

BPA NEWS

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BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION
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Threatened frogs find refuge in BPA transmission line corridors

A threatened Northwest frog that lost habitat to development, agriculture and invasive species has found refuge in what may seem like an unlikely place: beneath the high-voltage power lines of the Bonneville Power Administration.

Oregon spotted frogs lay eggs in the shallow water provided by wetlands, such as those that exist within many BPA transmission line corridors. Because high-growing vegetation poses a risk to power lines, BPA works to cultivate low-growing native plants that protect wetlands and maintain open-water habitats, all of which are beneficial to frogs.

BPA works closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies to ensure it protects suitable habitat for the Oregon spotted frog and other wildlife living beneath its transmission lines. Methods include reducing the unintentional injury of frogs from equipment, hand mowing or cutting non-native vegetation and carefully planning spot herbicide use.

The agency's practice of maintaining healthy plant communities along its rights-of-way and limiting the use of herbicides decreases maintenance costs and improves power system reliability.

The Oregon spotted frog isn't the only species that thrives in the improved habitat. BPA's techniques promote the growth of low-growing shrubs and flowering plants that are critical for imperiled honey bees and other pollinators.

The Oregon spotted frog is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. It once



lived in open wetlands, lakes, ponds, streams and occasionally slow-moving rivers from northern California to British Columbia.

Today, the threatened frog can still be found in some river basins in Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, but scientists have not documented the animal in northern California for more than a century.

About BPA

The Bonneville Power Administration, headquartered in Portland, Ore., is a nonprofit federal power marketer that sells wholesale electricity from 31 federal dams and one nuclear plant to 142 Northwest electric utilities, serving millions of consumers and businesses in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, western Montana and parts of California, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming. BPA delivers power via more than 15,000 circuit miles of lines and 261 substations to 475 transmission customers. In all, BPA markets about a third of the electricity consumed in the Northwest and operates three-quarters of the region's high-voltage transmission grid. BPA also funds one of the largest fish and wildlife programs in the world, and, with its partners, pursues cost-effective energy savings and operational solutions that help maintain affordable, reliable and carbon-free electric power for the Northwest. www.bpa.gov

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