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## **BPA boosts Northwest wind energy**

**PORTLAND, Ore.** – The Bonneville Power Administration has found a way to make the wind more useful for generating electricity year round. The program is a major step toward advancing wind generation in the Northwest.

With the signing of a contract with the Cowlitz County Public Utility District in Longview, Wash., BPA introduces a new service to help the region's publicly owned utilities bring wind-generated power to their customers. Cowlitz is buying two megawatts of power from the Nine Canyon wind energy project operated by Energy Northwest near Kennewick, Wash. Because the wind produces a variable supply of energy, BPA provides a back-up energy source to cover the times when the turbines don't turn. BPA has agreed to take the wind energy into its system, deliver the power as it's available and provide the back up.

"Helping utilities bring wind energy to market is exactly what our wind energy program envisions," said Assistant Secretary David Garman, U.S. Department of Energy. "The department's program includes comprehensive wind energy research along with support for utilities and the wind generation industry. The BPA services meet all these goals."

"Integrating wind generation will be an important part of BPA's future strategy to encourage regional development of renewable energy resources," said BPA Administrator Steve Wright. "It is yet another example of how the flexibility of the Northwest hydro power system provides value to the people of this region."

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The new service is available to any of BPA's public utility customers that want to invest in wind power. BPA charges are designed to cover the costs of providing the service while keeping wind affordable.

"A purchase of two megawatts of wind power is a small but important step for us," Cowlitz PUD General Manager Denny Robinson said. "BPA's involvement is imperative to this process of diversifying the PUD's energy portfolio. We appreciate BPA making this service available so both the PUD and BPA can learn more about the impacts of integrating this renewable resource into our electric systems."

"These services represent a tremendous advance for renewables in the Northwest," said Rachel Shimshak, executive director of the Renewable Northwest Project. "We hope that all utilities, public and private, will consider diversifying their energy portfolios with clean wind energy."

BPA has also developed a similar service for other regional public utilities that buy fixed amounts of power from BPA as well as for investor-owned utilities. The service integrates the wind energy and stores it in the hydropower system, delivering the power to the utility a week later in a steady, predictable supply.

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