



**NEWS RELEASE
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Idaho and BPA sign historic agreement for wildlife restoration

The governor of Idaho and the administrator of the Bonneville Power Administration met in Sandpoint, Idaho, today to celebrate the completion of the historic Albeni Falls wildlife settlement agreement. Idaho agrees that the \$24 million settlement satisfies BPA's wildlife habitat mitigation responsibilities for impacts from Albeni Falls Dam.

The dam, located on the Pend Oreille River at the outlet of Lake Pend Oreille, was completed in 1955 and is operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. BPA sells the power generated at this and 30 other dams in the Federal Columbia River Power System. Under the Northwest Power Act of 1980, BPA is obligated to protect, mitigate and enhance fish and wildlife affected by the FCRPS dams.

"In my view, this agreement is not only good for Idaho, it is also good for people who buy their electricity from utilities supplied by BPA, wherever they might live in the Northwest," Idaho Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter said in the ceremony today. "That is because with this agreement, BPA's payments to Idaho for wildlife mitigation are on schedule to stop in just 10 years, and once that happens, wildlife mitigation with the state of Idaho will no longer add to people's power bills" he said.

Through the settlement, Idaho agrees that all of its interests in dam construction and inundation impacts have been mitigated through prior land purchases with BPA. Using BPA funding, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game has acquired more than 4,200 acres of wildlife habitat in northern Idaho. Under the new agreement, BPA will provide nearly \$7 million for the long-term stewardship of the land. The funding will be invested by the Idaho Endowment Fund Investment Board, and the interest from the investment will provide perpetual funding for future care and maintenance costs of the acreage.

To address the dam's operational impacts on wildlife, the settlement provides almost \$13 million for habitat restoration at the Clark Fork and Priest river deltas around Lake Pend Oreille. These projects complement previous restoration actions to improve conditions for fish and wildlife around the lake. Once complete, the projects will restore more than 2,000 acres of habitat.

"This historic agreement, made possible by BPA's strong partnership with the state of Idaho and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, will provide essential wildlife habitat protection for Lake Pend Oreille and the surrounding area," said BPA Administrator Elliot Mainzer. "The habitat protected in this agreement will have long-lasting benefits for wildlife, Idaho residents and citizens of the Northwest."