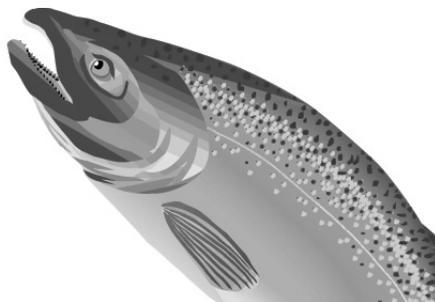


Ratepayers Deserve to Know the True Cost of Salmon Protection

Northwest power customers seldom know how much they pay for federal programs to protect the Northwest's endangered salmon runs, which is why the Washington Public Utility Districts Association (WPUDA) supports a bill sponsored by U.S. Rep. Cathy McMorris (Republican-Washington) requiring regular, detailed salmon-cost updates.

"At a time when energy costs are increasing, our region's ratepayers have a right to know where every penny of their money is spent," said WPUDA Executive Director Steve Johnson. "By requiring the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and other federal power marketers to tell customers exactly how much of their rates goes toward protecting salmon, Rep. McMorris is fighting for all Northwest residents."



McMorris' bill requires federal power marketers to estimate and report the direct and indirect costs involved with salmon protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Since passage of the Northwest Power Act in 1980, the BPA's wholesale power customers in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and western Montana have financed the agency's fish and wildlife program

through their rates.

Most of the program's costs are dedicated to ESA compliance.

The BPA estimates ESA components of its fish and wildlife program account for nearly 23 percent of its wholesale electricity rates. It spends an average of \$500 million annually on ESA compliance.

Federal court mandates and other compliance programs have driven ESA costs related to salmon up considerably in the Northwest.

A court-mandated spill of water over the BPA's dams last summer assisted between 25 and 300 adult salmon, meaning it cost ratepayers between \$250,000 and \$3 million per fish.

Combined, Washington PUDs are the BPA's largest buyer of wholesale electricity, accounting for 24 percent, or \$675 million, of the BPA's 2004 revenue. ■

Help Us Observe National Electrical Safety Month

Klickitat PUD is celebrating Safe Drinking Water Week and National Electrical Safety Month the week of May 1-5.

Customers are encouraged to visit the KPUD offices in Goldendale and White Salmon during "Open House" on Wednesday, May 3, for free refreshments and brochures.

In celebrating electrical safety month, we would like to remind our customers to inspect their homes to make sure they are free of electrical accidents waiting to happen. ■

