

**Northwest Power and Conservation Council  
Meeting Summary  
September 15, 2021  
Portland, Oregon – Webinar**

Council Chair Richard Devlin brought the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Council Members Jeffery Allen, Doug Grob, Guy Norman, Patrick Oshie, Jim Yost, Chuck Sams, and Mike Milburn joined the webinar. The next Council Meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2021.

**Reports from Committees**

**Fish and Wildlife Committee**

Member Allen, Fish and Wildlife Committee Chair, reported on the Fish and Wildlife Committee Meetings held on September 13 and 14, 2021.

**1. Performance Indicators Workshop**

The Fish and Wildlife Committee held a workshop on to discuss progress in developing performance indicators for the Program. It was encouraging to see the workshops have excellent attendance, with roughly 50 participants. They continued refinement on a number of the performance indicators and are about 50% of their way through the process. Member Allen noted the excellent collaboration between Council staff and stakeholders, and that it's encouraging to see that the region has continued to embrace what was envisioned in the addendum of the Program.

**2. New Pacific Lamprey Restoration and Investigations**

Ralph Lampman, Lamprey Research Biologist of the Yakima Nation, highlighted the work that the Yakima Nation and their partners are doing to benefit lamprey in the region. In many cases, what they're doing is groundbreaking science. He demonstrated progress for lamprey recovery in various subbasins and provided perspective on the environmental contribution of lamprey. He also spoke to the cultural significance of lamprey to basin tribes. They have ambitious recovery goals and they're making great progress toward them.

**3. Mapping Fish and Wildlife Projects to the Council's Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program**

Bonneville Power Administration and Council staff are working on a Fish and Wildlife project mapping effort. Council and BPA staff worked collaboratively in to develop a shared list of active projects and understand how projects support the Council's Program. They demonstrated that about 85% of the projects are in support of Council recommendations with the remaining work tied to accords or other BPA priorities. As this process evolves, it

will provide a clearer understanding of the projects with better transparency and allow for better decision making for projects and funding allocation going forward. Member Allen noted the outstanding collaboration between Council and BPA staff. There has been some difficulty through the pandemic to maintain the level of communication needed to do this work, so it's encouraging to see everything Council and BPA staffs are accomplishing.

Fish and Wildlife Committee meeting materials for September 2021 can be found here: <https://www.nwcouncil.org/meeting/council-meeting-september-14-2021>

## **Public Hearings Schedule**

Chair Devlin announced that the public comment period for the 2021 Draft Power Plan began on September 14th. The Council has set hearings for the Plan. The Montana hearing will be September 27th from 5:00 – 7:00 PM Mountain Time. The Washington hearing will be on October 7th from 5:00 – 7:00 PM Pacific Time. The Oregon hearing will be on October 12th from 1:30 – 3:30 PM Pacific Time. The Idaho hearing will be on October 14th from 5:00 – 7:00 Mountain Time. More hearings will be added if it is determined that more people need to testify.

## **Council Meeting Agenda Items**

### **1. Discussion of Draft of 2021 Northwest Power Plan**

Project Analyst Chad Madron reviewed the various 2021 Draft Northwest Power Plan (Draft Plan) online tools and materials and provided an overview of the process to submit written comment and attend public hearings.

The Draft Plan homepage contains links to the complete Draft Plan (a pdf that can be downloaded), a summary of the Draft Plan, supporting material, public hearing information, public comment options, and various technical resources used to develop the plan.

The Draft 2021 Northwest Power Plan homepage can be found here:

<https://www.nwcouncil.org/2021-northwest-power-plan>

There are several ways to comment on the Draft Plan. There is an online comment page that has a form where text is entered directly into fields. For longer comments, Word, PDF, and Zip files can be uploaded into a database that is checked regularly. Comments can be emailed to [comments@nwcouncil.org](mailto:comments@nwcouncil.org). All comments taken from the comment page, emails, and uploaded to the database will be made public at a later date.

The online comment page can be found here:

<https://app.nwcouncil.org/energy/powerplan/2021/comment/>

Links to the public hearings will take the user to the hearing agenda, instructions on how to attend the virtual hearings, and instructions on how to sign up to present oral comments.

The registration page for oral comments can be found here:

<https://app.nwcouncil.org/energy/powerplan/2021/hearings>

All public hearings will be recorded, and a court reporter will be in attendance to provide a full transcript. Public comment runs from September 14th through November 19th, 2021.

Member Milburn asked if there is a time limit for participants to sign up to attend and/or provide testimony at the hearings. Madron explained that participants will be able to register up to 5 minutes before the meeting starts. Council staff will encourage participants to sign up as early as possible.

Madron then presented on the online supporting material for the Draft Plan and provided examples of how users might access the information. He demonstrated the 2021 Power Plan Supporting Material Site Map which has a search function that allows the user to quickly navigate to any relevant sections of the supporting material. The idea is that the 2021 Power Plan will be shorter, more readable, approachable, and accessible than past Plans.

The 2021 Northwest Power Plan Supporting Material Site Map can be found here:

[https://www.nwcouncil.org/2021powerplan\\_sitemap](https://www.nwcouncil.org/2021powerplan_sitemap)

Member Grob suggested that Madron create a concise, easily deployed presentation on how to navigate the Plan's supporting materials. Madron agreed that giving this presentation would be beneficial at the public hearings.

## **2. BPA Transmission Wildfire Prevention and Related Policies**

Michelle Cathcart, VP of Transmission System Operations for Bonneville Power Administration, gave a brief presentation on BPA's Wildfire Mitigation Plan and highlighted the activities and impactful events related to the mitigation of wildfires across the transmission system experienced over the summer of 2021.

Cathcart described the stages of BPA's Wildfire Mitigation Plan.

- System Hardening – Year-round system modifications and a robust vegetation management program to minimize risk and customer impact. This is the foundation of BPA's wildfire mitigation.
- Situational Awareness Monitoring – During fire season, implementation of enhanced weather monitoring and weather forecasting by district. Asset management tools used to understand criticality, health, and risk. Red flag warnings (conditions ideal for combustion and rapid spread) are the major concern.
- Wildfire Season – Relay / Control Settings – During fire season, utilization of enhanced protection and control settings.

- Extreme Risk Days (monitoring / resources) – During Extreme Risk Days, in identified areas, stand up the PSPS decision making team.
- Activate PSPS – Last Resort: Public Safety Power Shutoff

### **Wildfire Mitigation – Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS)**

With the lessons learned from the California Camp Fire of 2018 and the Northwest Labor Day fires of 2020, BPA developed a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) procedure to strengthen their wildfire mitigation efforts. One of the foundational principles of the PSPS procedure is that it is a risk-based decision-making process. In the spring of 2021, the PSPS team identified a list of “at risk” lines that could be candidates for PSPS activation during the wildfire season. These “at risk” lines were categorized and prioritized into types of mitigations needed including mitigations for “asset condition” and mitigations for “vegetation.” The team focused on the “at risk” lines that were on the list for asset condition (various repairs) because most of the lines that were on the list for vegetation were “off right-of-way.”

On June 21, BPA activated the PSPS program for the first time in response to a reg flag warning which affected a south-central Oregon line segment, Brasada-Harney #1 115 kV. Following the procedure, the PSPS team was able focus on the highest risk facility and rule out the need to de-energize other facilities within the area, minimizing impacts to customers.

Member Yost asked for clarification of “off right-of-way vegetation risk.”

Cathcart explained that when transmission lines go through an area like a forest, the trees could be tall enough to fall into the lines. There are NERC standards related to right-of-way and legal rights that allow BPA to trim and cut down trees within a certain area around the lines. However, there could be trees in areas where they are not allowed to cut or trim. These are off right-of-way trees that could still be a risk to the transmission system.

Member Oshie asked how BPA might assess or understand the risks of the connection points between lower voltage interconnected facilities and higher voltage lines.

Cathcart explained that this is something BPA does consider. The lower voltage lines belong to BPA customers, and BPA asks their customers to communicate and coordinate with them if and when they are de-energizing their lower voltage lines.

Chair Devlin asked Cathcart to explain the phenomena of how particulates of a fire in the area of a line can act as a conductor that could force a line closure.

Cathcart explained that there are proactive de-energizations, but these are different from PSPS events. Lines are removed from service to support firefighting because flame retardant can also be a conductive material. In summer 2021, BPA had 14 lines removed from service for firefighter safety. Another 9 lines were removed from service due to smoke or fire. Smoke in the area of energized lines can create arcs because it can be a conductive

material. The arcing can cause facilities to relay out of service.

#### *Heat Dome: Actions Taken*

In late June there were very high temperatures across the system spanning multiple days. As BPA saw the heatwave approaching, they declared a system-wide global Restricted Maintenance from June 28, 6:00 AM to June 30, 10:00 PM. This allowed BPA to keep the system as intact as possible for the days where they saw the potential for the highest loading across the system. BPA worked with utilities in the highest risk areas (Tri-Cities) to create proactive plans to keep the system stable and prevent cascading outages. Crews would flush radiators of transmission assets and watered equipment to reduce its temperature, because as the equipment gets hotter, it can withstand less loading. BPA communicated safety information to field crews regarding heat exposure. BPA also partnered with the City of Richland to communicate with customers to conserve energy on June 25 and curtail energy use on June 28. They saw a significant difference their loading based on this messaging and ended up not having to shed load. The Ice Harbor Dam also helped to support load at that time.

#### *Bootleg Fire*

Cathcart explained how the Northwest AC Intertie (NWACI) is the main AC corridor between the Northwest and California. With the Bootleg Fire approaching the corridor, it became credible that three 500kV lines owned by BPA, Pacific Corp, and PGE would relay out of service. BPA coordinated with Pacific Corp and PGE to proactively decrease the total transfer capability on the NWACI. All three lines ended up relaying out of service, and they were able to withstand the outage because they had already decreased the flows on the intertie. Everything from assessing the system to restoring it was done in close coordination with the fire incident management teams.

Presentation materials are posted with this summary here:

[https://www.nwcouncil.org/sites/default/files/2021\\_0914\\_2.pdf](https://www.nwcouncil.org/sites/default/files/2021_0914_2.pdf)

### **3. Regional Conservation Progress Report**

Regional Technical Forum (RTF) Manager Jennifer Light presented the 2020 Regional Conservation Progress Report, which provides an update on the region's progress relative to the energy efficiency goals in the Council's Seventh Power Plan. The report comprises data from all the efficiency programs in the region: Bonneville and its customer utilities, the region's investor-owned utilities, the mid-Columbia utilities, Energy Trust of Oregon, and the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance. The report also includes data on total market savings, capturing additional savings occurring outside of direct program acquisition. These data provide an understanding of the cost-effective energy efficiency savings acquired in the region and related expenditures for 2016-2020. This time period represents the first five years of the Seventh Power Plan's Action Plan period.

The region is currently behind milestone goals for the 2016-2020 period. Plan milestones increased, but savings remain flat to declining. To reach the 1,400 aMW goal, 361 aMW will have to be reported for 2021. Light highlighted the significant drop in savings reported for 2020. Some of this could be due to Covid-19, but the impacts of Covid-19 were uneven across the region. Some utilities performed better in 2020 than they had in 2019. A handful of utilities got to within 5% of the savings they had in 2019. A few had around 20% less savings than the 2019, and still a few others had 45-50% less savings than in 2019. Covid-19 restriction impacted 2020 savings, but it does not appear to be the sole driver of why the region is behind the goal. One of the other drivers is flat to declining program spending. Program savings are historically tied to the amount of budget that is put towards them.

Light highlighted that BPA is currently achieving less than its determined share (42%) of Power Plan goals. BPA program savings does account for 31% of regional program savings. Savings self-funded by BPA utilities fell significantly in 2020. She also highlighted the NEEA initiative savings by year and noted that the NEEA work is a long-term value, and the short-term view tends to underrepresent the value of these initiatives. Light showed that the region has a cumulative savings of over 7,200 aMW from energy efficiency.

Member Oshie asked for detail regarding the lighting forecast they're viewing the general acceptance by the consumers of LED lighting.

Light explained that on the residential side, that market for screw in lamps has transformed. We're seeing very high volumes of LED sales and that will be locked in with the recent rulemaking. The opportunity and potential for lighting in the Plan is with LED integral fixtures on the residential side. On the commercial, industrial, and agriculture side, there is still a lot of opportunity in lighting.

Member Oshie acknowledged that fuel switching is not energy efficiency and asked how hybrid heat pumps are viewed.

Light said that it depends on how the heat pump is installed and controlled and that it's really specific to the home and determined by the primary fuel being used. She is not aware of utility programs that incentivize dual fuel heat pumps, and the RTF hasn't created a measure for it.

Members Grob and Devlin asked whether the implementation challenges were the sole driver for the decrease in BPA utility self-funding, or whether this was due to budget needing to shift to other areas of the utility. Light said her understanding was that it was primarily due to challenges with implementation and it being the first year in the rate period (when utilities tend to rely on their energy efficiency incentive, EEI, funds first). She said she would reach out to Bonneville and a handful of utilities to find out more and follow up with members.

Presentation materials are posted with this summary here:  
[https://www.nwcouncil.org/sites/default/files/2021\\_0914\\_3.pdf](https://www.nwcouncil.org/sites/default/files/2021_0914_3.pdf)

#### **4. Council Business**

##### **Council approval of the August 2021 Council Meeting minutes**

Vice-Chair Norman moved that the Council approve for the signature of the Vice-Chair the minutes of the August 11, 2021, Council Meeting held in Portland, Oregon via webinar, as presented by staff.

Member Sams seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

##### **Motion to amend contract C2021-02 with Gwendolyn Shearer for continued GENESYS modeling support through the remainder of Fiscal Year 2021**

Vice-Chair Norman moved that the Council approve an amendment to contract C2021-02 with Gwendolyn Sherer to add \$6,000 to the budget for a total amended contract budget not to exceed \$81,000 to support staff in continued GENESYS modeling for the remainder of fiscal year 2021, as presented by staff [with any changes made by Members at today's meeting].

Member Sams seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

##### **Motion to authorize staff to contract with Gwendolyn Shearer for GENESYS modeling support for fiscal year 2022**

Vice-Chair Norman moved that the Council authorize staff to contract with Gwendolyn Shearer for fiscal year 2022 in an amount not to exceed \$75,000 to support staff in GENESYS modeling, as presented by staff [with any changes made by Members at today's meeting].

Member Grob seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

**Motion to authorize staff to contract with PSR Energy Solutions and Consulting LTD (Soluções e Consultoria em Energia Ltda)**

Vice-Chair Norman moved that the Council authorize staff to contract with PSR Energy Solutions and Consulting Ltd for fiscal year 2022 in an amount not to exceed \$86,000 for renewal of the GENESYS modeling software license and software maintenance and technical support services, as presented by staff [with any changes made by Members at today's meeting].

Member Sams seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

**Motion to approve comments to the U.S. Department of Energy regarding proposed revisions to the definition of general service lamp and general service incandescent lamp**

Vice-Chair Norman moved that the Council approve the comment letter to the U.S. Department of Energy in response to DOE's proposed revisions to the definition of General Service Lamp and General Service Incandescent Lamp for purposes of its energy efficiency standards program, as presented by staff [with the changes made by the Members at today's meeting].

Member Sams seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

**Motion to approve comments to the U.S. Department of Energy regarding proposed elimination of "short-cycle" categories for dishwashers, clothes washers, and dryers**

Vice-Chair Norman moved that the Council approve the comment letter to the U.S. Department of Energy in response to DOE's proposal to eliminate "short-cycle" product classes for dishwashers, clothes washers, and dryers for purposes of its energy efficiency standards program, as presented by staff [with the changes made by the Members at today's meeting].

Member Sams seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.



**Motion to appoint Tomas Turner to the Independent Scientific Review panel (ISRP)**

Vice-Chair Norman moved that the Council appoint Tomas Turner, Ph. D to the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP) for a first term from October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2024, as presented by staff [with the changes made by the Members at today's meeting].

Member Sams seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

**Motion to renew Kurt Fausch's appointment to the Independent Scientific Review panel (ISRP) for a second term**

Vice-Chair Norman moved that the Council renew the appointment of Kurt Fausch, Ph. D to the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP) for a second term from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2024, as presented by staff [with the changes made by the Members at today's meeting].

Member Sams seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

**Motion to authorize staff to contract with QW Consulting, LLC to assist staff in implementing the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program**

Vice-Chair Norman moved that the Council authorize staff to contract with QW Consulting LLC in an amount not to exceed \$92,720 for fiscal year 2022 to assist staff in enhancing and maintaining the functionality of the Fish and Wildlife Program Resource Tools and Maps, and to continue work on Program performance and strategy performance indicators, as presented by staff [with the changes made by the Members at today's meeting].

Member Sams seconded.

No discussion.

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed.

Motion was approved.

## **Public hearings for 2021 Draft Power Plan**

Chair Devlin announced again that the public comment period for the 2021 Draft Power Plan has begun. There are meetings scheduled in all four states.

Montana – September 27 5:00 – 7:00pm Mountain time

Washington – October 7 5:00 – 7:00pm Pacific time

Oregon – October 12 1:30 – 3:30pm Pacific time

Idaho – October 14 5:00 – 7:00pm Mountain time

Chair Devlin took a moment to note that there is a Council Code of Conduct. Everyone including staff and Members are expected to review and abide by this Code of Conduct. We must remain civil, respectful, and conduct ourselves in a professional responsible manner. We ask that comments be germane to the Council's work and mission. And should you want to provide a comment you've previously made, we ask that you put it in writing to avoid repetition and to ensure that others are afforded the opportunity to address the Council.

## **Public Comment**

Lauren McCloy, Policy Director of the Northwest Energy Coalition, addressed the release of the Draft 2021 Power Plan and the opening of the public comment period. She first congratulated the Council on the release of the Draft Plan. She acknowledged that with the pandemic and the challenge of remote work, it's been a challenge to keep the work on schedule, and she acknowledged that the Council had to make some tough decisions in order to prioritize this work a still to meet its obligation to release the Plan in early 2021. She said that the public comment period is a very important part of the process not only because it serves to fulfill the Council's purpose to provide for the participation and consultation of the states, local governments, consumers, and the public at large, but also because it helps the Council gauge whether the Plan as proposed will address the region's needs. This Power Plan in particular comes at a critical time when the region needs to replace the energy and capacity services from retiring coal plants while grappling with the challenge of meeting aggressive economy-wide greenhouse gas reduction goals in some of the main load centers and the imperative of maintaining reliability and affordability as we begin to understand the impacts of climate change on the system. Some of which we're already experiencing.

She commended the Council's work that has gone into developing a detailed climate adjusted baseline for this Plan, and they do think that this innovation will become increasingly relevant and important during the action plan period. It will help the region anticipate the increasing weather variability affecting the people and environment of the Northwest and our power system, which is a critical role for the Council.

As the Coalition reviews the Draft Plan, they will be paying particular attention to the proposed resource strategy which they remain concerned is not as well balanced as it needs to be. They believe that the data continues to support a higher target for energy efficiency, and they also remain concerned about the low regional target for demand

response and the absence of a role for energy storage in the Plan. She said that the Draft Plan's guidance to the Bonneville Power Administration, particularly on energy efficiency, is a significant concern for the Northwest Energy Coalition. So as the Council enters the public comment period, they encourage the Council to be open to public input including from states, tribes, local governments, and stakeholders and members of the public including consumers. Public input serves as an important check on the content of the Plan and its relevance to the region as a whole. They look forward to reviewing the full Plan, engaging in the public process, and the Council's continued work to finalize the 2021 Plan in the months ahead.

She thanked the Council for the opportunity to comment and they look forward to continuing to engage.

Chair Devlin adjourned the meeting at 12:17 p.m.

Northwest Power and Conservation Council meeting materials for September 2021 can be found here: <https://www.nwcouncil.org/meeting/council-meeting-september-14-2021>