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**BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION
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First BPA customer schedules energy in 15-minute increments

New scheduling practice holds promise for renewable energy integration and lower costs

At 11:04 a.m. on Tuesday, Portland General Electric became the first BPA customer to schedule energy in 15-minute increments. BPA began offering the opportunity to schedule energy in intervals less than 30 minutes for the first time yesterday.

Historically, our region's power producers have scheduled energy transactions on the hour and, more recently, on the half hour. The option of buying, selling and transmitting energy in the shorter time frame provides more market flexibility to respond to unexpected changes in power generation and demand, making more effective use of available transmission lines to deliver energy.

BPA's road to offering the 15-minute scheduling option required innovation, investment and hard work.

"This accomplishment underscores our commitment to operate our transmission system efficiently and, if possible, to reduce renewable energy integration costs. I am proud of the hard work BPA did to implement this important new tool," BPA Administrator Elliot Mainzer said.

After being the first to take advantage of the new schedule, PGE explained its value.

"We're working with BPA and utilities throughout the region to find ways to improve the flexibility and efficiency of the grid," said Jim Piro, president and CEO of Portland General Electric. "Fifteen-minute scheduling is part of an ongoing, collaborative effort to assure that we can continue to provide our customers with reliable electric service at a reasonable cost."

By offering 15-minute scheduling, BPA meets requirements to help remove barriers to integrating variable energy resources included in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Order 764. BPA currently has more than 4,500 megawatts of wind energy connected to its transmission system and expects that number to increase as state and national policies and other factors drive additional development of renewable resources.

"The shift toward 15-minute scheduling is a significant step forward for the Northwest and will help to reduce costs to consumers as well as to integrate more renewable energy into our electric system," said Cameron Yourkowski, senior policy adviser at Renewable Northwest. "Kudos to Bonneville for making this work. This is an important step in the effort to modernize our grid."

The new 15-minute scheduling option could provide many benefits for BPA and its customers if the practice is widely adopted. Principal among those is the possibility of reducing the amount of balancing reserves BPA must hold to move hydropower generation up or down as the energy produced by other generators connected to its system strays from the amount scheduled.

"The Northwest is blessed with abundant clean energy resources, led by the hydropower system," said John Prescott, president and CEO of PNGC Power. "BPA has been proactive in taking steps to increase the efficient operation of its transmission system, and the implementation of 15-minute schedules is a positive step forward for the region's energy markets."

BPA markets more than one-third of the electricity consumed in the Pacific Northwest. The power is produced at 31 federal dams and one nuclear plant in the region and is sold to more than 140 Northwest utilities, among other entities. BPA operates a high-voltage transmission grid consisting of more than 15,000 miles of lines and associated substations in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana, serving more than 480 customers.

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