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## **Customers Comment on Return of Hiring Authority to BPA**

*Department of Energy's announcement that it is clearing the Bonneville Power Administration to conduct its own human resources functions seen as a positive sign*

PORTLAND – Leaders of groups representing purchasers of wholesale electricity from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) reacted positively today on the announcement that the Department of Energy (DOE) had returned to BPA all of its authorities to make personnel decisions following a process to address concerns over hiring issues raised in audits last year that led to suspension of the agency's authority. BPA is a key regional supplier of power impacting millions of Northwest residents.

"This is a critical step," said Scott Corwin, Executive Director of the Public Power Council. "With the problems fixed, authority is rightly returned to the regional Administrator so that BPA can take much needed personnel actions."

The Northwest Congressional delegation had expressed concerns about the hiring issues and the autonomy of BPA when DOE stripped the agency of its ability to take almost any personnel action last year in the wake of reports that it had not been following federal hiring guidelines.

John Prescott, President and CEO of PNGC Power said, "This affirms that Elliot Mainzer and the leadership team at BPA have done an impressive job with an enormous challenge over the past year."

BPA worked with DOE and the Office of Personnel Management to create an action plan to address the past human resources mistakes and to train staff regarding recent laws on federal hiring practices.

"Elliot Mainzer, the managers, and the employees at BPA have really stepped up to address the human resources issues," said John Saven, CEO of Northwest Requirements Utilities. "Now, we will work together to ensure they are in the best position possible to meet the mission of providing safe and reliable wholesale power and transmission for Northwest consumers."

The announcement today made clear that extensive work by BPA staff successfully addressed the concerns in the audits. A remaining issue customers would like addressed is to see the BPA General Counsel once again report to the BPA Administrator rather than to DOE headquarters.

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*The Public Power Council, PNGC Power, and Northwest Requirements Utilities are organizations that represent well over 100 utility preference customers of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), serving power to millions of consumers in eight states. These consumer-owned utilities are close partners with BPA in delivering the clean, cost based power from the Federal Columbia River Power System to residents and businesses in the Northwest.*