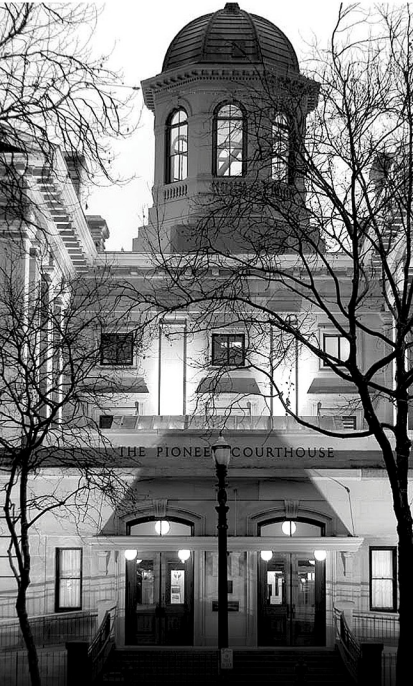




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NORTHWEST POWER AND CONSERVATION
COUNCIL MEETING

TRANSCRIPT OF
NINTH NORTHWEST REGIONAL POWER PLAN
PUBLIC HEARING

HELD ON
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2026
4:31 P.M.

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME
UPPER SNAKE RIVER REGIONAL OFFICE
CENTENNIAL ROOM
4279 COMMERCE CIRCLE
IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO 83401

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APPEARANCES

NORTHWEST POWER AND CONSERVATION COUNCIL:

Mike Milburn, Chairman (Montana)

Jeffrey Allen, Member (Idaho)

KC Golden, Member (Washington)

Ed Schriever, Member (Idaho)

Jennifer Light, Director, Power & Planning

NORTHWEST POWER AND CONSERVATION STAFF:

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Tomas Morrissey, Senior Power Analyst

Steven Simmons, Senior Energy Forecasting Analyst

Jake Kennedy, Power System Analyst

Joe Walderman, Resources Analyst

Peter Jensen, Communications Specialist

Nate Clayville, Energy Policy Advisor

PUBLIC COMMENTERS:

Rachel Brinkley, Idaho Conservation League

John Campbell, District 1 President, Raft River

Electric

Chris Seibold, Business Services & Community

Relations Manager, United Electric Co-Op

Jonathan Ochi, Resident

APPEARANCES (CONTINUED)

Dede Draper, Board Member, Fall River Rural Electric

PUBLIC COMMENTERS:

Garrett Hylton, Manager of Member Advocacy, Wells
Rural Electric Company

Ken Dizes, General Manager, Salmon River Electric
Co-Operative

Sarah Wheeler, External Affairs Manager, Idaho Falls
Power

Colby Hatton, Resident

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COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Good evening, everyone.
I'd like to call this meeting to order. My name is
Jeff Allen. I am a member of the Northwest Power
and Conservation Council from the great state of
Idaho.

And I can go even further and say that I'm
from Idaho Falls, because while I didn't go to high
school here, I played Little League baseball, and
you're from wherever you play Little League
baseball, so this is my home. It's great to be
here.

I'd like to welcome you to today's public
hearing on the Council's Draft Ninth 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
in the order in which you have signed up.

As a first order of business, and to keep

1 our attorneys happy, I have to read a statement for
2 the administrative record about this public hearing.

3 The Northwest Power Act of 1980 directs
4 the Council to develop a regional conservation and
5 electric generation power plan, and to review that
6 plan every five years. The Council's current power
7 plan is in its -- the Council's current power plan
8 is its eighth plan, also referred to as the 2021
9 Power Plan.

10 The Council is now engaged in its latest
11 five-year power plan review. The Council released
12 the Draft Ninth Northwest Power Plan in mid-August
13 for 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 nwcouncil.org. The
17 Council will be accepting comments on the Draft
18 Ninth Plan through October 16, 2026.

19 The Act also requires the Council to hold
20 public hearings in every state represented by the
21 Council, which includes Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and
22 Washington. The full schedule of hearings can be
23 found online.

24 I would like to encourage anyone who is
25 interested in commenting to please sign up on one of

1 the sheets located around the room.

2 We have a court reporter in attendance to
3 record your comments. The transcript of this
4 hearing will be circulated to all Council members,
5 and staff will be included in the administrative
6 record for the Power Plan review.

7 You can also leave written comments with a
8 staff member today or submit comments online.
9 Instructions for submitting comments online can be
10 found at the Council's website.

11 All comments received will be carefully
12 considered by the Council in making its final
13 decision to approve the Ninth Northwest Power Plan.

14 The Council expects to make a final
15 decision on the plan at the end of this year or in
16 early 2027. Thank you.

17 I'd also like to introduce my fellow
18 Council members who are up here. We have our
19 chairman, Mike Milburn, from the great state of
20 Montana. He was worried about running into a bunch
21 of Vandal fans here, and I told him, don't worry
22 about it, this is -- this is Vandal country mostly,
23 you're safe.

24 I have Ed Schriever, also from Idaho; KC
25 Golden from Washington; and their state staffer,

1 Nate Clayville is at the end of the table.

2 I'm going to turn -- do I turn this over
3 to you right now, Jen?

4 MS. LIGHT: Mm-hmm.

5 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Okay. I would like to
6 say before you do start to testify, though, we said
7 three minutes. I don't think we'll fill the full
8 two hours, so I'm going to use the microphone, the
9 chair's discretion, and grant you a little more
10 time.

11 I know some of you have traveled a long
12 way, so if you want to go four or five minutes, as
13 long as you don't call me any names, we'll let you
14 -- we'll let you go longer.

15 So with that, Jen, here you go.

16 MS. LIGHT: Okay. Thanks so much. Thanks
17 so much for coming out. I really appreciate the
18 turnout that we have. I just have a short
19 presentation just providing you with some really
20 high-level points about the ninth plan, and then
21 we'll turn it over to you all to hear your comments.

22 As Member Allen alluded to, we are here
23 because of the Northwest Power Act of 1980. The
24 council members themselves are appointed from the
25 governors in their states, and they're representing

1 the region of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and
2 Montana.

3 And the Act requires us to develop a
4 regional electric power plan, a fish and wildlife
5 program, and to do all of this work in the public
6 eye. This is where these hearings come into play as
7 well, as we get your comments throughout.

8 The Bonneville Power Administration does
9 have a legal obligation to acquire resources that
10 they see consistent with the Council's plan, and so
11 there is a strong connection to Bonneville, and
12 you'll see that in the draft plan, as well as we
13 have recommendations to them.

14 Just a quick note on the fish and wildlife
15 program. Because the Council's fish and wildlife
16 program is an element of the power plan, it does
17 provide kind of a basis for hydro operations that we
18 then plan from for the region.

19 And the Council did adopt its 2026 fish
20 and wildlife program in June of this year. One
21 priority in that program is to keep the water moving
22 during times that are critical for migration while
23 also making sure that we have the hydro system to
24 lean into for times that we need it and to leverage
25 that for the regional energy needs, so trying to

1 find that balance there.

2 So power planning, what are we doing?
3 We're trying to find a path forward to ensure an
4 adequate, efficient, economical, and reliable power
5 supply. And in that, we're essentially saying, what
6 is the system capability today, how much energy
7 might we need in the future, and what's the least
8 cost, least risk way to meet that, while being
9 mindful of a lot of considerations laid out by the
10 Power Act, and as the council members are kind of
11 weighing through all of the analysis.

12 Some key takeaways from this draft Ninth
13 Plan, the first one that I'll hit on is load growth.
14 I think this is something that the region is seeing
15 a lot of, load growth, particularly -- particularly,
16 as we compare it to our 2021 power plan.

17 Over the next 20 years of the region, we
18 see between 50 and 100 percent load growth, so
19 that's pretty significant potential load growth. It
20 is growing very differently across the region.

21 We're seeing different things depending on
22 where you sit and the types of loads that you might
23 have in your part of the region. And there's a lot
24 of uncertainty in that forecast, and that's one of
25 the other key things is we do plan under

1 uncertainty.

2 We don't have a crystal ball and we can't
3 see the loads perfectly in the future, just like we
4 can't see the weather patterns perfectly in the
5 future, and when the water is going to come down the
6 river whether there's going to be more snow pack or
7 less, how that's going to play out with -- with
8 water conditions throughout the system. Same with
9 also prices for market prices, gas prices.

10 So we have a lot of different uncertainty
11 that we're planning under, and the goal is to put
12 forward a regional strategy that's robust despite
13 that uncertainty. And that -- that is what we have
14 in this draft plan, and I'll touch on that in the
15 next slide.

16 So we're at this place of public comment,
17 and that's why we're here. We're here to hear from
18 you as we work towards our final plan.

19 So the resource strategy is sort of the
20 centerpiece of the Draft Ninth Plan. It provides an
21 outline for new resources over the first six-year
22 period, 2027 to 2032. It is a mix of resources, no
23 single resource that's going to meet our needs in
24 the future.

25 We've got demand-side resources like

1 conservation, demand response, voltage optimization,
2 providing energy and capacity, and helping to hedge
3 some of the risk of the ability to build out supply-
4 side resources and transmission.

5 We have supply-side renewables and storage
6 provide energy and capacity and meet some of the
7 clean goals that we have around the region. And
8 also, new natural gas is providing energy into the
9 system, particularly provides a hedge against low
10 water years that we see in the future and the
11 potential for in the region.

12 This strategy is supported by a whole host
13 of other recommendations that need to get done to
14 help make this happen. That includes stuff around
15 permitting, transmission, data center integration,
16 and many more recommendations throughout the action
17 plan.

18 As I mentioned, we have a close connection
19 to the Bonneville Power Administration, and as they
20 need to acquire resources for their obligation, they
21 must do so consistent with the Council's plan or as
22 they determine it's consistent with the Council's
23 plan.

24 So in this plan, we have draft
25 recommendations to Bonneville around acquiring its

1 share of conservation, supporting its customer
2 utilities, and getting other demand-side resources,
3 demand response and voltage optimization where it
4 makes sense, and how it makes sense for them,
5 acquiring the renewables, if there's an energy need
6 beyond sort of what they're getting on that demand
7 side to meet future growth, and then assessing the
8 cost-effectiveness between storage and natural gas
9 if they do have a capacity need that they see for
10 their obligation in the future.

11 A couple notes beyond the resource
12 strategy. While we do have recommendations in the
13 plan that touch on a lot of things, we don't
14 necessarily have a direct connection that kind of
15 drives decision-makers around things like
16 permitting, transmission, but we do try to
17 understand their importance and highlight where more
18 work needs to be done to help see this resource
19 strategy come to fruition. So you do see
20 recommendations around that.

21 It's also worth noting there's a couple
22 things you won't see in the plan, and they're not
23 really in the Council's purview, and that's around
24 setting electricity rates, also decisions around
25 retirements of existing resources, or what to do

1 around existing resources.

2 We don't really go there. We're really
3 focused on what are the new resources to add to the
4 existing system.

5 So thank you so much for being here. If
6 you haven't, I think most of you already have, but
7 if you want to give public comment and you haven't
8 had a chance to sign up, there are some sign-in
9 sheets in the back. We'll make sure we get you into
10 the queue.

11 You'll come up here. If you need the
12 restroom, I see that sign that says restroom, so I
13 take it it's over there.

14 If you have any questions, you can find me
15 or any of the team, we're wearing these tags, and if
16 my team can please raise their hands so you can see
17 us. I brought a lot of them out here because I know
18 it's going to be a good group.

19 Please be courteous. I really appreciate
20 that you guys are coming and giving public comments.
21 Sometimes that's uncomfortable and we all want to
22 hear what you have to say. So be courteous to
23 everyone in the room. Keep it brief and on topic.
24 The chair will let you go a little longer, as we
25 have time.

1 Note, your comments will be part of the
2 record. If you do have written comments that you're
3 reading from, if you can please share them with
4 Christian Douglass here, he's going to help make
5 sure that we just get them into the record so we
6 have them accurately. We don't want to misrepresent
7 your comments.

8 And if you want to submit comments online,
9 there are sheets back there, but we can also help
10 you do that. When you come up and give comments,
11 please state your name clearly, please also spell
12 your name so we have it in the record for the court
13 reporter, and also give your organization of your
14 work.

15 Here's a fun QR code that apparently we do
16 have if you need to get to our stuff, also our
17 website.

18 And, yeah, that was it for me, so I can
19 turn it back over to you, Mr. Allen.

20 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Thank you, Jen.

21 I'd also like to thank Fish and Game and
22 those who are agreeing to host us. Oftentimes, when
23 a regional organization thinks about a public
24 hearing in Idaho, they say, oh, let's go to Boise,
25 but Ed and I were pretty adamant about doing one

1 over here in eastern Idaho, mainly because there's
2 so much public power over here and there's no public
3 power to speak of in the Boise area.

4 A different entity takes care of that, so
5 it's -- it's rewarding to see so many of you show
6 up, and I'm looking at where you're from and I see
7 Magic Valley and I see Upper Snake and I see folks
8 from all over, so thank you for making the trip.

9 So with that, we'll begin.

10 Rachel Brinkley, you're up first.

11 RACHEL BRINKLEY: Wow, going first. All
12 right. Can you guys hear me?

13 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Yep.

14 RACHEL BRINKLEY: Good. Okay.

15 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Just make sure you
16 spell your name for the court reporter.

17 RACHEL BRINKLEY: All right. Good
18 evening. My name is Rachel Brinkley. R-A-C-H-E-L.
19 B-R-I-N-K-L-E-Y. Before I begin, I want to say that
20 my sister actually went into labor about an hour
21 ago, so if you see me on my phone or run out, it's
22 not because I'm not invested. I just got something
23 going on.

24 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Come on. What's
25 important?

1 RACHEL BRINKLEY: It's a little bit
2 important.

3 I'm here on behalf of the Idaho
4 Conservation League, and I'm here today to comment
5 on the Council's Draft Ninth Power Plan. I grew up
6 in Idaho Falls, and I did play Little League
7 softball here, so I'm really from here.

8 And like many people here, I was raised
9 with a deep connection to our rivers, public lands,
10 and the salmon and steelhead that are part of
11 Idaho's identity and history. I also see every day
12 how consequential the decisions we make about our
13 rivers and energy systems are for the future of our
14 region.

15 As an Idahoan, I want a future with
16 affordable, reliable, clean energy, and abundant
17 wild salmon in our rivers. I don't believe that we
18 have to choose between the two.

19 The Ninth Power Plan is an opportunity to
20 build that future, and I urge the Council to focus
21 on three priorities.

22 First: We need to protect and restore
23 salmon and steelhead. The final plan should more
24 robustly support regional sand and recovery goals
25 and implementation of the Columbia Basin Restoration

1 Initiative.

2 The Council's resource strategy shows that
3 the roughly 700 megawatts produced annually by the
4 four lower Snake River dams can be replaced. I urge
5 you to provide technical support and modeling in
6 partnership with Washington State to incorporate
7 that energy replacement into regional power
8 planning.

9 Second: New clean energy and
10 transmission. The draft plan shows that wind,
11 solar, and storage are among the most economic
12 resources available to meet future demand, but we
13 need the transmission capacity to connect these
14 resources to the grid.

15 I urge the Council to aggressively pursue
16 new, clean resources, remove barriers to
17 transmission across the four states, and ask BPA to
18 acquire renewable resources and leave regional
19 transmission expansion.

20 Third: Conservation and demand response.
21 The Northwest Power Act requires the Council to
22 prioritize conservation, and there is more that we
23 can do.

24 I urge you to adopt strong conservation
25 targets, expand demand response, and help utilities,

1 especially rural utilities, modernize their
2 programs. We should also be planning for emerging
3 large energy users by developing model conservation
4 standards creating a regional load management forum.

5 These are not competing priorities.
6 Building clean energy, expanding transmission,
7 investing in conservation, and replacing the energy
8 from the four lower Snake River dams can help us
9 create a more reliable and affordable energy system
10 while making meaningful progress towards salmon
11 recovery.

12 I grew up here. I grew up driving to
13 central Idaho to see salmon spawning, and I want
14 future generations of Idahoans to have the same
15 connections to our rivers and wild salmon that I had
16 growing up.

17 My dad worked on a farm just outside of
18 town, so I understand that our communities have
19 diverse interests. I also understand how important
20 it is to keep energy rates affordable.

21 That's why I believe we need to find
22 solutions that work for all of us. We can build a
23 future with both clean, reliable energy and abundant
24 wild salmon, while making sure Idaho communities can
25 afford the energy that they depend on.

1 Written comments from the Idaho
2 Conservation League will be submitted at a later
3 date. Thank you.

4 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Thank you, Rachel.
5 Next up is John Campbell.

6 JOHN CAMPBELL: John Campbell with Raft
7 River Electric, spelled J-O-H-N, C-A-M-P-B-E-L-L.

8 Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity,
9 and I appreciate the service you're all tendering by
10 serving on the committee. I am grateful for the
11 opportunity to address all of you.

12 My comments are made with the goal of
13 ensuring that I can fulfill my mission as a board
14 member of Raft River Electric and provide safe,
15 reliable, and cost-effective -- cost-effective
16 electric power to our members.

17 I request that the Council address the
18 following technical deficiencies prior to the
19 finalization of the plan:

20 First: Overestimation on battery storage
21 during multi-day weather events. The draft plan
22 relies heavily on battery storage expansions to
23 cover peak capacity requirements.

24 However, once these short-duration assets
25 saturate and deplete on day 1 of a multi-day event,

1 the proposed natural gas capacity is insufficient to
2 maintain the necessary resource adequacy margin.

3 The Council should upwardly revise the
4 targeted build-out from dispatchable natural gas
5 infrastructure to guarantee capacity over multi-day
6 peak windows.

7 Second: Misaligned conservation cost-
8 effectiveness. The threshold across balancing --
9 sorry -- misaligned conservation cost-effectiveness
10 threshold across balancing authorities.

11 The draft plan introduces a significant
12 structural imbalance by dividing regional
13 conservation targets between state lines, assigning
14 to Washington and Oregon an elevated cost cap of
15 \$150 per megawatt hour while assigning Idaho and
16 Montana under -- under a restricted \$70 per megawatt
17 cap distorts the regional total resource cost
18 framework.

19 If Idaho and Montana are expected to
20 anchor the region's physical generation baseline,
21 the Council must harmonize the cost-effectiveness
22 matrices across all four states to ensure uniform
23 peak demand flattening.

24 Third: Volatile spot market resilience
25 and locational marginal pricing. Relying on out-of-

1 region market imports to resolve capacity
2 deficiencies during coincidental peaks is an
3 unsustainable strategy.

4 During extreme west-wide meteorological
5 events, neighboring RTOs experience simultaneous
6 grid strains, eliminating available surplus and
7 maximizing physical transmission bottlenecks. The
8 region requires internal firm capacity rather than
9 unhedged dependency on external spot markets.

10 And finally, fourth, a pragmatic
11 integration of firm resource with clean energy
12 mandates. While state-level clean energy statutes
13 impose strict decarbonization trajectories, the laws
14 of power system physics dictate that the stable grid
15 requires a reliable baseload and peaking anchor.

16 The Council should adopt a pragmatic
17 framework that facilitates the permitting and
18 construction of necessary gas infrastructure to
19 preserve operational reliability.

20 So, in conclusion, to prevent structural
21 resource shortfalls, the final Ninth Power Plan must
22 establish a more robust margin of safety.

23 I request the Council adjust its final
24 portfolio recommendation to expand the build-out of
25 firm natural gas capacity, equalize the economic

1 thresholds for conservation programs across all four
2 member states, and decrease the reliance on external
3 market purchases.

4 I would like to add one personal thought
5 that, as a board member at Raft River Electric, I
6 represent the members in our area. We are deeply
7 reliant on the cost-affordability and power for the
8 irrigation load that our members are -- are
9 dependent on there.

10 Even the last few years, as we've had to
11 adjust rates, has hit very deeply on -- on people
12 who are deeply uncomfortable with the rates to begin
13 with, and that's most of what I'm hearing from my
14 members.

15 So I hope that will be considered, and I
16 appreciate you allowing us to be here and share our
17 thoughts today. Thank you.

18 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Thank you, John.

19 Chris Seibold?

20 CHRIS SEIBOLD: Good afternoon, Council
21 members. Thank you for the opportunity to comment
22 on the proposed Ninth Power Plan. My name is Chris
23 Siebold, C-H-R-I-S, S-E-I-B-O-L-D.

24 I'm with the United Electric Co-Op in
25 Heyburn, Idaho. We serve 5,200 members across

1 Minidoka and Cassia Counties in southern Idaho. Our
2 membership includes residential, industrial,
3 commercial, and irrigation customers.

4 United Electric appreciates the Council's
5 effort to develop a comprehensive plan that
6 addresses the continual increase in energy use and
7 demand throughout the region. United also
8 recognizes the importance the Council has placed on
9 energy savings through conservation efforts in the
10 past five years.

11 Over the past five years, United members
12 have completed energy efficiency projects with an
13 estimated best-par savings at over 8,200 megawatt
14 hours, with incentives going back to our members for
15 those projects at just under \$2.5 million.

16 Three times in the past, United's
17 industrial customers have received the Idaho
18 Governor's Award for Leadership in Industrial Energy
19 Efficiency. Providing incentives for these projects
20 makes them more cost-effective to be completed, and
21 the energy savings is the least cost resource for
22 our utility.

23 United believes it's important to continue
24 providing energy efficiency opportunities for every
25 rate class.

1 The proposed dual target structure would
2 make these programs less cost-effective and
3 eliminate critical measures for our members. The
4 greatest burden would fall on our residential
5 customers, the very members who often have the least
6 ability to absorb higher energy costs or cover the
7 upfront costs of energy efficiency improvements.

8 These programs give them a practical way
9 to lower their energy use and manage their monthly
10 bills. We should not limit those opportunities for
11 the ratepayers who need them most.

12 If a dual target approach is used for
13 conservation, a corresponding dual approach may also
14 be appropriate for allocating power supply costs.
15 Without such alignment, end-use customers may not
16 receive a proportionate share of the power cost --
17 power supply cost reductions achieved through
18 conservation efforts.

19 Another important consideration regarding
20 power supply proposals in the Ninth Plan is the
21 resource mixed use to meet growing demand.

22 United Electric believes the plan should
23 place greater emphasis on dispatchable base load
24 generation resources, including natural gas fire
25 generation, while reducing its reliance on

1 intermittent wind and solar resources.

2 A portfolio that includes dependable,
3 dispatchable resources can help enhance system
4 reliability and better support increasing energy
5 needs.

6 Thank you again for the opportunity to
7 provide comments. We look forward to working with
8 the Council as the plan continues to develop.

9 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Thank you, Chris.

10 Next up is Jon Ochi.

11 JON OCHI: Before I start, I just wanted
12 to say I also played baseball in Idaho Falls, Lester
13 boys baseball the first year it was established.

14 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: You probably struck me
15 out, sir.

16 JON OCHI: I was the shortstop. I was the
17 only 10-year-old on the all-star team.

18 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Nice.

19 JON OCHI: To toot my own horn.

20 And then secondly, before I begin, I've
21 written my comments out, and any of the facts that
22 I'm quoting are footnoted in this document.

23 So I intend to --

24 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Jon, could you spell
25 your name for the record?

1 JON OCHI: Oh, sorry. My name -- my full
2 name is Jonathan, J-O-N-A-T-H-A-N, my friends call
3 me Jon, and my last name is Ochi, O-C-H-I.

4 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Thank you.

5 JON OCHI: And I live in Idaho Falls.

6 So to bring us up to date to the very
7 moment, NOAA Fisheries reports juvenile fish
8 mortality through the Columbia and Snake River
9 hydropower system, rarely sees better than 50
10 percent.

11 U.S. District Judge Michael Simon, on
12 Wednesday, February 25th, 2026, ordered federal
13 agencies to release more water of up to 24 hours per
14 day for months at a time during downstream salmon
15 migrations.

16 He's also requiring the dams to operate
17 with smaller reservoirs. The effect is a swifter,
18 colder river flow that eases the journey for young
19 ocean-bound salmon.

20 Now, why would he do this? Judge Simon
21 wrote, "The beating heart of the northwest is
22 disappearing from the landscape; and yet, the
23 litigation continues in much the same way as it has
24 for 30 years."

25 He also said in Wednesday's order,

1 "Federal agencies were displaying a disappointing
2 history of government avoidance and manipulation
3 instead of sincere efforts at solving the problem
4 and genuinely remediating the harm."

5 Now, the purpose of Northwest Power and
6 Conservation Council, Section 4(e)(3)(F) in the
7 Northwest Power Act requires the inclusion of the
8 fish and wildlife program into the plan and to
9 protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife to
10 the extent affected by the development and operation
11 of any hydroelectric project of the Columbia River
12 and its tributaries.

13 And that's in the draft plan already, so
14 I'm sure you're all aware of that requirement.

15 It also says the federal agencies that
16 operate, manage, and regulate the Columbia system
17 all have responsibilities toward the Council's fish
18 and wildlife program and to the Act's purpose to
19 protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife
20 affected by the facilities. Also, in the draft
21 plan.

22 So after meeting the stated requirement to
23 protect, mitigate, and enhance the fish and
24 wildlife, then other actions may logically fall into
25 place. And I'm going to list some actions of the

1 fact that fish have no other choice but to live in
2 the river.

3 There are other ways to get energy into
4 the system, which you've identified effectively in
5 that plan, things like conservation and other
6 sources of energy. I'm going to name some actions
7 that could be taken.

8 First: Recognize the problem. And we are
9 recognizing that problem, notably in the Snake
10 River, and that's in your plan also.

11 Action 2: Protect fish habitat. We've
12 already designated 44,000 miles of river reaches as
13 protected areas.

14 But then consider these action items.
15 Geothermal is viable. Idaho has the highest
16 potential for geothermal and the least development
17 of any place that I can think of, according to
18 Travis McLean, who is a research scientist at the
19 National Engineering Laboratory.

20 Tina Riley, Boise's geothermal
21 coordinator, says geothermal is very effective,
22 affordable form of energy with a low footprint, but
23 certainly in Boise helps us to meet our climate
24 goals. Idaho Powers, Brad Bolin says geothermal can
25 always be on.

1 Action 4: And this is an item in your
2 draft that I encourage you to pursue further.
3 Investigate accelerating the work to replace
4 hydroelectric dam turbines with designs that
5 increase the generation of electricity while also
6 allowing the increased survival of migrating fish.

7 Turbine designs are decades old. In this
8 day and age, there should be no reason why we can't
9 come up with better designs.

10 Action 5: Incentivize citizens to install
11 rooftop solar by financial incentives and making
12 installation plug and play easy.

13 There was an attempt to do solar in the
14 Biden Administration, and all the money went to
15 private equity companies. Incentivize individual
16 citizens to do this.

17 Action 6: Consider nuclear power. The
18 U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission approved
19 TerraPower, Bill Gates' company, to build a plant in
20 Everett, Wyoming, using sodium pool power, which
21 shuts down automatically in an emergency.

22 They've already announced with Meta a plan
23 to build up to eight natrium plants to provide
24 carbon-free baseload power to Meta's global data
25 centers. I think they could be used in other areas.

1 I'm not saying you should do it. I'm just offering
2 you options besides if -- if you need more power.

3 PacifiCorp contracted the use -- the 345
4 megawatts produced by Natrium Plant and they see the
5 need for two more plants by 2033.

6 In conclusion, fish and wildlife have
7 suffered for two centuries. We the people living
8 now have nothing to do with trapping beaver to near
9 extinction and resulting habitat loss for wildlife,
10 nor would we choose to over-harvest fish in the 19th
11 and early 20th centuries, nor did we in Idaho choose
12 to drive fish in the Snake, Clearwater, and Sanford
13 Rivers to receive endangered species listing.

14 Many who have nothing to do with
15 extinction now have the honor and the privilege to
16 help these creatures survive by making wise choices.
17 Happily, there are viable options to extinction.

18 Thank you.

19 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Thank you, Jon.

20 Dede, you're next.

21 Garrett, you're on deck.

22 DEDE DRAPER: Hi, my name is Dede Draper,
23 D-E-D-E, D-R-A-P-E-R. I'm a board member for Fall
24 River Rural Electric up in Ashton, and we have --
25 about an hour from here -- and we have service

1 territories in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming.

2 We appreciate you all coming to Idaho
3 Falls so we didn't have to go to Boise, and I know
4 it was longer for you, but thank you.

5 I'd like to focus my comments on resource
6 adequacy, and specifically, the importance of
7 maintaining a balanced portfolio of resources in the
8 Northwest.

9 Fall River appreciates the Council's
10 recognition that there is no single resource that
11 can meet the region's growing electricity needs.
12 The Draft Ninth Plan calls for approximately 9,000
13 megawatts of renewable generation, which in six
14 years seems like it's going to be a real challenge.

15 Our cooperative owns four hydros, and one
16 of them in Felt on the Teton River. We are in year
17 number 8 of relicensing. The hydro's been in
18 service since the '60s, and by the time we're done,
19 we will have millions and millions of dollars put
20 towards just relicensing that facility. So it takes
21 a long time.

22 We believe that diversity is important.
23 Fall River supports investments in wind and solar,
24 conservation, storage, and demand management
25 programs. Each can play an important role in

1 meeting future Northwest energy needs.

2 As a rural electric cooperative
3 responsible for keeping the lights on every hour of
4 every day, we also believe that the region must
5 maintain sufficient generation that is available
6 when it is called upon.

7 The Northwest has experienced the
8 consequences of extreme weather, from summer heat
9 events to severe winter cold. During these periods,
10 electricity demand can increase dramatically at
11 precisely the time that the renewable sources and
12 the market purchases may be constrained.

13 The Council's own analysis recognizes this
14 issue, and the draft plan describes natural gases
15 providing seasonal reserves as an important hedge
16 during these events when hydro availability is
17 reduced.

18 Fall River and other members of PNGC Power
19 are putting that principle into practice. PNGC and
20 its partners are actively developing white pine
21 power in Radcliffe, Idaho, an approximately 600-
22 megawatt combined cycle natural gas facility
23 intended to provide firm dispatchable generation for
24 Northwest Cooperative consumers.

25 This does not mean choosing natural gas

1 instead of renewables, conservation, or storage. It
2 means recognizing that these resources perform
3 different functions and that the Northwest needs all
4 of them working together.

5 Our concern is capacity during the most
6 difficult hours of the year. When temperatures are
7 extremely high or extremely low, our members expect
8 electricity to be available when they turn on a
9 switch, and our responsibility as a cooperative is
10 to make sure that it is.

11 Fall River, therefore, supports the
12 Council's recognition of dispatchable generation as
13 part of a balanced regional resource strategy and
14 asks that the final Ninth Plan preserve a meaningful
15 role for firm on-demand generation in the Northwest
16 as the Northwest adds renewable generation, storage,
17 conservation, and demand-side resources.

18 Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

19 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Thank you.

20 Garrett?

21 GARRETT HYLTON: My name is Garrett
22 Hylton, G-A-R-R-E-T-T, H-Y-L-T-O-N. I'm the manager
23 of member advocacy for Wells Rural Electric Company
24 in northeastern Nevada. I also played Little League
25 there, so I guess that puts me in a bit of a weird

1 spot because I'm not from any of the four states
2 that this covers, but we are -- guys.

3 In any regard, I really do appreciate the
4 opportunity to come and talk. As others have
5 mentioned when we read through the Draft Ninth Plan,
6 we sort of agree at Wells Electric that it's a great
7 conversation starter and that that's something
8 that's both necessary and beneficial region-wide.

9 In my travels this fall, I certainly have
10 -- it's been a popular topic of discussion for a
11 variety of reasons as we've moved around the region,
12 and so we appreciate the opportunity to further
13 engage in those conversations.

14 I'm here today to talk a little bit about
15 the dual efficiency standard and how that sort of
16 has impacted us locally at Wells Rural Electric
17 Company.

18 We have a bit of a unique profile. We
19 have just over 4,000 members, so we're on the
20 smaller side as it comes to meters. We also have
21 several full-service mines, a variety of casinos,
22 and a fairly large irrigation load, so our load
23 profile tends to look a little bit unique.

24 Over the history of our conservation
25 programs, we've hit our incentive targets every

1 single period, and it's the versatility of the
2 program that has allowed us to do that.

3 As we go back and look 20, 30 years in the
4 past, we've hit our incentives by doing direct
5 installs with our residential members. We've done
6 it with sprinkler packages and VFDs with our
7 irrigation loads.

8 We've done pretty significantly -- pretty
9 significant and large projects on generator
10 efficiency with our mines. We've done HVAC and
11 other projects with our casinos to -- to make -- to
12 meet that -- to meet that quota.

13 Our concern with the dual target model is
14 that BPA has said that effectively because of the
15 difference in avoided costs, it's going to
16 significantly limit the number of programs available
17 in Montana and Idaho.

18 That's concerning to us. Last incentive
19 period, we had two projects lined up with local
20 casinos, and I certainly, and I think my colleagues
21 at WREC, certainly see that there are huge savings
22 available on the commercial and industrial sides of
23 things.

24 Those projects also tend to be incredibly
25 volatile. You know, we've had an 800,000 VFD

1 project at a mine go through when everybody at the
2 table thought it was a great idea, but gold prices
3 were so high that it just didn't make sense for them
4 to slow down gold production to do the energy
5 efficiency savings.

6 Last term we had two casino projects that
7 totaled about \$400,000 between the two. One of the
8 casinos changed ownerships. The other project
9 actually became much larger than it was initially
10 going to be and had to be moved into this incentive
11 period.

12 In order to hit that target and make up
13 that extra \$400,000, we ramped up income qualified
14 efforts and were able to install ductless heat pumps
15 and do some washer and dryer incentives for our
16 residential members.

17 And so as you go forward and you look at
18 this, I would -- I would hope that you would
19 maintain an open mind to the versatility of these
20 programs and the benefits that those can offer both
21 your utilities but also their consumers as an
22 extension.

23 The improvements to the quality of life
24 for our members, especially on the income-qualified
25 side, are very real, even if they're, you know, a

1 little bit smaller and they're avoiding costs in
2 some other programs.

3 So to get into a situation where those
4 offerings are limited in certain states, we would
5 hope that you would reconsider that and take a real
6 long hard look at that.

7 We also can't help but notice when we look
8 at BPA's achieved splits between the two regions,
9 they're kind of already hitting the intended
10 targets, the 90/10 distribution.

11 And so when you take into account that,
12 you know, utilities in Montana, Idaho, and Nevada
13 likely would be facing slightly smaller offerings,
14 you would have added infrastructure on the BPA side,
15 we are sort of concerned that we're in a place where
16 we may be offering less product for more money,
17 which is never a very popular thing with consumers.

18 So thank you for your time. I really
19 appreciate it.

20 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Thank you, Garrett.
21 Ken, you're next.

22 Sarah, you're on deck.

23 KEN DIZES: Thank you for making this
24 opportunity available. I'm Ken Dizes, K-E-N, D-I-Z-
25 E-S. So I am the general manager at Salmon River

1 Electric Co-Operative, the namesake of a lot of
2 these discussions we're having about fish.

3 I've been at the Co-Op -- I've worked for
4 the Co-Op for 41 years and managed it for 23 as its
5 -- as its chief executive officer, so I have a good
6 sense of -- of what it takes to run a small rural
7 electric cooperative in central Idaho. So we -- we
8 definitely have some concerns with the -- with the
9 proposed new power plan.

10 First and foremost, I'd like to address
11 the energy conservation target. We believe it's too
12 high. And the reason I say "we" believe it's too
13 high is because Bonneville tells us it's too high,
14 and -- and I -- so 50 percent of our total cost
15 structure is wholesale power, and we're completely
16 100 percent EPA customer.

17 And so when we have discussions with
18 Bonneville and they tell us that this is a target
19 they don't believe they can reach cost-effectively,
20 then -- then we believe them, and -- and we would
21 really like the Council to consider that target and
22 make sure -- I guess I'm disappointed that the
23 Council arrived at a target, an entity that's
24 supposed to be lockstep with Bonneville Power, and
25 yet, didn't seem to recognize what Bonneville's even

1 capable of achieving for energy conservation, and
2 what your recommendation -- what the effect would be
3 by setting the levels that you have.

4 So I guess an ask would be that in the
5 future that you are more aligned with Bonneville, as
6 you say you are, and that you have a better sense of
7 what Bonneville is capable of and what -- what it
8 might take to ramp up their programs to achieve the
9 level of energy conservation that the Council is
10 recommending.

11 Sometimes I feel like the Council believes
12 that maybe you're going to meet maybe -- I don't
13 know if you're not believing in Bonneville, but you
14 surely maybe feel a reason to push Bonneville beyond
15 what they think they can do, and I appreciate that,
16 but this can come at the cost of higher electricity
17 prices, and how it -- how it affects us is -- is --
18 is greatly so.

19 The other thing I'd like to mention is the
20 dual target. Again, we can't recommend or -- or
21 support that in any way, shape, or form because the
22 ultimate -- ultimately, as we understand it, it will
23 provide less programs for our small rural Idaho
24 utility as far as offerings for energy conservation
25 programs.

1 We already pay a fixed price in our power
2 rates for energy conservation that we often can't
3 perform, and yet, we still have to pay the rates for
4 it. And all this is going to do is cause those
5 rates to be higher and have fewer programs to offer,
6 so I really would hope that the Council would
7 consider that.

8 So -- and Bonneville gave me a few other
9 things that I'll share. It says -- so Bonneville
10 did indicate that they're not set up to administer
11 two programs, and that program infrastructure,
12 redesign, contract overhauls, and IT updates to
13 their beach program are -- would be evidence that
14 those things are not in place properly to meet -- to
15 meet the dual target.

16 And so that -- that comes to a cost of
17 about \$1 million one-time fixed and about \$10.4
18 million recurring per each rate period.

19 So we -- we know where that money is going
20 to come from. If that were the end result, it's
21 going to come from the ratepayers, and that's our
22 customers.

23 And then -- and then, so I'll move away
24 from -- from that and talk a little bit about fish
25 and wildlife. Of course, Salmon River Electric is

1 very concerned with having a judge run our river
2 system. We don't think that's who should be running
3 our river system, and we don't support many, if not
4 most, of his recommendations.

5 Evidence was this year with the increased
6 spill and the effect it had on the fish that were
7 holding up at the dam, not able to manage to go up
8 the river. So please be aware that a judge is not
9 the authority on what it takes to restore or
10 mitigate the effects of hydro on salmon.

11 We are -- our utility, I can tell you, is
12 definitely a proponent of keeping the Snake River
13 dams. We think it would be a travesty to ever
14 remove those. They provide low-cost, reliable, on-
15 demand electricity, and we do believe that we can
16 operate a federal hydro system along with our fish.

17 We believe there are many things that need
18 to be addressed outside the river system that have a
19 bigger impact on salmon, but that's not for this
20 conversation.

21 And I guess I would conclude that with my
22 remarks today. So, again, thank you for taking the
23 time to listen to me.

24 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Thank you, Ken.

25 Sarah. No pressure, but you may be last.

1 SARAH WHEELER: I know. Everyone is so
2 eloquent.

3 All right. Good evening. My name is
4 Sarah Wheeler, very tough spelling, S-A-R-A-H,
5 Wheeler, W-H-E-E-L-E-R. Thank you for hosting this
6 meeting. I will just say we do appreciate you guys
7 coming to this side of the state. It's a beautiful
8 drive through safe, fresh country, but it's good
9 winter here.

10 I am the external affairs manager for
11 Idaho Falls Power, which is a community-owned and
12 community-operated utility. In fact, we're the ones
13 keeping the lights on right now for this meeting, so
14 I'm proud to say that.

15 We service just over 35,000 meters, and we
16 have successfully spent our energy conservation
17 dollars in the last decade. I'm also happy to
18 report that we are on track to spend the 2.4 million
19 allocated to us this current rate period.

20 I say this not to brag, but I guess I am a
21 little bit. I do have one of the best energy
22 efficiency program managers in the back, Jason. But
23 to let you know, we do have some concerns with
24 potential implications with what this Ninth Power
25 Plan could have on our local program that is

1 functioning strong and well.

2 Reading through the Ninth Power Plan,
3 which is a great read, those appendixes were great
4 as well, it shows that a dual target costs our
5 customers, of the roughly 320 average megawatts of
6 technical conservation potential in Idaho and
7 Montana, only 200 of that qualifies as cost-
8 effective under that \$70 cap.

9 This would effectively eliminate a
10 significant portion of what our customers use, such
11 as the ductless heat pump programs. These are the
12 measures our customers want and they use.

13 Since 2022, our residential programs, so
14 I'm just speaking residential only, have supported
15 780 projects and saved nearly 1.6 million kilowatt
16 hours of energy. And our customers do tell us that
17 these energy rebates are what make these upgrades
18 affordable. Our residents help fund these BPA
19 programs and they should be able to use them.

20 The shift in savings is small for what we
21 feel like the cost is going to be required, as Ken
22 said. The dual target proposal has what appears to
23 be significant cost implications to BPA, requiring
24 that \$1 million upfront cost and then that \$10
25 million every rate period after that.

1 This adds complexity and it adds costs,
2 which ultimately are going to trickle down to our
3 ratepayers, and it does little to shift that needle,
4 since we're already meeting about that 90/10 split,
5 which is what this plan is trying to allocate for.

6 I also want to be fair and recognize why
7 some of these targets differ. The plan generates
8 much of the higher west side value to Washington's
9 carbon market and Oregon's limit on new gases -- new
10 gas. Now, while those are legitimate choices for
11 those states, the BPA conservation program is funded
12 regionally, and the cost is assessed equitably among
13 tier 1 customers in our provider of choice
14 contracts.

15 Under the dual target, Oregon and
16 Washington get a \$150 ceiling there and a \$70
17 ceiling for Idaho and Montana. And customers in
18 Idaho and Montana shouldn't receive fewer options
19 because policies set in other states when we're
20 paying the same percentage. It's simply asking us
21 to consider and measure everyone on the same
22 yardstick.

23 I understand the Council's concern. It is
24 not a small task when we talk about the energy
25 crisis happening, the goals and conflicts. And it's

1 difficult to use, like you said, assumptions on
2 where we think things are going to go when we have a
3 lot of emerging new technologies.

4 And I realize that this single adequacy
5 standard shows a winter shortfall about once in
6 every 8.5 years instead of once in ten, and a
7 shortfall of about 37 megawatts.

8 But eliminating these important
9 residential programs for our customers doesn't seem
10 to be going in the right direction.

11 So I think we've had a lot of good public
12 comment today, a lot more eloquent than I said, but
13 we do ask, I think, for us to consider in the plan
14 viable dispatchable resources that some have been
15 mentioned today, whether we look at more geothermal,
16 the nuclear side of things, and reconsider the dual
17 target proposal and allow BPA that framework that
18 had been provided in the other power plans, but BPA
19 the autonomy then to craft its own continued
20 successful energy efficiency program.

21 Thank you.

22 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Thank you, Sarah.

23 Has anyone else signed up?

24 All right. Then we will not adjourn the
25 meeting, but we will recess. Jen got nervous, I was

1 going to say. I'm going to stay until 5:45, at
2 which point we'll reconvene and see if anyone else
3 has asked.

4 But as Jen pointed out, lots of staff
5 members in the audience, so if you want to continue
6 to discuss these items while the four of us put our
7 feet up and eat peeled grapes, you're welcome to do
8 so. We're -- we're all here to talk to you, so
9 let's use this time wisely. We'll reconvene at 545.

10 (WHEREUPON, a recess was taken.)

11 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: So we're going to end
12 that recess. Appreciate all the conversation that
13 transpired. I'm sure all four of us are smarter
14 than we were 20 minutes ago.

15 We have had another individual who wishes
16 to testify. So, Colby, you missed a great legal
17 disclaimer and everything, but the gist of it is,
18 come have a seat, spell your name, and if you have
19 any comment -- we're going to -- it's going to be in
20 a record, but if you have any written comments, you
21 can hand those to us later.

22 Got about five or so minutes. Go ahead.

23 COLBY HATTON: All right. I realized upon
24 putting my name down that I forgot to send onto my
25 own email from my computer. So we're going to --

1 going to go for the sparknotes version.

2 But, good afternoon. My name is Colby
3 Hatton, C-O-L-B-Y, H-A-T-T-O-N. I am a resident of
4 Idaho Falls, and I just wanted to give a quick
5 testimony about -- or quick comment. Sorry.

6 Basically, the short version is, we are in
7 a climate emergency. This past winter here in
8 Idaho, we had extremely little snow. I was
9 literally driving around with my window down in the
10 middle of February, which was -- it's not normal for
11 Idaho, especially Idaho Falls.

12 And on that subject, fossil infrastructure
13 is simply not a investment. It is a payday loan.
14 Every dollar we put in is going to have to be paid
15 back in costs of eventually swapping to renewable
16 energy, and also in the damage that we have to pay
17 from climate change, things like failed crops,
18 increased wildfires, and other catastrophic events,
19 both here at home and across the world.

20 So, in my opinion, I believe that we
21 should be doubling down on battery storage, on more
22 geothermal production. I feel like we have not
23 remotely tapped into the resources that we have with
24 that.

25 And while I understand that natural gas is

1 a very flexible fuel, I think we should keep the
2 generation we have currently, the power plants we
3 have as peaker plants, but I strongly am against
4 building new power plants that rely on natural gas.

5 The other side of my comment was about the
6 transmission line infrastructure that's being built.
7 And inversely there, I am hugely in favor of that.

8 Transmission infrastructure is one of the
9 biggest challenges to -- to electrifying today, and
10 the more we can do on that, the better our return
11 will be. So, didn't have it quite as poetic as I
12 was hoping, but those were my thoughts today. And I
13 appreciate your time. Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN ALLEN: Thank you, Colby.

15 All right, so we will recess again until
16 6:10. You're free to go, free to stay and talk,
17 whatever suits you best, but we really appreciate
18 the turnout today. We have to stay until 6:00.

19 (WHEREUPON, a recess was taken.)

20 (WHEREUPON, the hearing reconvened at 6:10
21 p.m.)

22 (WHEREUPON, Councilman Allen concluded the
23 hearing, which was not recorded.)

24 (WHEREUPON, the Ninth Northwest Regional
25 Power Plant hearing was concluded at 6:30 p.m.)

CERTIFICATE

I, Lesli Hinshaw, 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 21st day of October, 2026.



Lesli Hinshaw, CER No. 5217

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