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November 27, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Terry Morlan

SUBJECT: Schedule for the Sixth Power Plan and Approval of Issue Paper Release

The Council is required by the Northwest Power Act (the Act) to review its power plan a minimum of every five years [Section 4(d)(1)]. The Fifth Power Plan was adopted in December 2004. Therefore, it must be reviewed by December 2009. The Act also requires that the fish and wildlife program be incorporated into the power plan [Section 4(e)(3)(F)] and that the Council must issue a request for amendments to the fish and wildlife program prior to reviewing the power plan [Section 4(h)(2)]. The intent of these requirements is to ensure that the power plan incorporates the provisions of the fish and wildlife program that affect the operation of the power system, so that the Council and Bonneville may take into account in the plan's resource acquisition scheme the non-power constraints imposed by the fish and wildlife program.

The primary reason, however, for developing a new power plan at this time is not the five year requirement in the Act. It is to provide guidance to Bonneville and the region as they face substantial new challenges to deal with climate change and related policies, increased generating resource costs, and growing water and other environmental constraints.

Development of a power plan is an intensive analytical and public involvement process that typically takes about 2 years. Preliminary to the review, development of data, models, and analysis is required. This phase will require at least a year. Then recommendations for future resources to minimize the cost and risk of the regional power system will be developed, which includes specific actions needed to implement the recommendations. Staff is proposing an aggressive schedule to complete a new power plan by the summer of 2009. The Council hopes to complete the fish and wildlife program amendment process by the late fall of 2008, giving the Council time to complete the power plan even on this aggressive schedule.

The first step in thinking about a new power plan is to identify the key issues that the plan should address. Staff has developed a paper that describes what we think are the key issues. But to complete framing the issues we need to hear from others in the region what they think are the key issues. These are the people who the Council relies on to implement the power plan, so their views are vital.

The Power Committee will have a recommendation for the Council on whether or not this paper is ready for public comment.

Attachment