



Fact Sheet

March 2013

BPA invests in fish and wildlife

Hydroelectric dams supply more than 60 percent of the Northwest’s electricity each year in normal rain and snow conditions. Much of that comes from the 31 federal dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers. In addition to emissions-free electricity, the system provides flood control, irrigation, transportation and recreation.

Because BPA sells and distributes the power from the 31 federal dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers, we are committed to our obligations mitigate for the impacts of these dams on fish, wildlife and habitat. BPA is proud to fund and manage one of the largest fish and wildlife protection programs in the nation.



Each year, BPA invests millions of dollars to make dams safer for fish. We partner with states and tribes, conservation agencies and others to restore damaged habitat, protect lands and streams and improve hatchery practices.

BPA’s funding for fish and wildlife has five main components:

EXPENSE OR DIRECT PROGRAM: BPA funds hundreds of fish and wildlife projects in the Columbia Basin, including habitat restoration, hatcheries, land acquisitions, predator control and research and evaluation.

REIMBURSABLE: BPA reimburses the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation for a portion of the costs to operate and maintain the fish passage improvements at the dams and for O&M costs for certain hatcheries operated by the Corps, Reclamation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

CAPITAL REPAYMENT: BPA reimburses the U.S. Treasury for the principal and interest for constructing capital projects of other federal agencies as well as its own capital investments, such as federally owned hatcheries and fish passage improvements at the dams.

What BPA spent for fish and wildlife 2002–2012 (\$ in millions)

Cost category	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Expense or direct	\$144.2	\$147.2	\$145.7	\$135.8	\$137.9	\$139.5	\$148.9	\$177.9	\$199.6	\$221.1	\$248.9
Reimbursable	50.9	52.6	57.2	57.9	60.7	60.3	62.2	64.3	69.7	74.3	73.0
Capital repayment	78.2	80.5	85.4	89.7	87.5	112.9	116.2	120.0	123.5	127.2	131.5
Power purchases	147.8	171.1	191.0	110.8	168.2	120.7	274.9	240.3	310.1	70.7	38.5
Lost opportunity costs	12.6	79.2	21.7	182.1	397.4	282.6	273.5	142.8	99.4	156.7	152.2
TOTAL	\$433.7	\$530.6	\$501.0	\$576.3	\$851.7	\$715.9	\$875.8	\$745.3	\$802.3	\$649.9	\$644.1

This information was made publicly available by BPA in December 2012 and is consistent with agency-approved financial information.



POWER PURCHASES: Fish operations – such as spilling water over dams rather than passing it through turbines – can limit the amount of electricity generated at the dams. If fish operations cause BPA to purchase power to meet its load obligations, the cost of purchased power is identified as a fish cost.

LOST OPPORTUNITY COSTS: The value of energy that could have been generated if water had passed through turbines represents lost opportunity costs. These costs vary depending on power market prices and water volume.

Funding and ensuring results

BPA's fish and wildlife program is paid for through the electric rates of utilities that buy power from BPA. It is not funded by U.S. taxpayers. Without these fish and wildlife costs, BPA's electricity rate to its Northwest public utility customers would be about a third lower.

BPA's fish and wildlife investments are reviewed by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's Independent Science Review Panel to ensure that projects address the factors that affect fish health and that results are scientifically valid. Evaluation results are used to continually improve the program.

In addition to the ratepayer dollars that BPA invests in fish and wildlife, a number of other federal agencies are actively involved in Columbia River Basin fish and wildlife restoration. These agencies, collectively known as the Columbia Basin Federal Caucus, include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation that own and operate the federal dams, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, NOAA Fisheries and others. For more information on the Caucus, visit www.salmonrecovery.gov.