our final decision to approve
15 the 9th Northwest Power Plan. The council expects
16 to make a final decision on the plan at the end of
17 this year or early in 2027.

18 All right. And with that, just a couple
19 more logistics. So we're going to have -- folks
20 with have the opportunity to provide three minutes
21 of testimony tonight. My colleague, Leanne, will
22 hold up a three-minute sign, a one-minute warning
23 and a 30-second warning, so please pay attention to
24 the bright folders, hard not to, and then we will
25 just go in the order that people have signed up.

1 So first, we will have Patti Kramer,
2 followed by Mark Leed. Oh, and I will actually --
3 hold that thought. I will turn it over to my
4 colleague, Jenn, for some comments.

5 MS. LIGHT: All right. Thank you. So as
6 folks are getting settled, which most of you are,
7 I'm going to just do a very quick intro to the draft
8 power plan. I'm standing here because, otherwise,
9 you wouldn't see me. I'm too short behind this
10 computer screen. Hopefully, everyone can hear me.

11 So -- let me make sure this works. All
12 right. A little bit of who we are, and Member
13 Hoffmann did just cover this, but the Northwest
14 Power Conservation Council was authorized by
15 Congress through the Northwest Power Act of 1980.

16 The point was to give a greater voice to
17 the region in planning for energy and protecting
18 fish and wildlife in the region. Governors in the
19 states of Idaho, Oregon, Washington and Montana have
20 appointed these council members that you see in
21 front of you and the Act requires that we develop a
22 broad participation -- let me get that right -- of
23 the regional power plan and Columbia River Basin
24 fish and wildlife program.

25 Also under the power act, the Bonneville

1 Power Administration has responsibilities to acquire
2 resources consistent with the council's plan, so as
3 I'll talk about and as you'll see in the draft plan,
4 there are some specific recommendations to
5 Bonneville.

6 First, a little bit on the Columbia River
7 Basin fish and wildlife program. Because this is a
8 piece of work we do here on the council and it
9 ultimately is an element of the council's power
10 plan. This is something developed through excessive
11 public process to mitigate -- protect, mitigate and
12 enhance the fish and wildlife affected by the hydro
13 system in the Columbia River.

14 In June of this year, the council just
15 adopted the 2026 Columbia River Basin fish and
16 wildlife program that does become part of the plan.
17 There's measures in that that relate to onsite, kind
18 of, flow and passage measures, as well as offsite
19 habitat and restoration.

20 And one of the key priorities, and there's
21 several, but one is to keep the water moving for
22 migrating fish at times that are critical for that,
23 while also still meeting the regional energy needs,
24 and so you see there's a real balance there between
25 our two responsibilities.

1 The power planning, what we do is to make
2 sure that we put forward a plan for the region that
3 ensures an adequate, efficient, economical and
4 reliable power supply. That is the directive from
5 the Power Act.

6 This is something we adopt and approve,
7 update at approximately every five years and it
8 provides a blueprint for the region in how to meet
9 future needs. So at a very high level, what we're
10 doing is we're saying what did the power system
11 provide today, where do we see loads growing in the
12 future and what's the least cost, least risk way of
13 trying to meet those loads, so that's what we're
14 trying to put forward in this draft plan.

15 A couple things about what we don't do in
16 the power plan, and I think it's really important
17 because power planning connects to a lot of
18 different aspects of the power system. We have a
19 narrow piece and we're directly responsible, but we
20 have to think about all these other aspects.

21 So, for example, we don't do transmission
22 planning or development, but we certainly do think
23 about the transmission system and what's available.
24 We don't do permitting and siting of resources,
25 although that is certainly important, understanding

1 what can happen there.

2 We don't think -- make any decisions
3 around resource retirement, so existing resources
4 and their retirement, and we don't set electricity
5 rates. So all things are very much connected, how
6 we think about power planning, but they are not
7 directly in the council's purview.

8 So some key takeaways from this draft 9th
9 power plan. One is the load growth that we're
10 anticipating for the region. We put forward a 20-
11 year forecast of future loads and we are projecting,
12 over the next 20 years, the power system loads in
13 the northwest will increase by 50 to 100 percent,
14 very significant load growth in the region.

15 The 50 to 100 percent, that's a wide
16 range. There's a lot of uncertainty in that and
17 that's one of the other key things that we have
18 dealt -- dealt with in the plan is managing for
19 where there is uncertainty, whether that's load
20 growth or uncertainty around future weather and how
21 that affects how resources show up. Hydro is a big
22 part of our resource mix, so understanding that --
23 that potential change in hydro, as well as resources
24 and how they can show up.

25 To meet the future needs, this load

1 growth, given this uncertainty and risk, the draft
2 plan does include a regional portfolio of resources,
3 a mix of resources, that's cost-effective to meet
4 those needs, and we're really at this point where we
5 have this public hearing process, where we have open
6 public comment, where we want to hear from the
7 region, how is this looking, where can we improve
8 this draft plan to make sure that we have that final
9 plan that's ensuring that adequate, efficient,
10 economical and reliable power supply.

11 Here is the draft strategy. This is kind
12 of the core to the power plan that's supported by a
13 lot of really important recommendations in some of
14 those areas that I talked about. This draft power
15 plan does put forward a mix of demand-side
16 resources. That's your energy conservation or
17 energy efficiency, your demand response, some of
18 those resources that can help to meet our needs and
19 also mitigate or help defer some of the need for
20 transmission and other resource buildout.

21 Renewables are key to the strategy,
22 particularly combined with storage that can provide
23 energy and capacity while meeting the clean goals.
24 The draft plan does include new natural gas that can
25 provide energy to the system, particularly in times

1 of low hydro conditions where there's just less
2 water coming down the system.

3 And all of these are supported by some
4 additional recommendations around how to think about
5 transmission and make sure that we have the
6 transmission we need, permitting, data center
7 integration and more.

8 I mentioned earlier the direct connection
9 with the Bonneville Power Administration and that it
10 must acquire resources to meets its needs,
11 consistent with the council's power plan, and so the
12 draft 9th plan does include recommendations to
13 Bonneville to acquire its share of the conservation,
14 resource or the energy efficiency resource to
15 support its customer utilities and getting those
16 other demand side resources to get some renewables,
17 if they have an energy need beyond conservation, and
18 then to assess the cost effectiveness between
19 storage and natural gas, if they have a capacity
20 need.

21 So with that, just a couple of logistics
22 before we do turn it back to the Chair and go
23 through your public comments. Please do sign up on
24 the sign-up sheets. Annika, our staff, is holding
25 up one and there's others back there, if you haven't

1 already and you do want to give public comment.

2 For those on the Webinar, please do email
3 your full name to that meeting organizer email
4 that's in the invite. We want to make sure that you
5 can get your comment in.

6 Some logistics in the room. If you need a
7 bathroom at any point, there's a woman's bathroom
8 right outside this door. Through the elevator bank
9 is the men's. If anyone does want to film these
10 proceedings, they're welcome to. There is a
11 designated filming area over here. Peter, if you
12 can kind of wave where you are.

13 Feel free to look for staff if you have
14 any questions. We're wearing our fancy name badges,
15 and if staff can kind of raise your hands so they
16 can see where you are. They're all very friendly.
17 Hopefully, spread out enough. Feel free to ask us
18 questions.

19 Please be courteous in this room. I know
20 it's hard to come and give these public comments.
21 We appreciate you being here. We value it. Please
22 be courteous to everyone else. Let's make this a
23 very comfortable space for us to share our thoughts.

24 Please keep it brief and on topic. We're
25 going to keep them to three minutes and note that

1 your comments will be part of that official record.
2 If you have brought with you a written set of
3 comments, we would appreciate that. Christian
4 Douglas here can help collect those and can get them
5 in. That's just really helpful for us and for the
6 court reporter, and also, you can submit comments
7 online.

8 I do have one more slide. Just a
9 reminder. This is where you can get to that public
10 comment portal. There's also a fancy QR code, if
11 that's helpful, but please do participate in this
12 process, whether it's through these comments today
13 or submitting it online, we really value that, and
14 that's all from me.

15 MS. HOFFMANN: Sure. Thank you so much,
16 Jenn. All right. And with that, we will begin our
17 public comments. So first out of the gate, we'll
18 have Patti Kramer, followed by Mark Leed -- Leed,
19 and Avalon Gonnerman. So if the three of you would
20 like to come to the table, we can start.

21 So thank you, Patti, and thank you all for
22 joining us this evening. Patti, do you want to
23 start us off?

24 PATTI KRAMER: Yeah. Will my time start
25 after I spell and state my name?

1 My name is Patti, P-A-T-T-I, Kramer, K-R-
2 A-M-E-R. I'm with the Climate, Energy and
3 Environment Team of Oregon Indivisible Network.

4 I don't have to remind anyone here that,
5 in the nearly 50 years since the Northwest Power Act
6 established the Northwest Power Conservation
7 Council, wild salmon populations in the Columbia
8 River Basin have consistently declined while
9 increased funding has been spent on measures to
10 mitigate this decline, which is not a particularly
11 sound business plan.

12 I also do not have to remind anyone that a
13 study by NOAA in September of 2022 concluded that
14 restoring the Snake River stocks to healthy,
15 harvestable populations will require breaching the
16 four lower Snake River dams.

17 I would like to address the issue of wild
18 fish survival. I realize the energy issues in the
19 9th power plan are designed to reduce our dependence
20 on diminishing sources of hydroelectric power and
21 increase our reliance on alternative sources,
22 increase grid efficiency and conservation measures.

23 I like to think that this will create a
24 landscape in which simple economics will render some
25 portion of hydroelectric power sources, or dams,

1 redundant. My hope is that the four lower Snake
2 River dams will be on the top of the list.

3 I am concerned that there is no explicit
4 reference to dam breaching in the text of the plan.
5 I am concerned that no serious consideration of dam
6 breaching will be given until the power plan is
7 approved and in play, at which point we can hope
8 that wild fish recovery is possible.

9 The Northwest Power Plan requires the
10 council, as we know, to provide an analysis of cost-
11 effective methods to provide electric power at the
12 lowest cost. It also mandates the council to
13 develop the power plan while taking into account
14 fish and wildlife impact.

15 The council uses the computer modeling
16 tool, Genesis, to simulate the operation of the
17 regional power system to assess the adequacy of the
18 power supply, given uncertain future conditions. It
19 also used -- it also uses it to assess the impact of
20 the cost of non-power related constraints on the
21 operations of the dams, which is primarily fish and
22 wildlife protection.

23 Genesis can model a scenario to assess the
24 long-term energy and wildlife effects of breaching
25 the four lower Snake River dams. If used

1 conceivable that elimination of the outdated costly
2 dams with increased reliance and alternative power
3 sources could result in lower costs and increased
4 efficiency of the power supply while markedly
5 increasing the likelihood of wild fish recovery.

6 It has not been used to do this, however.
7 This issue arose for the 8th power plan five years
8 ago in a memo and presentation by Ben Kujala to the
9 council in February of 2022. He stated that these
10 public comments indicated a significant amount of
11 interest in having the council analyze power system
12 options without power generation at the lower Snake
13 River dams, and in response, the staff was requested
14 to draft a work plan.

15 It is our understanding that the -- this
16 analysis was not carried out. We respectfully
17 request that the council run Genesis models without
18 the four lower Snake River dams and include plans
19 for this analysis in the 9th Power Plan.

20 It behooves us to explore all reasonable
21 models to optimize the regional power system while
22 simultaneously protecting the wild fish populations
23 that underscore the vitality and character of all
24 Pacific Northwest communities. Thank you very much
25 for this opportunity.

1 MS. HOFFMANN: Thank you, Patti. Next up,
2 we have Mark.

3 MARK LEED: Hey, my name is Mark Leed,
4 first name, M-A-R-K, last name, L-E-E-D. I live in
5 Vancouver, Washington and I am a rate payer of Clark
6 Public Utilities.

7 As a rate payer, I'm concerned about
8 increased load resulting from a variety of factors,
9 including adoption of electric vehicles, and I plan
10 to be in the market soon for an electric vehicle,
11 which will be my first one.

12 These load increases heighten the need to
13 expand transmission capacity. The draft plan
14 indicates that delays in expanding the transmission
15 system could result in more natural gas generation.

16 Instead, I would recommend that you
17 recommend to BPA to prepare to acquire additional
18 renewable resources instead of additional natural
19 gas and to lead the region in expanding transmission
20 capacity in order to integrate those renewable
21 resources into the grid.

22 I also urge you to put a greater priority
23 on regional salmon recovery goals, especially on
24 implementation of the Columbia Basin Restoration
25 Initiative. The power plan's resource strategy can

1 replace the 700 megawatts produced annually from the
2 four lower Snake River dams.

3 The council should collaborate with the
4 applicable Washington State agencies to incorporate
5 lower Snake energy -- lower Snake River dams' energy
6 replacement into the region's future power plans,
7 and thank you very much for your time.

8 MS. HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mark. Next up,
9 Avalon.

10 AVALON GONNERMAN: My name is Avalon
11 Gonnerman, A-V-A-L-O-N, for my first name. G-O-N-N-
12 E-R-M-A-N for my last name.

13 MS. HOFFMANN: And Avalon, can I ask you
14 to move a little bit closer to the mic or pull it to
15 you?

16 Thank you.

17 MS. GONNERMAN: Thank you. I have
18 prepared a poem.

19 When I was little, searching at tidepools,
20 I was told to not turn my back on the ocean, or I
21 could be pulled away in the current. The crashing
22 of waves was a powerful reminder.

23 The river no longer speaks in such terms.
24 Her waters have been silenced, reduced to a dull
25 mulling where motion once lived. The surge

1 depresses in dredged channel, but she still has a
2 voice. Forty-foot cavern of soul, let the water
3 reclaim herself.

4 She repeatedly speaks to her loss of
5 health. The seasonal lakes and wetlands have been
6 filled, dammed, diverted. The Wapato withholds her
7 breath. The river converted to hold industry. Life
8 is taken, but nothing is given in return. The
9 people have forgotten this obligation.

10 Her salmon lie face-up in the river,
11 200,000 strong and killed, choked by the poison of
12 our minds, an act of ecocide, the face of
13 colonialism magnified.

14 Her waters scream. They want to be
15 released. Upheld by concrete, she cannot breathe,
16 so she warns us in bright green blooms, tells us to
17 let her go, run cool and free. We try to tune her
18 out with the noise of our machinery.

19 We make the planes, weapons and bombs, and
20 can the salmon with the material left over. We damn
21 the future and dare to ask, if the dams are gone,
22 who will meet our need for energy?

23 We capitalize off of pain, insist these
24 are industries we should maintain. This energy is a
25 negative fuel to poison the land and our people. To

1 me, the loss of Earth's ability to be well is the
2 biggest detriment to our collective health.

3 The cattails, Wapato, camas, steelhead,
4 sturgeon, salmon, beaver and lamprey have been
5 telling us for generations. They give up their
6 bodies, embody sacrifice to show us the health of
7 the water. They say, if something doesn't change,
8 we will not come back. You need to take care of
9 water so we may take care of you.

10 The only people to heed her call are those
11 of the land. They recognize her warnings. They see
12 our relatives are hurting. They feel the loss of
13 foods and habitat.

14 We are not blind to the land. We see her
15 defacement, but justify its necessity to provide us
16 with riches that will spoil a hundred years from
17 now, an artificial semblance of abundance
18 manufactured and stolen from every corner of the
19 world.

20 We cannot mitigate an exploitative world
21 view. Sustenance will dwindle as people globally
22 acquire a taste, and soon the fish will not feed,
23 the water will not nourish, and the land will not
24 provide what we took in excess and that will be a
25 lesson, too.

1 When I was little, I understood my
2 insignificance. I heard the water and heeded her
3 warning. I will not turn my back on the water.
4 Whatever we do to the river, we do to ourselves.
5 Thank you for your time.

6 MS. HOFFMANN: Thank you so much. Next
7 up, we have Tim Emineth, followed by Fred Heutte and
8 Connor Reiten -- or Reiten, if the three of you
9 would like to come to the table.

10 We'll start with Tim.

11 TIM EMINETH: Hi. My name is Tim Emineth,
12 E-M-I-N-E-T-H. I live in Vancouver. I pay my
13 electric bill with Clark County PUD. I'm on my
14 second electric car lease through PUD. I can --
15 because I'm retired, I can go whenever their rates
16 for charging are 15 cents a kilowatt, so I drive
17 very cheap and I don't pollute the air.

18 So we have been pushing the can down the
19 road about climate change and I just don't see how
20 people can deny anymore, and the climate change is
21 affecting the fish. As -- 1972, as a 14-year-old
22 kid, I got my first salmon on the -- at Frenchman's
23 Bar downriver from Vancouver, sitting in the tent in
24 the rain, and somebody says your pole -- the bell on
25 your pole is ringing, and I go out there, catch a

1 35-pound salmon.

2 You don't see that kind of fish anymore.
3 Before that, they used to catch 50-, 60-pound fish.
4 Now, you watch a fishing show and they get all
5 excited, we got a 20-pounder. It's -- it's just
6 getting sadder and sadder.

7 And I came to testify with you guys, I
8 believe in January, and I don't mean any disrespect,
9 but at that time when I left, I said are you -- are
10 you proud of what you've accomplished.

11 Since then, I believe -- I could be wrong,
12 but I believe it's been cut -- funding for -- for
13 hatcheries has been cut. How are we going forward?
14 How -- cutting funding is -- and maybe I'm wrong,
15 but cutting funding is not going to be doing any
16 good for -- for the hatcheries.

17 I don't know. I'm just disgusted and --
18 so once again, I ask, are you guys proud of what
19 you've accomplished since 1980? You still haven't
20 started cleaning up the -- the water downriver from
21 Bonneville dam where, if you want to eat a sturgeon,
22 they tell you cook it on a rack, don't let it sit in
23 its own grease because it's got too many pcb's, it's
24 not healthy to eat.

25 Is that the kind of fish you want to eat?

1 It's not what I want to eat. That's basically all
2 I've got. Thank you. I hope that you guys start
3 doing better because I've still got some years left
4 and I retired 45 years of construction. I want to
5 go fishing and I've gone to -- I no longer have a
6 boat, so I have to hire a guide.

7 I've gone with these guides to the Rogue
8 River -- sorry. I'm done? Good. Thank you.

9 MS. HOFFMANN: Thank you so much. Fred?

10 FRED HEUTTE: Hey, everybody. Fred
11 Heutte, spelled F-R-E-D, last name, H-E-U-T-T-E,
12 representing the Northwest Energy Coalition. Good
13 to be with you again.

14 For the 9th plan, NWECC has identified five
15 key themes. First, prioritize affordable and
16 adequate resources to meet our region's needs and a
17 reliable Northwest power system.

18 Second, maximize energy conservation and
19 demand response, renewable energy, storage and data
20 center flexibility. Third, help salmon and wildlife
21 by reducing pressure on the Columbia/Snake River
22 hydro system through a clean resource expansion
23 strategy.

24 Four, meet the clean energy and
25 conservation priorities adopted by our states and

1 utilities. Five, ensure the region continues to
2 meet our economic needs while protecting our
3 national heritage.

4 NWECC commenced the council's work and is
5 pleased to state that, in large part, the draft 9th
6 power plan meets these priorities. The draft plan
7 takes a balanced approach with a diverse portfolio
8 of mostly renewable resources, conservation and
9 energy storage.

10 This mix ensures resilience and
11 reliability and allows every part of our region to
12 contribute a fair share of both the effort and the
13 benefits. A strong 9th power plan that prioritizes
14 conservation and a diverse portfolio of clean
15 resources will also support the fish and wildlife
16 program by reducing pressure on hydrogeneration.

17 On the specific recommendations of the
18 draft 9th plan, we focus on the strong conservation
19 and demand resource targets and encouragement for
20 regional collaboration in support of the council's
21 resource strategy.

22 That includes the council's proposed model
23 of conservation standards for data center
24 performance and heat pump installation. Based on
25 the draft 9th plan analysis, we have reviewed

1 appendix Q in detail and believe that a single
2 regional conservation target should remain in place.

3 The costs and risks of moving to a two-
4 sound target delineated on state boundaries appear
5 to be larger than any net benefits.

6 First, it's important to note that with a
7 transition to multiple zones, there could be both
8 direct costs and lost opportunities for conservation
9 acquisition. Secondly, I look forward to discussing
10 the staff findings presented this afternoon on
11 additional resources to meet the adequacy standard
12 for a single conservation zone.

13 Third, we think there are elements of the
14 BPA program that can be strengthened and look
15 forward to participating in those efforts.

16 On the supply side, we support the
17 resource strategy recommendations for the region to
18 prioritize clean energy and storage resources. And
19 for transmission, we support the recommendation to
20 continue forward progress in line with west -- the
21 western transmission expansion consortium and for
22 BPA to advance its initiatives and/or connection and
23 grid expansion.

24 But there's one more thing we think the
25 council can do to take direct action to address the

1 resource and load growth challenge that we face.

2 We believe that council should establish
3 in the 9th plan an additional recommendation to
4 establish a load management form in line with
5 previous initiatives, including the wind integration
6 form that will enable us to convene -- for council
7 to convene the region and create a strategy to
8 achieve full use of our load management options.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. HOFFMANN: Thank you, Fred. Connor,
11 sorry for butchering your last name.

12 CONNOR REITEN: No problem. My name is
13 Connor Reiten, C-O-N-N-O-R R-E-I-T-E-N. I'm here on
14 behalf of Northwest Requirements Utilities and we
15 represent approximately 60 small and rural consumer-
16 owned utilities that purchase all or substantially
17 all of their power from the Bonneville Power
18 Administration.

19 NRU appreciates the substantial work
20 undertaken by the council, its staff and the
21 regional stakeholders to develop the draft 9th power
22 plan and we appreciate the opportunity to provide
23 feedback.

24 We've participated actively throughout the
25 development of the draft plan, including comments in

1 June and August emphasizing our concern about the
2 proposed regional separation of conservation
3 targets. Our comments today build upon those
4 earlier submissions.

5 First, NRU continues to strongly support a
6 single regional conservation target. We recognize
7 the value of the council's subregional analysis, but
8 the additional analysis provided in appendix Q of
9 the draft plan does not demonstrate that dual target
10 provides increased value to the region.

11 We continue to support a single
12 conservation target for the following reasons.
13 First, BPA's existing conservation funding and
14 delivered -- delivery structure already requires an
15 overwhelming majority of savings to the western
16 portion of the region, as noted by BPA and supported
17 by our own analysis and historical savings, BPA has
18 consistently acquired over 90 percent of its savings
19 from utilities in Oregon and Washington.

20 Separate targets would require new rules
21 for funding, eligibility, accounting and reporting.
22 Without providing additional value, we cannot ask
23 our members to take on this additional burden.

24 The location of the utility, whether in
25 western or eastern states, does not accurately

1 reflect the needs of those utilities and our
2 members. We should not bifurcate programs so the
3 rural customers in Montana are unable to receive the
4 same energy efficiency opportunities as rural
5 customers in Washington.

6 Finally, public power and advocacy groups
7 have all expressed near unanimous support for a
8 single conservation target. We encourage the
9 council to give significant weight to the views of
10 the utilities and the organizations responsible for
11 funding and implementing these programs.

12 We are encouraged to see the council --
13 that council has heard public power's request to
14 learn more about potential -- about potentially
15 adequate resource strategies under a single
16 conservation target. Given the information present
17 just earlier today, we will provide our feedback on
18 this new information at future public hearings and
19 comments.

20 That said, we do recommend that the
21 council test a single target strategy using all
22 available resources including demand response, which
23 will provide us with a true -- with a truly complete
24 picture of an adequate strategy.

25 In closing, NRU encourages the council to

1 consider the region's utility providers and adopt
2 the final resource strategy that maintains a single
3 regional conservation target. This approach
4 preserves the useful information produced by the
5 council's subregional analysis while supporting
6 reliability, affordability and practical --
7 practical implementation. Excuse me.

8 We appreciate council's consideration of
9 our comments throughout this process, the
10 opportunity to participate in these public sessions
11 and the continued engagement of council members and
12 staff. Thank you.

13 MS. HOFFMANN: Thank you, Connor. All
14 right. Next up, we have Abby Dalke, Tyler Troelsen
15 and Judy Stevenson.

16 ABBY. DALKE: My name is Abby Dalke, A-B-
17 B-Y D-A-L-K-E. I am the advocacy and policy
18 coordinator at Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition, and I
19 live here in Portland, and importantly, am a rate
20 payer at PacificCorp, and our coalition is striving
21 to create a future with affordable and reliable
22 clean energy that also supports strong, sustainable
23 and abundant fish populations throughout the
24 Columbia Basin.

25 I'm really grateful for all of you and the

1 council staff for your work on the draft 9th power
2 plan and thank you, of course, for the opportunity
3 to provide comment today.

4 Given the crossroads that we find
5 ourselves in, the 9th power plan and the work you
6 all are doing is uniquely positioned to chart a
7 better course for our region, one that works for all
8 the communities and families here and advance the
9 salmon and steelhead recovery.

10 In the final plan, we hope that you make a
11 few important adjustments to ensure that BPA
12 balances hydropower benefits with fish and wildlife
13 protection as directed by the Northwest Power Act.

14 First, the final power plant ought to
15 robustly integrate the Columbia Basin restoration
16 initiative and regional salmon recovery goals in
17 order to advance the comprehensive solutions
18 necessary.

19 Second, lower Snake River dam energy
20 replacement. We can replace the mere hundreds of
21 average megawatts produced annually from the four
22 lower Snake River dams with a combination of
23 conservation, flexibility, storage and transmission.

24 The council can and should provide
25 technical support and modeling with Washington

1 State's energy replacement planning processes for
2 the lower Snake River dams and incorporate those
3 into future regional power plans.

4 Lastly, the river -- the fish need a
5 river, not stagnant hot pools. This is -- this
6 includes consistent better river conditions like
7 more flow and spill, so I ask that you please
8 prioritize new clean energy resources to respond to
9 the anticipated loan growth and relieve pressure on
10 the river fish and the increasingly concerning
11 hydropower system.

12 We have tools at our disposal like new
13 clean energy and storage resources, but the region
14 needs a substantial amount of new transmission
15 infrastructure to bring clean energy resources
16 online and meet this demand.

17 I firmly believe that we have an
18 opportunity right now with the 9th power plan to
19 advance those comprehensive solutions, the needs of
20 our region, including affordable energy, resilient
21 communities, abundant salmon and friendly families
22 and neighbors.

23 We have to get this right and move past
24 the harmful status poll and false narratives that
25 want us to believe that we can't have healthy and

1 abundant salmon and a more reliable and affordable
2 energy system.

3 We can have both if we focus on these
4 priorities in the next power plan. Again, I greatly
5 appreciate your time and your expertise and
6 commitment and creativity to do so.

7 MS. HOFFMANN: Thank you, Abby. Tyler?

8 TYLER TROELSEN: Hi. I'm Tyler Troelsen,
9 T-Y-L-E-R T-R-O-E-L-S-E-N. I live in Vancouver and
10 I'm a rate payer of Clark Public Utilities. I'm
11 also the Southwest Washington organizer with the
12 Sierra Club and the Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition
13 and I'm here to speak about the kind of energy
14 future I believe the 9th power plan should help
15 build for Southwest Washington and the Columbia
16 River Basin.

17 The 9th power plan is an important
18 opportunity to build an energy system that is clean,
19 reliable, affordable and resilient while also
20 meeting our responsibility to restore healthy and
21 abundant salmon and steelhead populations.

22 The council's own guidance recognizes that
23 these responsibilities are connected, and I believe
24 our energy investments should reflect that. For
25 example, to achieve the council's own fish and

1 wildlife goals, the plan's resource strategy should
2 incorporate lower Snake River dam energy replacement
3 into our region's future power plans.

4 I also want to encourage the council to
5 put a much stronger emphasis on distributed and
6 community-based renewable energy. Southwest
7 Washington communities should have more
8 opportunities to generate clean energy locally
9 rather than relying primarily on large generation
10 projects located far away. That can mean rooftop
11 solar on homes, schools, municipal buildings,
12 businesses and warehouses, as well as community
13 solar projects.

14 Distributed generation should be treated
15 as a meaningful part of our regional energy
16 portfolio, not simply as a supplement to utility-
17 scale projects. Local energy generation can give
18 communities more control over their energy future
19 while reducing pressure on the broader transmission
20 system.

21 Second, the 9th power plan should make a
22 battery storage and other forms of energy storage a
23 major priority. We need to expand investment in
24 storage so that locally-generated renewable energy
25 can be stored and used when demand is highest and we

1 should look beyond short-term duration lithium ion
2 batteries towards long-duration storage that can
3 help communities maintain reliable power through
4 extended periods of extreme weather or low renewable
5 generation.

6 At the same time, storage projects need
7 strong safety standards and meaningful community
8 involvement in where and how they are developed.
9 Clean energy infrastructure should be something
10 communities can participate in shaping, not
11 something imposed on them.

12 Finally, we also need to make sure
13 electrification remains affordable for households.
14 As more of our transportation and heating systems
15 move to electricity, electricity will become an even
16 more important part of household budgets.

17 We need to make sure that this transition
18 not -- does not disproportionately burden low-income
19 and rural households. The draft plan recognizes
20 that wind, solar and storage can provide the most
21 cost-effective pathway for meeting future demand and
22 greatly support fish and wildlife recovery.

23 I urge the council to more robustly build
24 on this opportunity to prioritize clean energy,
25 storage, conservation and resilient infrastructure

1 while ensuring that the benefits reach communities
2 across the region. We can build an energy system
3 that is cleaner and more reliable while also
4 creating healthier rivers and stronger communities.
5 The 9th power plan should seize that opportunity.
6 Thank you.

7 MS. HOFFMANN: Thank you, Tyler. Judy?

8 JUDY STEVENSON: My name's Judy Stevenson,
9 J-U-D-Y S-T-E-V-E-N-S-O-N. I live in Portland and
10 I'm a PGE rate payer. As a rate payer, I care about
11 having an affordable, reliable, clean energy system
12 that also supports healthy and abundant salmon and
13 steelhead populations.

14 The 9th power plan will shape our region's
15 energy future for decades and it presents an
16 opportunity to advance both salmon recovery and
17 clean energy development. My first request is that
18 the council more explicitly recognize that our
19 region can replace the energy currently generated by
20 the four lower Snake River dams and incorporate that
21 future into its planning.

22 The power plan resource strategy
23 demonstrates that demand-side resources, renewable
24 energy supply, storage and expanded transmission can
25 meet growing electricity needs. The council should

1 provide technical support and modeling in
2 partnership with Washington State to replace the 700
3 average megawatts produced by the lower Snake River
4 dams while maintaining affordability and
5 reliability.

6 Planning for energy replacement and salmon
7 recovery are not competing goals. By planning now,
8 the region can create greater flexibility for fish
9 recovery while ensuring reliable power for northwest
10 communities.

11 My second request is that the council
12 strengthen its commitment to clean energy resources
13 needed to make that future possible. The draft plan
14 shows that wind, solar, storage, conservation and
15 demand response can meet future demand at low cost.

16 I urge the council to recommend that BPA
17 accelerate investments in renewable energy and
18 transition capacity so the region can meet future
19 demand with affordable, clean resources. The
20 Northwest Power Act directs the council to
21 prioritize conservation, and the cheapest megawatt
22 is often the one we never have to generate.

23 Before building expensive new generation,
24 the region should maximize energy efficiency and
25 demand response opportunities like adopting strong

1 conservation targets and encouraging region-wide
2 collaboration.

3 This is especially important as demand
4 grows from large new loads such as data centers,
5 which should contribute to grid flexibility and help
6 address the infrastructure issues that they create.
7 Developing model conservation standards can help
8 address these load growth issues, as well.

9 We don't have to choose between affordable
10 electricity and healthy salmon runs. By planning
11 for the replacement of the lower Snake River dams'
12 energy output and investing in clean energy,
13 transmission, conservation, demand response and
14 storage, the council can support salmon recovery
15 while ensuring a reliable and affordable energy
16 future for the northwest. Thank you for your time.

17 MS. HOFFMANN: Thank you, Judy. All
18 right. Next up we have Matt Schulte and Laura
19 Feldman. Hi, Matt.

20 MATT SCHULTE: Hi.

21 MS. HOFFMANN: You're up.

22 MATT SCHULTE: Matt Schulte, M-A-T-T S-C-
23 H-U-L-T-E, and I am not a water, energy or power
24 professional. I'm a musician. Nevertheless, I had
25 a thought, so -- the draft 9th power plan talks

1 about challenges and opportunities facing the
2 northwest and Portland in the coming years.

3 Among them are the need for a great deal
4 of electrical capacity, the need to make better use
5 of the existing systems, and the high-tech growth as
6 a major source of new demand.

7 Separately, the plan also discusses
8 commercial building efficiency, demand response, and
9 storage. A different and related issue is that
10 Portland's downtown has remained stuck in its
11 efforts to come back from and face current
12 challenges.

13 Portland's downtown, I believe, has a
14 potential partial solution to these challenges by
15 not treating these issues separately, but as
16 connected. To connect and address all these
17 seemingly disparate elements, I am proposing an
18 initiative called the grid connected core, and
19 before the Northwest builds enormous amounts of new
20 infrastructure to serve high-tech loads, it should
21 ask what demand is worth serving, including whether
22 the public, and not just corporations and big tech,
23 benefit and how much capacity can be created by
24 coordinating the infrastructure we already have.

25 This, in part, is what the grid connected

1 core initiative would do. I have submitted online
2 my fuller comments, as well as a summary of the grid
3 connected core initiative. Thank you.

4 MS. HOFFMANN: Thank you, Matt. And
5 Laura?

6 LAURA FELDMAN: Hi, everyone. My name is
7 Laura Feldman. I live in Portland, Oregon, PGE
8 customer. Earlier today, I was working on passive
9 PCB air sampling down on the lower Willamette, which
10 is, you know, the super fun side.

11 This is going to seem scattered and I
12 apologize for it. I'm not really prepared, but I do
13 have some feelings about this. I encountered the
14 Northwest Power and Conservation Council in around
15 1995 when I joined the first year of Americore and I
16 was in my late 30s at that time and I feel it's
17 really when I began to learn about the place,
18 homeplace, where I lived.

19 From a fish level, a salmon level, as well
20 as other issues that affect this region, and I was
21 -- Carlotta -- I don't know if anybody remembers
22 Carlotta. She came and spoke to our group and it
23 was very -- it was very moving.

24 And today when I was remembering this, I
25 thought, well, we're kind of in the same place. It

1 was sort of a dismal realization, not the same
2 place. In fact, it's worse, and I'm very sad about
3 that, needless to say. I'm glad you're still going
4 and trying to do the work. I'm sad to see -- well,
5 not --

6 Just bear with me. The Bonneville Power
7 Administration has primarily funded this -- this
8 draft plan, which gives me grave concern and -- and
9 that will be explained a little bit later.

10 I think protecting and restoring salmon
11 and steelhead in their habitat through tribal
12 leadership and stewardship is key and that means
13 avoiding boondoggles like the golden -- Goldendale
14 Pump Storage Project on Yakama lands, which is a
15 massive and heavily contested hydroelectric energy
16 facility that would destroy Pushpum, a sacred
17 cultural site for the Yakama Nation.

18 These are not solutions. You know, we
19 have to -- we have to think differently about this.
20 Public conservation should be key. Tribal -- tribal
21 leadership and public conservation should be key,
22 and dam removal. There's no way around that.

23 BPA supports nuclear -- the nuclear energy
24 push in the region via small modular nuclear
25 reactors and data centers. They need to be

1 investigated. They are linked with Energy
2 Northwest, and they resist removing the Snake River
3 dams.

4 BPA is joined with markets that are
5 Arkansas based, part of a Southwest Power pool. Are
6 they going to be making decisions about our river
7 and its habitat? I'm just really concerned and
8 salmon and habitat recovery comes about through --
9 should come about through reliable, affordable and
10 clean energy, not the way around -- we have nothing
11 if we don't have the salmon and this habitat and
12 this river and this region. I can't say that
13 passionately enough.

14 And this is a very nice plan, but it's
15 kind of vague. We need to dig deep, and we need to
16 go deep around BPA because we've been doing
17 research. That's what activists do and it's a
18 little bit stinky, so I wonder about BPA. Thank you
19 for your time.

20 MS. HOFFMANN: Thank you so much, Laura.
21 Just a reminder to those of you in the room, if
22 you're interested in testifying, please sign up on
23 one of our sign-in sheets. For those of you who
24 have joined us online, if you would like to testify
25 and not just attend in a listening capacity tonight,

1 please sign up and -- to testify. And until we have
2 further testimony, the committee will stand at
3 recess.

4 (WHEREUPON, a recess was taken.)

5 MS. HOFFMANN: Okay. I'm going to call
6 the public hearing back to order on the 9th -- the
7 draft 9th power plan and I'd like to invite Ben
8 Brint from Oregon Environmental Council to testify.
9 Thanks for being here.

10 BEN BRINT: Yeah, thanks for having me.
11 Thank you all for reconvening for a late comment. I
12 do appreciate it.

13 So yeah, good evening. My name is Ben
14 Brint. I'll spell it out. B-E-N B-R-I-N-T. And I
15 am the senior climate program director at Oregon
16 Environmental Council, founded in 1968, OEC is a
17 nonprofit and we're a nonpartisan organization
18 that's dedicated to advancing equitable innovative
19 solutions to Oregon's most pressing environmental
20 challenges.

21 And I first want to thank the council for
22 -- and the staff for its thoughtful analysis,
23 community engagement and sessions like today to have
24 feedback on the draft 9th power plan.

25 The 9th plan lands really at a pivotal

1 moment. We see surging demand from data centers,
2 greater electrification needs and population growth
3 in many parts of our region and it's colliding with
4 rising costs or climate needs and, of course, fish
5 and wildlife protections.

6 OEC really, you know, encourages the
7 council the maybe make four areas of improvement in
8 its draft plan based on what we've seen and read.
9 The first one is around energy conservation and
10 demand response. The Northwest Power Act requires
11 the council to prioritize conservation and the data
12 really shows the most cost-effective potential -- it
13 can be their -- beyond what the draft has captured.

14 We support region-wide conservation goal
15 proposed -- the proposed model conservation
16 standards for data centers and heat pumps and BPA
17 support for utilities, especially rural utilities to
18 modernize demand response delivery.

19 Second, we support clean resources and, at
20 any -- and with urgency. We know already when solar
21 and storage, like battery -- battery storage are
22 some of the top -- the best economic choices to meet
23 new and growing demand.

24 The council really should recommend that
25 the region do everything possible to remove barriers

1 to cross-gate transmission issues and direct BPA to
2 lead on acquiring renewables and extend grid
3 capacity to integrate them.

4 The third area is gas generation. We see
5 that there's an estimate of about 2100 megawatts of
6 new gas to be added to the system and we think this
7 is the wrong bet, due to climbing fuel and
8 infrastructure costs and constrained pipeline
9 system. We see that more investment, again, in
10 transmission and storage can displace this gas and
11 we encourage the council to direct BPA to focus
12 there.

13 And lastly, we want to support the load
14 management forum. We see that -- you know,
15 something that OEC does is we bring stakeholders
16 together in these types of forums and we see that
17 talking about flexible loads and having that sort of
18 coordinated regional strategy is going to be
19 essential to move all stakeholders, including state
20 and tribal governments, forward.

21 And so getting this right, it's a really
22 pivotal moment, as I said, to protect the
23 affordability of not just Oregon, but all regional
24 households, cleaner climate commitments and help
25 protect and restore salmon and wildlife in the

1 region, so thank you for the opportunity and I'll
2 submit these comments in written form, as well.

3 MS. HOFFMANN: Thank you so much, Ben. Is
4 there anybody else, Chad, who's joined us online who
5 would like to testify?

6 MR. MADRON: There is not at this time.

7 MS. HOFFMANN: Okay. Is there anybody
8 else signed up in the room who would like to testify
9 at this time?

10 (No audible response.)

11 MS. HOFFMANN: Okay. The committee will
12 stand at recess.

13 (WHEREUPON, the NINTH NORTHWEST REGIONAL
14 POWER PLAN MEETING concluded at 6:30 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

I, Shavonne Velez, do hereby certify that I reported all proceedings adduced in the foregoing matter and that the foregoing transcript pages constitutes a full, true and accurate record of said proceedings to the best of my ability.

I further certify that I am neither related to counsel or any party to the proceedings nor have any interest in the outcome of the proceedings.

IN WITNESS HEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 25th day of September, 2026.



Shavonne Velez CER No. 5422

1	5	ability 21:1	26:11
100 10:13,15	50 10:13,15 15:5	abundance 21:17	adequate 9:3
14-year-old 22:21	50- 23:3	abundant 30:23	11:9 24:16 29:15, 24
15 22:16	6	32:21 33:1,21	adjustments
16th 5:19	60 27:15	36:12	31:11
1968 43:16	60-pound 23:3	accelerate 37:17	Administration
1972 22:21	7	accepting 5:18	8:1 12:9 27:18
1980 5:5 7:15	700 19:1 37:2	accomplished	41:7
23:19	8	23:10,19	administrative
1995 40:15	8th 17:7	account 16:13	5:3 6:7
2	9	accounting 28:21	adopt 9:6 30:1
20 10:12	90 28:18	accurately 28:25	adopted 8:15
20- 10:10	9th 4:18 5:12,19	achieve 27:8	24:25
20-pounder 23:5	6:15 10:8 12:12	33:25	adopting 37:25
200,000 20:11	15:19 17:19	acquire 8:1	adoption 18:9
2021 5:9	24:14 25:5,13,18,	12:10,13 18:17	advance 26:22
2022 15:13 17:9	25 27:3,21 31:1,5	21:22	31:8,17 32:19
2026 5:19 8:15	32:18 33:14,17	acquired 28:18	36:16
2027 6:17	34:21 36:5,14	acquiring 45:2	advancing 43:18
2100 45:5	38:25 43:6,7,24,	acquisition 26:9	advocacy 29:6
3	25	act 5:4,20 7:15,	30:17
30-second 6:23	A	21,25 9:5 15:5	affect 40:20
30s 40:16	A-B- 30:16	20:12 31:13	affected 8:12
35-pound 23:1	A-M-E-R 15:2	37:20 44:10	affecting 22:21
4	A-V-A-L-O-N	action 26:25	affects 10:21
45 24:4	19:11	actively 27:24	affordability 30:6
	Abby 30:14,16	activists 42:17	37:4 45:23
	33:7	added 45:6	affordable 24:15
		additional 12:4	30:21 32:20 33:1,
		18:17,18 26:11	19 35:13 36:11
		27:3 28:8,22,23	37:19 38:9,15
		address 15:17	42:9
		26:25 38:6,8	afternoon 26:10
		39:16	agencies 19:4
		adequacy 16:17	

air 22:17 40:9	area 13:11 45:4	Bar 22:23	blueprint 9:8
alternative 15:21 17:2	areas 11:14 44:7	barriers 44:25	boat 24:6
Americore 40:15	Arkansas 42:5	based 25:24 42:5 44:8	bodies 21:6
amount 17:10 32:14	arose 17:7	basically 24:1	bombs 20:19
amounts 39:19	artificial 21:17	Basin 7:23 8:7,15 15:8 18:24 30:24 31:15 33:16	Bonneville 7:25 8:5 12:9,13 23:21 27:17 41:6
analysis 16:10 17:16,19 25:25 28:7,8,17 30:5 43:22	aspects 9:18,20	bathroom 13:7	boondoggles 41:13
analyze 17:11	assess 12:18 16:17,19,23	batteries 35:2	boundaries 26:4
and/or 26:22	attend 42:25	battery 34:22 44:21	BPA 18:17 26:14, 22 28:16,17 31:11 37:16 41:23 42:4,16,18 44:16 45:1,11
Annika 12:24	attendance 6:3	bear 41:6	BPA's 28:13
annually 19:1 31:21	attention 6:23	beaver 21:4	breaching 15:15 16:4,6,24
anticipated 32:9	audible 46:10	began 40:17	breath 20:7
anticipating 10:10	August 28:1	begin 14:16	breathe 20:15
anymore 22:20 23:2	authorized 7:14	behalf 27:14	bright 6:24 20:16
apologize 40:12	Avalon 14:19 19:9,10,13	behooves 17:20	bring 32:15 45:15
appendices 5:15	average 31:21 37:3	bell 22:24	Brint 43:8,10,14
appendix 26:1 28:8	avoiding 41:13	Ben 17:8 43:7,10, 13 46:3	broad 7:22
applicable 19:4	B	benefit 39:23	broader 34:19
appointed 7:20	B-E-N 43:14	benefits 25:13 26:5 31:12 36:1	brought 14:2
appreciates 27:19	B-R-I-N-T 43:14	bet 45:7	budgets 35:16
approach 25:7 30:3	B-Y 30:17	bifurcate 29:2	build 28:3 33:15, 18 35:23 36:2
approve 6:14 9:6	back 12:22,25 19:20 21:8 22:3 39:11 43:6	big 10:21 39:22	building 37:23 39:8
approved 16:7	badges 13:14	biggest 21:2	buildings 34:11
approximately 9:7 27:15	balance 8:24	bill 22:13	buildout 11:20
	balanced 25:7	bit 7:12 8:6 19:14 41:9 42:18	builds 39:19
	balances 31:12	blind 21:14	
	bank 13:8	blooms 20:16	

burden 28:23 35:18	cents 22:16	climbing 45:7	comments 4:19, 21 5:18 6:3,9,10, 11,13 7:4 12:23 13:20 14:1,3,6, 12,17 17:10 27:25 28:3 29:19 30:9 40:2 46:2
business 5:2 15:11	Chad 46:4	closer 19:14	commercial 39:8
businesses 34:12	Chair 12:22	closing 29:25	commitment 33:6 37:12
butchering 27:11	challenge 27:1	Club 33:12	commitments 45:24
C	challenges 39:1, 12,14 43:20	coalition 24:12 30:18,20 33:12	committee 43:2 46:11
C-O-N-N-O-R 27:13	change 10:23 21:7 22:19,20	code 14:10	communities 17:24 31:8 32:21 34:7,18 35:3,10 36:1,4 37:10
C-O-U-N-C-I-L 5:17	channel 20:1	collaborate 19:3	community 34:12 35:7 43:23
call 4:14,21 21:10 43:5	character 17:23	collaboration 25:20 38:2	community- based 34:6
called 39:18	charging 22:16	colleague 6:21 7:4	competing 37:7
camas 21:3	chart 31:6	colleagues 4:13	complete 29:23
capacity 11:23 12:19 18:13,20 37:18 39:4,23 42:25 45:3	cheap 22:17	collect 14:4	comprehensive 31:17 32:19
capitalize 20:23	cheapest 37:21	collective 21:2	computer 7:10 16:15
captured 44:13	choices 44:22	colliding 44:3	conceivable 17:1
car 22:14	choked 20:11	colonialism 20:13	concern 28:1 41:8
care 21:8,9 36:10	choose 38:9	Columbia 7:23 8:6,13,15 15:7 18:24 30:24 31:15 33:15	concerned 16:3,5 18:7 42:7
carefully 6:13	Christian 14:3	Columbia/snake 24:21	concluded 15:13
Carlotta 40:21,22	circulated 6:6	combination 31:22	concrete 20:15
carried 17:16	Clark 18:5 22:13 33:10	combined 11:22	conditions 12:1 16:18 32:6
catch 22:25 23:3	clean 11:23 24:22,24 25:14 26:18 30:22 32:8, 13,15 33:18 34:8 35:9,24 36:11,17 37:12,19 38:12 42:10 44:19	comfortable 13:23	
cattails 21:3	cleaner 36:3 45:24	commenced 25:4	
cavern 20:2	cleaning 23:20	comment 5:13 11:6 13:1,5 14:10 31:3 43:11	
center 12:6 24:20 25:23	climate 15:2 22:19,20 43:15 44:4 45:24	commenting 6:1	
centers 38:4 41:25 44:1,16			

Congress 7:15	continued 30:11	12,13,21,25	cutting 23:14,15
connect 39:16	continues 25:1	30:11 31:1,24	
connected 10:5	28:5	34:4 35:23 36:18,	D
33:23 39:16,18,	contribute 25:12	25 37:11,16,20	
25 40:3	38:5	38:14 40:14 43:8,	D-A-L-K-E 30:17
connection 12:8	control 34:18	16,21 44:7,11,24	Dalke 30:14,16
26:22	convene 27:6,7	45:11	dam 16:4,5 23:21
connects 9:17	converted 20:7	council's 4:18	31:19 34:2 41:22
Connor 22:8	cook 23:22	5:8,16 6:12 8:2,9	dammed 20:6
27:10,12,13	cool 20:17	10:7 12:11 25:4,	damn 20:20
30:13	coordinated	20,22 28:7 30:5,8	
conservation 5:6	45:18	33:22,25	dams 15:16,25
7:14 11:16 12:13,	coordinating	County 22:13	16:2,21,25 17:2,
17 15:6,22 24:18,	39:24	couple 6:18 9:15	13,18 19:2 20:21
25 25:8,14,18,23	coordinator	12:21	31:22 32:2 36:20
26:2,8,12 28:2,6,	30:18	court 6:2 14:6	37:4 42:3
12,13 29:8,16	core 11:12 39:18	courteous 13:19,	dams' 19:5 38:11
30:3 31:23 35:25	40:1,3	22	dare 20:21
37:14,21 38:1,7,	corner 21:18	cover 7:13	data 12:6 24:19
13 40:14 41:20,	corporations	crashing 19:21	25:23 38:4 41:25
21 44:9,11,14,15	39:22	create 15:23 27:7	44:1,11,16
consideration	cost 9:12 12:18	30:21 37:8 38:6	deal 39:3
16:5 30:8	16:12,20 37:15	created 39:23	dealt 10:18
considered 6:13	cost- 16:10	creating 36:4	decades 36:15
consistent 8:2	cost-effective	creativity 33:6	decision 6:14,16
12:11 32:6	11:3 35:21 44:12	critical 8:22	decisions 10:2
consistently 15:8	costly 17:1	cross-gate 45:1	42:6
28:18	costs 17:3 26:3,8	crossroads 31:4	decline 15:10
consortium 26:21	44:4 45:8	cultural 41:17	declined 15:8
constrained 45:8	council 4:16 5:5,	current 5:8 19:21	dedicated 43:18
constraints 16:20	10,11,18,20,21	39:11	deep 42:15,16
construction	6:6,14,15 7:14,20	customer 12:15	defacement
24:4	8:8,14 15:7	40:8	21:15
consumer- 27:15	16:10,12,15 17:9,	customers 29:3,5	defer 11:19
contested 41:15	11,17 19:3 26:25	cut 23:12,13	delays 18:14
continue 26:20	27:2,6,20 29:9,		
28:11			

delineated 26:4 delivered 28:14 delivery 28:14 44:18 demand 11:17 12:16 24:19 25:19 29:22 32:16 34:25 35:21 37:15,19, 25 38:3,13 39:6, 8,21 44:1,10,18, 23 demand-side 11:15 36:23 demonstrate 28:9 demonstrates 36:23 deny 22:20 dependence 15:19 depresses 20:1 designated 13:11 designed 15:19 destroy 41:16 detail 26:1 detriment 21:2 develop 5:5 7:21 16:13 27:21 developed 8:10 35:8 Developing 38:7 development 9:22 27:25 36:17 differently 41:19 dig 42:15	diminishing 15:20 direct 12:8 26:8, 25 45:1,11 directed 31:13 directive 9:4 directly 9:19 10:7 director 43:15 directs 5:5 37:20 discusses 39:7 discussing 26:9 disgusted 23:17 dismal 41:1 disparate 39:17 displace 45:10 disposal 32:12 disproportionatel y 35:18 disrespect 23:8 distributed 34:5, 14 diverse 25:7,14 diverted 20:6 door 13:8 dot 5:17 Douglas 14:4 downriver 22:23 23:20 downtown 39:10, 13 draft 4:18 5:12, 15,19 7:7 8:3 9:14 10:8 11:1,8, 11,14,24 12:12	17:14 18:13 25:5, 6,18,25 27:21,25 28:9 31:1 35:19 37:13 38:25 41:8 43:7,24 44:8,13 dredged 20:1 drive 22:16 dual 28:9 due 45:7 dull 19:24 duration 35:1 dwindle 21:21 E E-M-I-N-E-T-H 22:12 E-R-M-A-N 19:12 earlier 12:8 28:4 29:17 40:8 early 6:17 Earth's 21:1 eastern 28:25 eat 23:21,24,25 24:1 ecocide 20:12 economic 25:2 44:22 economical 9:3 11:10 economics 15:24 effective 16:11 effectiveness 12:18 effects 16:24	efficiency 11:17 12:14 15:22 17:4 29:4 37:24 39:8 efficient 9:3 11:9 effort 25:12 efforts 26:15 39:11 eighth 5:9 electric 5:6 16:11 18:9,10 22:13,14 electrical 39:4 electricity 10:4 35:15 36:25 38:10 electrification 35:13 44:2 element 8:9 elements 26:13 39:17 elevator 13:8 eligibility 28:21 elimination 17:1 email 13:2,3 embody 21:6 Emineth 22:7,11 emphasis 34:5 emphasizing 28:1 enable 27:6 encountered 40:13 encourage 5:25 29:8 34:4 45:11 encouraged 29:12
---	---	--	---

encouragement 25:19	essential 45:19	F	firmly 32:17
encourages 29:25 44:6	establish 27:2,4	F-R-E-D 24:11	fish 7:18,24 8:7, 12,15,22 15:18 16:8,14,21 17:5, 22 21:22 22:21 23:2,3,25 25:15 30:23 31:12 32:4, 10 33:25 35:22 37:8 40:19 44:4
encouraging 38:1	established 15:6	face 20:12 27:1 39:11	fishing 23:4 24:5
end 6:16	estimate 45:5	face-up 20:10	five-year 5:11
energy 7:17 8:23 11:16,17,23,25 12:14,17 15:2,18 16:24 19:5 20:22, 24 24:12,18,19, 24 25:9 26:18 29:4 30:22 31:19 32:1,8,13,15,20 33:2,13,18,24 34:2,6,8,15,17, 18,22,24 35:9,24 36:2,11,15,17,19, 24 37:6,12,17,24 38:12,15,23 41:15,23 42:1,10 44:9	evening 5:1 14:22 43:13	facility 41:16	flexibility 24:20 31:23 37:8 38:5
engaged 5:10	excess 21:24	facing 39:1	flexible 45:17
engagement 30:11 43:23	excessive 8:10	fact 41:2	flow 8:18 32:7
enhance 8:12	excited 23:5	factors 18:8	focus 25:18 33:3 45:11
enormous 39:19	Excuse 30:7	fair 25:12	folders 6:24
ensure 25:1 31:11	existing 10:3 28:13 39:5	false 32:24	folks 6:19 7:6
ensures 9:3 25:10	expand 18:13 34:23	families 31:8 32:21	foods 21:13
ensuring 11:9 36:1 37:9 38:15	expanded 36:24	fancy 13:14 14:10	forecast 10:11
Environment 15:3	expanding 18:14, 19	February 17:9	forgotten 20:9
environmental 43:8,16,19	expansion 24:22 26:21,23	feed 21:22	form 27:4,6 46:2
equitable 43:18	expects 6:15	feedback 27:23 29:17 43:24	forms 34:22
	expensive 37:23	feel 13:13,17 21:12 40:16	Forty-foot 20:2
	expertise 33:5	feelings 40:13	forum 45:14
	explained 41:9	Feldman 38:19 40:6,7	forums 45:16
	explicit 16:3	fill 4:11	forward 9:2,14 10:10 11:15 23:13 26:9,15,20 45:20
	explicitly 36:18	filled 20:6	found 5:24 6:12
	exploitative 21:20	film 13:9	founded 43:16
	explore 17:20	filming 13:11	Fred 22:7 24:9,10 27:10
	expressed 29:7	final 6:14,16 11:8 30:2 31:10,14	
	extend 45:2	Finally 29:6 35:12	
	extended 35:4	find 31:4	
	extreme 35:4	findings 26:10	

free 13:13,17 20:17 Frenchman's 22:22 friendly 13:16 32:21 front 4:11 7:21 fuel 20:25 45:7 full 5:23 13:3 27:8 fuller 40:2 fun 40:10 funded 41:7 funding 15:9 23:12,14,15 28:13,21 29:11 future 9:9,12 10:11,20,25 16:18 19:6 20:21 29:18 30:21 32:3 33:14 34:3,18 35:21 36:15,21 37:13,15,18 38:16	generations 21:5 Genesis 16:16,23 17:17 get all 23:4 give 7:16 13:1,20 21:5 29:9 34:17 glad 41:3 globally 21:21 goal 44:14 goals 11:23 18:23 31:16 34:1 37:7 golden 41:13 Goldendale 41:13 Gonnerman 14:19 19:10,11, 17 good 23:16 24:8, 12 43:13 governments 45:20 Governors 7:18 grateful 30:25 grave 41:8 grease 23:23 great 4:16 39:3 greater 7:16 18:22 37:8 44:2 greatly 33:4 35:22 green 20:16 grid 15:22 18:21 26:23 38:5 39:18, 25 40:2 45:2 group 40:22	groups 29:6 growing 9:11 36:25 44:23 grows 38:4 growth 10:9,14, 20 11:1 27:1 32:9 38:8 39:5 44:2 guidance 33:22 guide 24:6 guides 24:7 guys 23:7,18 24:2 H H-E-U-T-T-E 24:11 H-U-L-T-E 38:23 habitat 8:19 21:13 41:11 42:7, 8,11 hands 13:15 happen 10:1 hard 6:24 13:20 harmful 32:24 harvestable 15:15 hatcheries 23:13, 16 health 20:5 21:2,6 healthier 36:4 healthy 15:14 23:24 32:25 33:20 36:12 38:10 hear 4:21 7:10 11:6	heard 22:2 29:13 hearing 4:18 5:4 6:5 11:5 43:6 hearings 5:21,23 29:18 heat 25:24 44:16 heating 35:14 heavily 41:15 heed 21:10 heeded 22:2 heighten 18:12 helpful 14:5,11 heritage 25:3 Heutte 22:7 24:10,11 Hey 18:3 24:10 high 9:9 high-tech 39:5,20 highest 34:25 hire 24:6 historical 28:17 Hoffmann 4:8,15 7:13 14:15 18:1 19:8,13 22:6 24:9 27:10 30:13 33:7 36:7 38:17,21 40:4 42:20 43:5 46:3,7,11 hold 5:20 6:22 7:3 20:7 holding 12:24 homeplace 40:18 homes 34:11 hope 16:1,7 24:2
G G-O-N-N- 19:11 gas 11:24 12:19 18:15,19 45:4,6, 10 gate 14:17 generate 34:8 37:22 generated 36:19 generation 17:12 18:15 34:9,14,17 35:5 37:23 45:4			

31:10 hot 32:5 household 35:16 households 35:13,19 45:24 hundred 21:16 hundreds 31:20 hurting 21:12 hydro 8:12 10:21, 23 12:1 24:22 hydroelectric 15:20,25 41:15 hydrogeneration 25:16 hydropower 31:12 32:11	12:12 17:18 included 6:7 includes 4:23 5:22 25:22 32:6 including 5:14 18:9 27:5,25 29:22 32:20 39:21 45:19 incorporate 19:4 32:2 34:2 36:20 increase 10:13 15:21,22 increased 15:9 17:2,3 18:8 28:10 increases 18:12 increasing 17:5 increasingly 32:10 Indivisible 15:3 industries 20:24 industry 20:7 information 5:14 29:16,18 30:4 infrastructure 32:15 35:9,25 38:6 39:20,24 45:8 initiative 18:25 31:16 39:18 40:1, 3 initiatives 26:22 27:5 innovative 43:18 insignificance 22:2 insist 20:23	installation 25:24 Instructions 6:11 integrate 18:20 31:15 45:3 integration 12:7 27:5 interest 17:11 interested 6:1 42:22 intro 7:7 investigated 42:1 investing 38:12 investment 34:23 45:9 investments 33:24 37:17 invite 4:9 13:4 43:7 involvement 35:8 ion 35:1 issue 15:17 17:7 39:9 issues 15:18 38:6,8 39:15 40:20 45:1	38:17 June 8:14 28:1 justify 21:15 K K-R- 15:1 key 8:20 10:8,17 11:21 24:15 41:12,20,21 kid 22:22 killed 20:11 kilowatt 22:16 kind 8:17 11:11 13:12,15 23:2,25 33:13 40:25 42:15 Kramer 7:1 14:18, 24 15:1 Kujala 17:8 L L-E-E-D 18:4 lakes 20:5 lamprey 21:4 land 20:25 21:11, 14,23 lands 41:14 43:25 landscape 15:24 large 25:5 34:9 38:4 larger 26:5 lastly 32:4 45:13 late 40:16 43:11
I Idaho 5:22 7:19 identified 24:14 impact 16:14,19 implementation 18:24 30:7 implementing 29:11 important 9:16,25 11:13 26:6 31:11 33:17 35:16 38:3 importantly 30:19 imposed 35:11 improve 11:7 improvement 44:7 include 11:2,24		J J-U-D-Y 36:9 January 23:8 Jenn 7:4 14:16 joined 40:15 42:4, 24 46:4 joining 4:9 14:22 Judy 30:15 36:7,8	

latest 5:10	39:20 45:17	magnified 20:13	means 41:12
Laura 38:18 40:5, 6,7 42:20	loan 32:9	maintain 20:24 35:3	measures 8:17, 18 15:9,22
lead 18:19 45:2	Local 34:17	maintaining 37:4	meet 9:8,13 10:25 11:3,18 20:22 24:16,24 25:2 26:11 32:16 36:25 37:15,18 44:22
leadership 41:12, 21	locally 34:8	maintains 30:2	meeting 4:14 8:23 11:23 13:3 33:20 35:21
Leanne 6:21	locally-generated 34:24	major 34:23 39:6	meets 12:10 25:6
learn 29:14 40:17	located 6:2 34:10	majority 28:15	megawatt 37:21
lease 22:14	location 28:24	make 5:3 6:16 7:11 9:1 10:2 11:8 12:5 13:4,22 20:19 31:10 34:21 35:12,17 37:13 39:4 44:7	megawatts 19:1 31:21 37:3 45:5
leave 6:8	logistics 6:19 12:21 13:6	making 6:14 42:6	member 6:9 7:12
Leed 7:2 14:18 18:3	long-duration 35:2	management 27:4,8 45:14	members 4:16 6:6 7:20 28:23 29:2 30:11
left 20:20 23:9 24:3	long-term 16:24	managing 10:18	memo 17:8
lesson 21:25	longer 19:23 24:5	mandates 16:12	men's 13:9
level 9:9 40:19	loss 20:4 21:1,12	manufactured 21:18	mentioned 12:8
lie 20:10	lost 26:8	Margy 4:15	mere 31:20
Life 20:7	lot 9:17 10:16 11:13	Mark 7:2 14:18 18:2,3 19:8	methods 16:11
LIGHT 7:5	low 12:1 35:4 37:15	markedly 17:4	mic 19:14
likelihood 17:5	low-income 35:18	market 18:10	mid-august 5:12
linked 42:1	lower 15:16 16:1, 25 17:3,12,18 19:2,5 31:19,22 32:2 34:2 36:20 37:3 38:11 40:9	markets 42:4	migrating 8:22
list 4:20 16:2	lowest 16:12	massive 41:15	minds 20:12
listen 5:1		material 20:20	minutes 6:20 13:25
listening 42:25		Matt 38:18,19,20, 22 40:4	mitigate 8:11 11:19 15:10 21:20
lithium 35:1		maximize 24:18 37:24	mix 10:22 11:3,15 25:10
live 18:4 22:12 30:19 33:9 36:9 40:7		meaningful 34:15 35:7	
lived 19:25 40:18			
load 10:9,14,19, 25 18:8,12 27:1, 4,8 38:8 45:13	M		
loads 9:11,13 10:11,12 38:4	M-A-R-K 18:4		
	M-A-T-T 38:22		
	machinery 20:18		
	MADRON 46:6		

model 16:23 25:22 38:7 44:15 modeling 16:15 31:25 37:1 models 17:17,21 modernize 44:18 modular 41:24 moment 44:1 45:22 Montana 5:22 7:19 29:3 motion 19:25 move 19:14 32:23 35:15 45:19 moving 8:21 26:3 40:23 mulling 19:25 multiple 26:7 municipal 34:11 musician 38:24	neighbors 32:22 net 26:5 Network 15:3 nice 42:14 NOAA 15:13 noise 20:18 non-power 16:20 nonpartisan 43:17 nonprofit 43:17 northwest 5:4,12 6:15 7:13,15 10:13 15:5,6 16:9 17:24 24:12,17 27:14 31:13 37:9, 20 38:16 39:2,19 40:14 42:2 44:10 note 13:25 26:6 noted 28:16 nourish 21:23 NRU 27:19 28:5 29:25 nuclear 41:23,24 NWEC 24:14 25:4	one-minute 6:22 online 4:23,24 5:24 6:10,12 14:7,13 32:16 40:1 42:24 46:4 onsite 8:17 open 11:5 operation 16:16 operations 16:21 opportunities 26:8 29:4 34:8 37:25 39:1 opportunity 6:20 17:25 27:22 30:10 31:2 32:18 33:18 35:24 36:5, 16 46:1 optimize 17:21 options 17:12 27:8 order 4:15,22 5:2 6:25 18:20 31:17 43:6 Oregon 4:16 5:22 7:19 15:3 28:19 40:7 43:8,15 45:23 Oregon's 43:19 org 5:17 organization 43:17 organizations 29:10 organizer 13:3 33:11 outdated 17:1	output 38:12 overwhelming 28:15 owned 27:16 P P-A-T-T-I 15:1 Pacific 17:24 Pacificcorp 30:20 pain 20:23 part 8:16 10:22 14:1 25:5,11 34:15 35:16 39:25 42:5 partial 39:14 participate 14:11 30:10 35:10 participated 27:24 participating 26:15 participation 7:22 partnership 37:2 parts 44:3 passage 8:18 passionately 42:13 passive 40:8 past 32:23 pathway 35:21 Patti 7:1 14:18, 21,22,24 15:1 18:1 pay 6:23 22:12
N name's 36:8 narratives 32:24 narrow 9:19 Nation 41:17 national 25:3 natural 11:24 12:19 18:15,18 necessity 21:15 needed 37:13 needless 41:3 negative 20:25	O obligation 20:9 ocean 19:20 October 5:19 OEC 43:16 44:6 45:15 official 14:1 offsite 8:18		

payer 18:5,7 30:20 33:10 36:10	14,22 37:13 38:25 39:7 41:8 42:14 43:7,24,25 44:8	Portland 30:19 36:9 39:2 40:7	preserves 30:4
PCB 40:9		Portland's 39:10, 13	pressing 43:19
pcb's 23:23	plan's 18:25 34:1	positioned 31:6	pressure 24:21 25:16 32:9 34:19
people 4:21 6:25 20:9,25 21:10,21 22:20	planes 20:19	potential 10:23 29:14 39:14 44:12	previous 27:5
percent 10:13,15 28:18	planning 7:17 9:1,17,22 10:6 32:1 36:21 37:6,7 38:10	potentially 29:14	primarily 16:21 34:9 41:7
performance 25:24	plans 17:18 19:6 32:3 34:3	power 4:18 5:4,6, 8,9,11,12 6:8,15 7:8,14,15,23,25 8:1,9 9:1,4,5,10, 16,17,18 10:6,9, 12 11:10,12,14 12:9,11 15:5,6, 19,20,25 16:6,9, 11,13,17,18 17:2, 4,7,11,12,19,21 18:25 19:6 24:17 25:6,13 27:17,21 29:6 31:1,5,13,14 32:3,18 33:4,14, 17 34:3,21 35:3 36:5,14,22 37:9, 20 38:23,25 40:14 41:6 42:5 43:7,24 44:10	priorities 8:20 24:25 25:6 33:4
periods 35:4	plant 31:14	power's 29:13	prioritize 24:15 26:18 32:8 35:24 37:21 44:11
permitting 9:24 12:6	play 16:7	powerful 19:22	prioritizes 25:13
Peter 13:11	pleased 25:5	practical 30:6,7	priority 18:22 34:23
PGE 36:10 40:7	poem 19:18	prepare 18:17	problem 27:12
picture 29:24	point 7:16 11:4 13:7 16:7	prepared 19:18 40:12	proceedings 13:10
piece 8:8 9:19	poison 20:11,25	present 29:16	process 8:11 11:5 14:12 30:9
pipeline 45:8	pole 22:24,25	presentation 17:8	processes 32:1
pivotal 43:25 45:22	policy 30:17	presented 26:10	produced 19:1 30:4 31:21 37:3
place 26:2 40:17, 25 41:2	poll 32:24	presents 36:15	professional 38:24
plan 4:18 5:6,7,8, 9,10,11,12,15,19 6:8,15,16 7:8,23 8:2,3,10,16 9:2, 14,16 10:9,18 11:2,8,9,12,15,24 12:11,12 15:11, 19 16:4,6,9,13 17:7,14,19 18:9, 13 24:14 25:6,13, 18,25 27:3,22,25 28:9 31:2,5,10 32:18 33:4,14,17 34:21 35:19 36:5,	pollute 22:17		program 7:24 8:7, 16 25:16 26:14 43:15
	pool 42:5		programs 29:2,11
	pools 32:5		progress 26:20
	population 44:2		Project 41:14
	populations 15:7, 15 17:22 30:23 33:21 36:13		projecting 10:11
	portal 14:10		projects 34:10, 13,17 35:6
	portfolio 11:2 25:7,14 34:16		proposed 25:22
	portion 15:25 28:16		

28:2 44:15 proposing 39:17 protect 8:11 45:22,25 protecting 7:17 17:22 25:2 41:10 protection 16:22 31:13 protections 44:5 proud 23:10,18 provide 4:19 6:20 9:11 11:22,25 16:10,11 21:15, 24 27:22 29:17, 23 31:3,24 35:20 37:1 provided 4:20 28:8 providers 30:1 providing 28:22 public 4:14,17,19 5:4,13,20 8:11 11:5,6 12:23 13:1,20 14:9,17 17:10 18:6 29:6, 13,18 30:10 33:10 39:22 41:20,21 43:6 PUD 22:13,14 pull 19:14 pulled 19:21 pump 25:24 41:14 pumps 44:16 purchase 27:16 purview 10:7	push 41:24 pushing 22:18 Pushpum 41:16 put 9:2,14 10:10 11:15 18:22 34:5 Q QR 14:10 questions 13:14, 18 quick 7:7 R R-E-I-T-E-N 27:13 rack 23:22 rain 22:24 raise 13:15 range 10:16 rate 18:5,7 30:19 33:10 36:10 rates 10:5 22:15 reach 36:1 reactors 41:25 read 44:8 real 8:24 realization 41:1 realize 15:18 reasonable 17:20 reasons 28:12 receive 29:3 received 6:13 recess 43:3,4	46:12 reclaim 20:3 recognize 21:11 28:6 36:18 recognizes 33:22 35:19 recommend 18:16,17 29:20 37:16 44:24 recommendation 26:19 27:3 recommendation s 8:4 11:13 12:4, 12 25:17 26:17 reconvening 43:11 record 5:3 6:3,7 14:1 recovery 16:8 17:5 18:23 31:9, 16 35:22 36:16 37:7,9 38:14 42:8 reduce 15:19 reduced 19:24 reducing 24:21 25:16 34:19 redundant 16:1 reference 16:4 referred 5:9 reflect 29:1 33:24 region 7:17,18 9:2,8 10:10,14 11:7 18:19 25:1, 11 26:17 27:7 28:10,16 31:7 32:13,20 36:2,19 37:8,18,24 40:20	41:24 42:12 44:3, 25 46:1 region's 19:6 24:16 30:1 34:3 36:14 region-wide 38:1 44:14 regional 5:5 7:23 8:23 11:2 16:17 17:21 18:23 25:20 26:2 27:21 28:2,6 30:3 31:16 32:3 34:15 45:18, 23 Reiten 22:8 27:12,13 relate 8:17 related 16:20 39:9 relatives 21:12 released 5:11 20:15 reliability 25:11 30:6 37:5 reliable 9:4 11:10 24:17 30:21 33:1, 19 35:3 36:3,11 37:9 38:15 42:9 reliance 15:21 17:2 relieve 32:9 relying 34:9 remain 26:2 remained 39:10 remains 35:13 remembering 40:24
--	---	--	---

remembers 40:21	7:21 16:9 28:14 44:10	45:25	rules 28:20
remind 15:4,12	research 42:17	restoring 15:14 41:10	run 17:17 20:17
reminder 14:9 19:22 42:21	resilience 25:10	result 17:3 18:15	runs 38:10
removal 41:22	resilient 32:20 33:19 35:25	resulting 18:8	rural 27:15 29:3,4 35:19 44:17
remove 44:25	resist 42:2	retired 22:15 24:4	S
removing 42:2	resource 10:3,22 11:20 12:14 18:25 24:22 25:19,21 26:17 27:1 29:15 30:2 34:1 36:22	retirement 10:3,4	S-C- 38:22
render 15:24	resources 8:2 9:24 10:3,21,23 11:2,3,16,18 12:10,16 18:18, 21 24:16 25:8,15 26:11,18 29:22 32:8,13,15 36:23 37:12,19 44:19	return 20:8	S-T-E-V-E-N-S-O- N 36:9
renewable 18:18, 20 24:19 25:8 34:6,24 35:4 36:23 37:17	respectfully 17:16	review 5:6,11,13 6:8	sacred 41:16
renewables 11:21 12:16 45:2	respond 32:8	reviewed 25:25	sacrifice 21:6
repeatedly 20:4	response 11:17 17:13 24:19 29:22 37:15,25 38:13 39:8 44:10, 18 46:10	riches 21:16	sad 41:2,4
replace 19:1 31:20 36:19 37:2	responsibilities 8:1,25 33:23	ringing 22:25	sadder 23:6
replacement 19:6 31:20 32:1 34:2 37:6 38:11	responsibility 33:20	rising 44:4	safety 35:7
reporter 6:3 14:6	responsible 9:19 29:10	risk 9:12 11:1	salmon 15:7 18:23 20:10,20 21:4 22:22 23:1 24:20 30:18 31:9, 16 32:21 33:1,12, 21 36:12,16 37:6 38:10,14 40:19 41:10 42:8,11 45:25
reporting 28:21	restoration 8:19 18:24 31:15	risks 26:3	sampling 40:9
represent 27:15	restore 33:20	river 7:23 8:6,13, 15 15:8,14,16 16:2,25 17:13,18 19:2,5,23 20:7,10 22:4 24:8,21 31:19,22 32:2,4, 5,6,10 33:16 34:2 36:20 37:3 38:11 42:2,6,12	Save 30:18 33:12
represented 5:21		rivers 36:4	savings 28:15,17, 18
representing 24:12		road 22:19	scale 34:17
request 17:17 29:13 36:17 37:11		robustly 31:15 35:23	scattered 40:11
requested 17:13		Rogue 24:7	scenario 16:23
require 15:15 28:20		rooftop 34:10	schedule 5:23
Requirements 27:14		room 6:2 13:6,19 42:21 46:8	schools 34:11
requires 5:20		rows 4:11	Schulte 38:18,20, 22

scream 20:14	Sierra 33:12	32:19 41:18 43:19	start 14:20,23,24 22:10 24:2
screen 7:10	sign 4:20,24 6:1, 22 12:23 42:22 43:1	sort 41:1 45:17	started 23:20
searching 19:19	sign-in 42:23	soul 20:2	state 4:16 5:21 14:25 19:4 25:5 26:4 37:2 45:19
seasonal 20:5	sign-up 12:24	sound 15:11 26:4	State's 32:1
seemingly 39:17	signed 4:22 6:25 46:8	source 39:6	stated 17:9
seize 36:5	significant 10:14 17:10 29:9	sources 15:20, 21,25 17:3	statement 5:3
semblance 21:17	silenced 19:24	Southwest 33:11, 15 34:6 42:5	states 7:19 24:25 28:25
senior 43:15	simple 15:24	space 13:23	status 32:24
Separate 28:20	simply 34:16	speak 4:25 33:13	steelhead 21:3 31:9 33:21 36:13 41:11
separately 39:7, 15	simulate 16:16	speaks 19:23 20:4	Stevenson 30:15 36:8
separation 28:2	simultaneously 17:22	specific 8:4 25:17	stewardship 41:12
September 15:13	single 26:1,12 28:6,11 29:8,15, 21 30:2	spell 14:25 43:14	stinky 42:18
serve 39:20	sit 23:22	spelled 24:11	stocks 15:14
serving 39:21	site 41:17	spent 15:9	stolen 21:18
sessions 30:10 43:23	siting 9:24	spill 32:7	storage 11:22 12:19 24:19 25:9 26:18 31:23 32:13 34:22,24 35:2,6,20,25 36:24 37:14 38:14 39:9 41:14 44:21 45:10
set 10:4 14:2	sitting 22:23	spoil 21:16	stored 34:25
settled 7:6	slide 14:8	spoke 40:22	strategies 29:15
shape 36:14	small 27:15 41:24	spread 13:17	strategy 11:11,21 18:25 24:23 25:21 26:17 27:7 29:21,24 30:2 34:1 36:22 45:18
shaping 35:10	Snake 15:14,16 16:1,25 17:12,18 19:2,5 31:19,22 32:2 34:2 36:20 37:3 38:11 42:2	staff 6:6,9 12:24 13:13,15 17:13 26:10 27:20 30:12 31:1 43:22	
share 12:13 13:23 25:12	solar 34:11,13 35:20 37:14 44:20	stagnant 32:5	
sheets 6:2 12:24 42:23	solution 39:14	stakeholders 27:21 45:15,19	
short 7:9	solutions 31:17	stand 43:2 46:12	
short-term 35:1		standard 26:11	
show 10:21,24 21:6 23:4		standards 25:23 35:7 38:7 44:16	
shows 37:14 44:12		standing 7:8	
side 12:16 26:16 40:10			

strengthen 37:12	support 12:15 25:15,20 26:16, 19 28:5,11 29:7 31:25 35:22 37:1 38:14 44:14,17, 19 45:13	talk 8:3	three-minute 6:22
strengthened 26:14	supported 11:12 12:3 28:16	talked 11:14	tidepools 19:19
striving 30:20	supporting 30:5	talking 45:17	Tim 22:7,10,11
strong 20:11 25:13,18 30:22 35:7 37:25	supports 30:22 36:12 41:23	talks 38:25	time 4:20 14:24 19:7 22:5 23:9 33:5 35:6 38:16 40:16 42:19 46:6, 9
stronger 34:5 36:4	surge 19:25	target 26:2,4 28:6,9,12 29:8, 16,21 30:3	times 8:22 11:25
strongly 28:5	surging 44:1	targets 25:19 28:3,20 38:1	today 6:9 9:11 14:12 28:3 29:17 31:3 40:8,24 43:23
structure 28:14	survival 15:18	taste 21:22	today's 4:17
stuck 39:10	sustainable 30:22	Team 15:3	told 19:20
study 15:13	Sustenance 21:21	tech 39:22	tonight 4:14 6:21 42:25
surgeon 21:4 23:21	system 8:13 9:10, 18,23 10:12 11:25 12:2 16:17 17:11,21 18:15 24:17,22 32:11 33:2,18 34:20 36:2,11 45:6,9	technical 5:15 31:25 37:1	tool 16:16
submissions 28:4	systems 35:14 39:5	telling 21:5	tools 32:12
submit 6:9 14:6 46:2	T	tells 20:16	top 16:2 44:22
submitted 40:1	T-R-O-E-L-S-E-N 33:9	tent 22:23	topic 13:24
submitting 6:11 14:13	T-Y-L-E-R 33:9	terms 19:23	totally 4:12
subregional 28:7 30:5	table 14:20 22:9	test 29:21	transcript 6:5
substantial 27:19 32:14	takeaways 10:8	testify 4:21,24 23:7 42:24 43:1,8 46:5,8	transition 26:7 35:17 37:18
substantially 27:16	takes 25:7	testifying 42:22	transmission 9:21,23 11:20 12:5,6 18:13,14, 19 26:19,21 31:23 32:14 34:19 36:24 38:13 45:1,10
summary 40:2	taking 16:13	testimony 6:21 43:2	transportation 35:14
super 40:10		text 5:14 16:4	treated 34:14
supplement 34:16		themes 24:15	
supply 9:4 11:10 16:18 17:4 26:16 36:24		thing 26:24	
		things 9:15 10:5, 17	
		thought 7:3 38:25 40:25	
		thoughtful 43:22	
		thoughts 13:23	

treating 39:15 tribal 41:11,20 45:20 Troelsen 30:14 33:8 true 29:23 tune 20:17 turn 7:3 12:22 19:20 22:3 two- 26:3 Tyler 30:14 33:7,8 36:7 types 45:16 U ultimately 8:9 unable 29:3 unanimous 29:7 uncertain 16:18 uncertainty 10:16,19,20 11:1 underscore 17:23 understand 4:12 understanding 9:25 10:22 17:15 understood 22:1 undertaken 27:20 uniquely 31:6 update 9:7 Upheld 20:15 urge 18:22 35:23 37:16 urgency 44:20	utilities 12:15 18:6 25:1 27:14, 16 28:19 29:1,10 33:10 44:17 utility 28:24 30:1 utility- 34:16 V vague 42:15 Vancouver 18:5 22:12,23 33:9 variety 18:8 vehicle 18:10 vehicles 18:9 view 21:21 views 29:9 visit 5:16 vitality 17:23 voice 7:16 20:2 W wall 4:11 Wapato 20:6 21:3 warehouses 34:12 warning 6:22,23 22:3 warnings 21:11 warns 20:16 Washington 5:23 7:19 18:5 19:4 28:19 29:5 31:25 33:11,15 34:7 37:2	watch 23:4 water 8:21 12:2 20:2 21:7,9,23 22:2,3 23:20 38:23 waters 19:24 20:14 wave 13:12 waves 19:22 weapons 20:19 wearing 13:14 weather 10:20 35:4 Webinar 13:2 website 5:16 6:12 weight 29:9 west 26:20 western 26:21 28:15,25 wetlands 20:5 wide 10:15 wild 15:7,17 16:8 17:5,22 30:18 33:12 wildlife 7:18,24 8:7,12,16 16:14, 22,24 24:20 25:15 31:12 34:1 35:22 44:5 45:25 Willamette 40:9 wind 27:5 35:20 37:14 wishing 4:19 withholds 20:6 woman's 13:7	work 8:8 17:14 25:4 27:19 31:1,5 41:4 working 40:8 works 7:11 31:7 world 21:19,20 worse 41:2 worth 39:21 written 6:8 14:2 46:2 wrong 23:11,14 45:7 www. northwestcouncil 5:16 Y Yakama 41:14,17 year 6:17 8:14 10:11 40:15 years 5:7 9:7 10:12 15:5 17:7 21:16 24:3,4 39:2 Z zone 26:12 zones 26:7
--	---	--	---