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**BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION  
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***Innovative agreement:  
BPA to share costs with PUDs in regional planning project***

**Portland, Ore.** – Three public utility districts and the [Bonneville Power Administration](#) signed an agreement today that takes an innovative approach to regional transmission planning. They will share the costs of building a \$14 million high-voltage transmission line in Central Washington developed through collaborative assessment and planning. The Northern Mid-Columbia Joint Transmission Project participants include BPA and [Chelan](#), [Douglas](#) and [Grant](#) County PUDs.

"This project is important because it demonstrates that we can voluntarily do joint planning and have it result in a project," said Bill Dobbins, general manager of Douglas PUD.

The collaboration makes it cost-effective for all parties to improve the efficiency and reliability of the Northwest's transmission grid. The savings will then be passed on to local customer-owners. Construction-related jobs would also boost local economies.

[ColumbiaGrid](#)'s Planning and Expansion Functional Agreement brought the parties together. "It clearly shows the value that the planning and expansion process brings to our region," said Allen Burns, ColumbiaGrid's president and CEO. "That value is in improved delivery of electricity as well as the increased flexibility on the system."

ColumbiaGrid is a nonprofit membership corporation formed to improve the operational efficiency, reliability and planned expansion of the Northwest power grid.

This multi-year effort began with each utility planning its own transmission requirements. As a result, needs were identified. The parties then worked together to determine who would build, own and pay for the required additions.

The route is yet to be determined and the project must pass environmental review. Construction is forecast, depending on review, to start in 2014.

Under the agreement, the project consists of two parts. Work could proceed simultaneously. First, BPA would add a new 230-kilovolt bay at its Columbia Substation in Douglas County. Second, Douglas County PUD would design and build a new nine-mile, 230-kilovolt line. This line would tie in to the new bay.

The agreement allows the entities to reconfirm participation at two key points: after completion of the preliminary design and when detailed design is complete and the final construction cost estimate is done.

Participants have agreed to share the costs of the project as follows: BPA would provide 42 percent of the funding; Douglas and Grant PUDs each would fund 17 percent; and Chelan PUD, 24 percent. Costs would be roughly allocated based on the benefits provided to each utility.

*BPA is a nonprofit federal agency that markets renewable hydropower from federal Columbia River dams, operates three-quarters of high-voltage transmission lines in the Northwest and funds one of the largest wildlife protection and restoration programs in the world. BPA and its partners have also saved enough electricity through energy efficiency projects to power four large American cities. For more information, contact us at 503-230-5131 or visit our website at [www.bpa.gov](http://www.bpa.gov).*

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**Bonneville Power Administration**

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