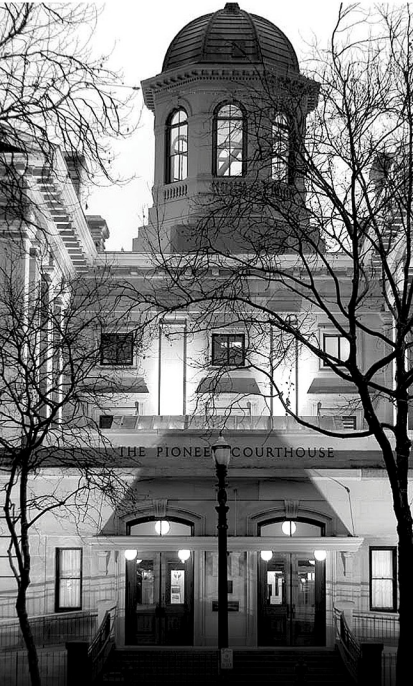




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9TH NORTHWEST REGIONAL POWER PLAN PUBLIC HEARING

TRANSCRIPT OF 9TH NORTHWEST REGIONAL POWER PLAN PUBLIC HEARING

HELD ON

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2026

4:34 P.M.

5000 DISCOVERY DRIVE

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9TH NORTHWEST REGIONAL POWER PLAN PUBLIC HEARING
HELD ON
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2026
4:34 P.M.

CHUCK SAMS: Good evening, everyone. I'd like to call this public hearing to order.

My name is Chuck Sams. I am a member of the Northwest Power Conservation Council from the State of Oregon, and I'd like to welcome to today's hearing on the Council's Draft Ninth Northwest Power Plan.

Anyone wishing to provide public comment should sign up on the list provided. When the time comes to hear your comments, I will call people up to testify -- call people up to comment in the order in which you signed up.

As the first order of business, I have a statement to make for the administrative record about this public hearing. The Northwest Power Act of 1980 directs the Council to develop a regional conservation and electric generation power plan, and to review that plan every five years. The Council's current power plan is its eighth plan, also referred to as the 2021 Power Plan. The Council is now

1 engaged in its latest five-year power plan review.
2 The Council released the Draft Ninth Northwest Power
3 Plan in mid-August for public review and comment.

4 For more information, including the text
5 of the draft plan and technical appendices, please
6 visit the Council's website at nwcouncil.org. The
7 Council will be accepting comments on the Draft
8 Ninth Plan through October 16, 2026.

9 The Act also requires the Council to hold
10 public hearings in every state represented by the
11 Council, which includes Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and
12 Washington. The full schedule of hearings can be
13 found online.

14 I would like to encourage anyone who is
15 interested in commenting to please sign up on one of
16 the sheets located around the room. We have a court
17 reporter in attendance to record your comments. The
18 transcript of this hearing will be circulated to all
19 Council members and staff, and will be included in
20 the administrative record for the power plan review.
21 You can also leave written comments with a staff
22 member today, or submit comments online.
23 Instructions for submitting comments online can be
24 found on the Council's website.

25 All comments received will be carefully

1 considered by the Council in making its final
2 decision to approve the Ninth Northwest Power Plan.
3 The Council expects to make a final decision on the
4 -- on the plan at the end of this year or in early
5 2027. Thank you.

6 MS. LIGHT: Hi, everyone, I'm Jennifer
7 Light. I'm the Director of Power Planning. I'm
8 going to give just a very short presentation about
9 the plan and do a little setup, and then we'll turn
10 off the projector and Council members can come up
11 and we'll start the public comment process.

12 Thanks so much for coming. Just a little
13 bit about who we are. This -- Member Sams went over
14 this a bit, but we do represent the four states and
15 put together both a power plan for the region and a
16 Fish and Wildlife program.

17 The Act does require that we update this
18 approximately every five years, and so we're in that
19 process right now. And one of the key connections
20 to the power plan is the Bonneville Power
21 Administration, where they do have legal obligation
22 to plan to acquire resources consistent with the
23 Council's plan as the administrator determines are
24 consistent.

25 So before I get into the power plan, I do

1 just want a quick note on the Council's Fish and
2 Wildlife program, because it is an important part of
3 our work and it is ultimately an element of the
4 power plan. The Council did adopt its most recent
5 version of the Fish and Wildlife program in June of
6 this year, and that does become a basis for how we
7 think about hydro operations as part of the energy
8 system that we have today. One of the priorities in
9 that program was to keep water moving for fish
10 during times that were critical for migration, but
11 also making sure that we can balance out the
12 regional energy needs.

13 So in the power plan, the key thing that
14 we're trying to do is make sure that we have an
15 adequate, efficient, economical, and reliable power
16 supply. And at a high level, basically what we're
17 doing is, we're looking at what can the system
18 provide today, where might we need to go in the
19 future to meet future load growth, and then how do
20 we get there in a way that's least cost, least risk,
21 and trying to manage for all the uncertainty in the
22 future.

23 A few key themes from this Draft Ninth
24 Power Plan that we have in front of you, the first
25 is load growth. I think this is one of the biggest

1 drivers for the need for new energy resources that
2 we're seeing. And we see the potential for growth
3 of about between 50 percent and 100 percent over the
4 next 20 years. We could do a long-term load
5 forecast, but that's pretty significant growth and
6 also a lot of uncertainty around that growth, and
7 that's something that we're planning for.

8 And that leads me to the next point about
9 planning under uncertainty. We have uncertainty in
10 what future loads might be, at what pace might those
11 loads show up, and how might those loads look. But
12 we're also accounting for uncertainty in the future
13 of weather and what that might mean for electricity,
14 what that might mean for the hydro system and the
15 water coming down the river, and what that might
16 mean for other resources.

17 And so there's a lot of uncertainty that
18 we plan around and plan with to come up with a -- a
19 future resource portfolio that's robust across that
20 uncertainty. And this draft plan does include a
21 portfolio of new resources that we recommend to the
22 region, and it is not just one single resource.
23 It's a mix of resources needed to get to where we
24 need to go in the future, and I'll hit on that in
25 the next slide.

1 But here we are now in this public comment
2 process, where we are looking for your feedback and
3 your comments as we move through and work towards
4 that final power plan.

5 So the -- the key central piece of the
6 Draft Ninth Plan is this proposed set of new
7 resources for the next six years. It's a
8 combination of resources on the demand side, like
9 conservation, demand response, voltage optimization.
10 Those can really help to meet needs while also
11 recognizing the risk and challenges of building on
12 the supply side and building out transmission. This
13 can defer that -- that need a little bit, reduce
14 that pressure a little bit.

15 But also we have a need for a lot of
16 supply side resources, renewables and storage, and
17 often together can help to provide energy and
18 capacity while meeting clean goals that we have
19 throughout this region. New natural gas is also a
20 part of the recommended strategy. It helps to
21 provide capacity and energy to the system,
22 particularly in periods where we have not much water
23 coming down the system, or not as much water coming
24 down the system.

25 And it's all of these resources together,

1 supported by a suite of other recommendations to
2 address transmission, permitting, data centers and
3 data center flexibility, and more, that help to
4 really make up the core of what the Draft Ninth Plan
5 is putting forward.

6 We also have specific recommendations to
7 Bonneville. As I mentioned, Bonneville does have a
8 legal connection to the Council and its plan to
9 acquire resources that it determines to be
10 consistent with the Council's plan. And so the
11 Draft Ninth Plan recommends that Bonneville acquire
12 conservation consistent with the plan, support its
13 customers in getting other demand side resources,
14 that demand response and voltage optimization,
15 acquire renewables if it needs to for energy beyond
16 those demand side resources if it needed for its
17 obligation, and to look at the cost effectiveness
18 between storage and natural gas if there's a
19 capacity for its obligation.

20 Beyond the resource strategy, I mentioned
21 the Draft Ninth Plan also includes a set of other
22 recommendations. There's a lot of things that the
23 Council needs to be mindful of and think through
24 that are related to new resource development, but
25 might not be specifically in our purview. But we do

1 talk about transmission planning and development and
2 the importance of that, for example, permitting and
3 sighting of resources. The Council can't directly
4 control and kind of direct those areas, but we do
5 need to think about them, talk about them, and we do
6 have recommendations that do speak to those areas.

7 It is worth noting that one thing that is
8 outside of the Council's role is setting electricity
9 rates or making decisions around existing system
10 resources. We're really focused on those new
11 resources in the future.

12 So public comment, there are some sign up
13 sheets. If you do want to provide comment and you
14 haven't already, we can make sure that we can get
15 you the sign up. Annika is holding up her hand
16 there if needed. If -- there's bathrooms around the
17 corner, if needed. If you do have any questions,
18 look for any of the staff. We're wearing these
19 badges, and that's -- most of us in the room here
20 are currently staffed.

21 We are going to ask that you would please
22 be courteous. Giving public comment is hard and
23 it's appreciated that you're here. So let's be
24 respectful of everyone here and the time they're
25 coming out to do this. Please be brief and on

1 topic. We will start with three minutes per person,
2 but certainly can open that up if -- if more time is
3 needed.

4 Do know that comments become part of the
5 official record. If you did bring with you written
6 comments, Dor, who is leading the room, will grab
7 those from you and help get them to the court
8 reporter so we have them. So thank you for that.

9 And then with that, you can also submit
10 comments online. Here's a QR code and more
11 information. And just note, we want to hear from
12 you. As you come up, please state your name and
13 organization if you're affiliated with one. We'll
14 also ask that you spell your name for the court
15 reporter so that we have that. And we'll just work
16 through comments as we have on the list.

17 And that is it for me. So we're going to
18 do a little shuffling, get the Council members up
19 here and then we'll start the process. So thank
20 you. We can turn off the projector. Thanks so
21 much, Stephanie.

22 STEPHANIE: Yep.

23 CHUCK SAMS: Good evening, everyone. I am
24 joined with my fellow Council member, Margi Hoffman.
25 And we'll be taking comments. We look forward to

1 hearing your comments and the first up is Lindsay
2 Forepaugh with Wasco Electric.

3 LINDSAY FOREPAUGH: Good evening, Council
4 members. My name is Lindsay Forepaugh. L-I-N-D-S-
5 A-Y Forepaugh, F- as in Frank, O-R-E-, P- as in
6 Paul, A-U-G-H. I am the general manager of Wasco
7 Electric Cooperative, and we serve rural communities
8 and agricultural members across north central
9 Oregon. Thank you for holding this meeting in the
10 Dalles and for the substantial work that the
11 Council, and staff, and regional stakeholders have
12 invested in the Draft Ninth Power Plan.

13 Wasco Electric supports the Council's
14 conclusion that the northwest will need a diverse
15 portfolio of resources to meet the growing demand
16 while maintaining an adequate, efficient, economical
17 and reliable power system. The draft recognizes the
18 need for conservation in a balanced mix of
19 generation, storage demand side, and transmission
20 resources.

21 We also appreciate the Council's efforts
22 to improve load forecasting and evaluate uncertainty
23 associated with the large loads, electrification,
24 resource availability, transmission and changing
25 conditions. We support the Council's responsibility

1 and identifying cost effective conservation and
2 recognize that its value may differ by location.

3 The Council's sub-regional analysis
4 provides useful information. However, we are
5 concerned about the proposed implementation
6 structure, particularly the separate conservation
7 targets for Oregon and Washington, and for Idaho and
8 Montana.

9 Wasco Electric asks the Council to retain
10 one regional conservation target for BPA to use in
11 -- in order to implement the program's strategy and
12 narrative guidance. BPA and its customers have
13 developed regional conservation programs, funding
14 structures, contractor networks, and tracking
15 systems that deliver over multiple channels. BPA
16 and the Northwest Requirements Utilities have
17 explained that dividing the target would require
18 program redesign, system changes, training, contract
19 revisions, and ongoing administrative support.

20 The existing program is delivering most of
21 BPA's conservation savings in Oregon and Washington
22 generally consistent with the Council's findings.
23 This is especially important because small rural
24 utilities, like Wasco Electric Cooperative,
25 geography does not alone determine utilities

1 conservation potential and customer needs, staffing,
2 and capacity.

3 Wasco Electric has experienced many of
4 those flexibility matters. We serve 2.8 meters per
5 mile, and have a limited number of projects. Our
6 tracker reports 72,000 kilowatt hours of savings.
7 Most in residential. Consistent with this format,
8 our funding is limited at \$4,960, and most of that
9 is already earmarked for low income members.

10 These dual target structures could hurt
11 our ability to serve our members. We are not seeing
12 that economics in our residential programs. Thank
13 you.

14 CHUCK SAMS: Thank you. Next, we have
15 David Nightingale -- himself.

16 DAVID NIGHTINGALE: David Nightingale --

17 CHUCK SAMS: Nightingale.

18 DAVID NIGHTINGALE: Yeah, like the bird.

19 CHUCK SAMS: Thank you. Thank you for the
20 opportunity to speak.

21 I already sent in the comments to the
22 Council and I imagine you probably haven't read them
23 yet. But let me just tell you the -- this version
24 and the idea that is that there is a very good
25 resource for wind in southwest Washington. There is

1 really great access to -- very near transmission,
2 both going out to where Satsop was one of these
3 nuclear plants as well as other high voltage lines
4 out of the southwest Washington area. It is blocked
5 from the continental winds in the east where the
6 vast majority of wind is and it has a very different
7 profile as far as when it's most prevalent as far as
8 when the wind blows. It's influenced by the ocean
9 winds not continental events.

10 And I have in my -- in my comments I've
11 summarized every wind farm in Oregon and Washington
12 and it shows as you probably already know peaking in
13 the winter and spring, just when we don't need it
14 because all the dams are getting lots of power going
15 through. And the wind -- there's two wind farms in
16 southwest Washington right now, one just east of
17 Centralia by about 15 miles -- 12 to -- 12 to 15
18 miles, and one actually you can see from the beach
19 at Grayland State -- Grayland State Park. You can
20 look up and you can see four wind turbines there
21 that go into Grays Harbor PUD.

22 And looking at those two monthly
23 generation, and this is over five years of all of
24 the wind in -- in northwest Washington and those two
25 individual wind farms, those two wind farms peak in

1 the winter which makes them the most valuable. It's
2 the most frequent. It's going to be, you know, 60,
3 70 percent capacity factor during the winter months,
4 which is exactly when it's most valuable for us.

5 The current locations for wind that are
6 modeled in the plan don't look at that part. They
7 don't look at anything west of Cascades. Thank you.

8 So I'm suggesting that John Ollis and his
9 folks take a look and do some analysis, including
10 wind in southwest Washington, because of both the
11 profile of the wind and the transmission that exists
12 right there maybe 6, 7 miles of transmission in most
13 locations around there.

14 And -- I'm not done yet? Let me see, 30
15 seconds? The wind -- the wind here. Oh, I know. I
16 used to work for the Utilities and Transportation
17 Commission. I have degrees in business and
18 engineering. I left state service about five years
19 ago. But I'm sticking my nose in energy stuff as I
20 think it's appropriate. So also looking at other
21 things, working with the tribes, and have applied to
22 be appointed to the Washington Transmission
23 Authority Advisory Group. And used to serve on the
24 RTF commission.

25 So anyway, thank you very much. And

1 please consider my comments.

2 CHUCK SAMS: Thank you, Mr. Nightingale.

3 Oh, excuse me. Mr. Nightingale, would you
4 be so kind as to spell your name for the court
5 reporter?

6 DAVID NIGHTINGALE: Oh sure. Into here?
7 N-I-G-H-T-I-N-G-A-L-E.

8 THE REPORTER: Okay. Thank you.

9 MARGARET HOFFMAN: I think that's it for
10 the list so if we could do that.

11 CHUCK SAMS: I think we have extra time.
12 Do you want to keep going, or you can go into time.

13 LINDSAY FOREPAUGH: I sincerely appreciate
14 the opportunity to finish my remarks to the -- to
15 the Council.

16 I will -- it'll be a little redundant so
17 please bear with me just a little bit.

18 The existing program is delivered -- is
19 delivering most of all BPA's conservation in Oregon
20 and Washington, generally consistent with your
21 Council's framework. Disrupting the structure could
22 increase costs, providing little benefit, and as the
23 regional program is already achieving the geographic
24 outcome that the Council seeks, this is especially
25 important to rural electric utilities.

1 Geography alone does not determine the
2 utility's conservation potential. Customer needs,
3 staffing capacity, and the ability to deliver
4 specific measures. A higher target for Oregon and
5 Washington could not presume that every utility in
6 those states has the conservation opportunities or
7 the delivery capacity large urban utilities do.
8 Separate targets also do not clearly align with
9 BPA's regional funding model, under which the
10 conservation funding is tied to each customer's tier
11 one load.

12 As I mentioned, Wasco Electric Cooperative
13 experiences show that flexibility matters. We serve
14 approximately 2.8 meters per mile, many of which is
15 in the number and type of projects that we can
16 adhere to. Our tracker reports approximately 72,000
17 kilowatt hours of savings, mostly in the residential
18 program. Of that approximately 44,000 kilowatt
19 hours comes from water heating, 16,000 from HVACs,
20 8,000 from weatherization, and 4,000 from new
21 construction.

22 It -- the report shows that no savings has
23 come from commercial, industrial, or agricultural
24 sectors. That reflects the available opportunities
25 and is not a reflection on my staff's lack of

1 effort. The same constraints affects funding. Our
2 fiscal year '26 through '28 energy efficiency budget
3 is approximately \$4,960 and we've only utilized
4 73,000 of it for about 14.7 percent. We've
5 identified approximately \$250,000 for low income and
6 anticipated projects. But another \$10,000 is for
7 our conservation.

8 We recognize that BPA's program
9 flexibility and ability to roll over funds and
10 receive bilateral transfers allows us to retain and
11 redirect conservation dollars where opportunities
12 fit best. Wasco Electric in general supports the
13 regional planning, continued conservation, needed
14 transmission markets, and a balanced resource
15 portfolio. We ask the Council to strengthen the
16 final plan, retaining one target, and preserving
17 BPA's implementation discretion.

18 Thank you very much for the opportunity to
19 finish all of my comments. And I will -- be assured
20 that these will be submitted for further review.
21 With the utmost sincerity, thank you.

22 CHUCK SAMS: Thank you. What's that? Do
23 we have anybody else?

24 DAVID NIGHTINGALE: Can I get three more
25 minutes?

1 CHUCK SAMS: Sure. Come on up.

2 DAVID NIGHTINGALE: Thank you for the
3 additional time. So I've -- I've shared my -- my
4 comments, not just with the Council, but some other
5 folks also, experts in other organizations. And
6 I've gotten three responses, and the verb all of
7 them have used is "compelling," as far as the -- the
8 argument is now making. And I hope you find it that
9 way as well.

10 And it is something that is not in any of
11 the analysis because I wasn't sure about it, but I
12 -- one of the things that I examined was looking at
13 the, it was January 2022 when we had that big arctic
14 outbreak and it was very cold. All the wind shut
15 down in the gorge. And I looked at the, you know,
16 hour by hour, these ones on the west side. And they
17 also shut down, but not as long and not as much.
18 They were still spinning when all of this stuff was
19 shut down in the gorge.

20 So I think there may be also, in addition
21 to having this Cascade divide between the ocean
22 winds and the continental winds, there may be also a
23 more resilient piece to the coastal wind in
24 southwest Washington that would also be a beneficial
25 aspect to developing wind in that area.

1 They were all -- there's been two other
2 additional proposed wind farms that have been done
3 in southwest Washington. Also, one on Weyerhaeuser
4 land, which is the same as Skookumchuck, it's on
5 Weyerhaeuser land. And another, I don't know which
6 land -- whose land it was. And the one, it's called
7 Coyote Crest Wind Park, was offered around 2009.
8 And my experience having worked in -- in the energy
9 in that point of time, that was a little premature
10 as far as being useful for some of the legislative
11 statutory requirements at that point in time. And
12 for some other reasons, I don't know them all, but
13 nobody took the offer and so it wasn't developed.

14 There was another one, it was down in
15 South Pacific County on Radar Ridge, originally
16 proposed by the Columbia Generating Station for Tri-
17 Cities, and then later somebody else. And that one
18 was reportedly, and again I wasn't part of it, this
19 is just what I've -- I've read, is that it was
20 stopped because of concern for the Marbled Murrelet
21 habitat in that area. And that one was a fairly low
22 elevation, fairly close to the coast, where you
23 actually would expect a lot of those, whereas other
24 locations are a higher elevation and less habitat
25 for those particular critters. So, okay?

1 CHUCK SAMS: Thank you.

2 DAVID NIGHTINGALE: Yeah, you're very
3 welcome.

4 CHUCK SAMS: Thank you. Anybody else for
5 testimony -- or comment? Sorry.

6 With that, I will move that we go into
7 recess until we have somebody else sign back up. We
8 stand recessed.

9 (WHEREUPON, a recess was taken.)

10 CHUCK SAMS: Good evening, everyone. We
11 will come out of recess. Seeing nobody else wanted
12 to provide comments, thank you for all who came out
13 this evening. Appreciate those who did provide
14 comments and for the support of the staff. On
15 behalf of Margi and I thank you all. We wish you a
16 good evening. And this public hearing is at a
17 close.

18 (WHEREUPON, the 9TH NORTHWEST REGIONAL
19 POWER PLAN PUBLIC HEARING concluded at 6:29 p.m.)
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

I, Lindsay Vineyard, 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 16th day of October, 2026.



Lindsay Vineyard, Certificate No. 4287

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