



news & views

from Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

LINCOLN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Fish price tag demands ongoing scrutiny

There is nothing like an \$802 million price tag to prompt a lot of reflection. The figure is Bonneville Power Administration's 2010 fish and wildlife expenditures. As a trade publication recently put it, the expenditures amount to \$340 per chinook, sockeye and steelhead that passed Bonneville Dam in 2010.

While \$802 million may not seem like a lot when Congress is struggling to come up with trillions of dollars to reduce the nation's debt, it is a very real figure to people here in the Northwest who pay it. And when you add \$802 million to the decades-long tally, Northwest families and businesses have put \$11.8 billion toward fish and wildlife since 1978. About one-third of what Lincoln Electric pays BPA for power goes to fish and wildlife expenditures. That translates to about \$15 to \$20 a month out of a \$100 retail electric bill.

What are we really paying for? Quite simply, these costs are incurred to comply with laws that are intended to protect salmon and other critters and to mitigate for the impacts of the federal dams. The costs include many things: habitat restoration, construction and maintenance of fish hatcheries, new technologies to help fish pass by dams, and changes in hydro operations and river flows to get fish downstream. One of LEC's industry allies, Northwest RiverPartners, most critical jobs is to see that we are getting our money's worth.

The Northwest Power and Conservation Council is the focus of much of that effort. RiverPartners is working with the Council, BPA and our allies to contain escalating fish and wildlife costs and to evaluate whether measures we pay for are delivering real benefits. Just as Congress is struggling to cut the federal budget, we know it is



tough to make inroads into institutionalized expenditures.

A case in point: this spring, RiverPartners joined with the Public Power Council, PNGC Power and Northwest Requirements utilities, to zero in on a group of ongoing research, monitoring and evaluation projects under review by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council.

Our team determined at least half of the \$34 million spent on these "Group

Continued on page 5

System Wide Power Outage Planned

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is requiring a system wide power outage to complete critical maintenance on the transmission line serving all Lincoln Electric Cooperative members.

All Co-op Members will be without power on Sunday, September 18 from 1 a.m. - 6 a.m.

We apologize for the inconvenience, but this crucial maintenance will provide long term reliability for co-op members. If you have any questions, please contact the office.



Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



**889-3301
1-800-442-2994**

When the water starts pouring, the dams go into action

As we watched our local rivers rise in late spring and heard about the floods on national news, we are reminded how fortunate we are in the northwest. Not only are dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers the foundation of the Northwest's clean renewable electric power system, they also play a crucial role in flood control as well as transportation, irrigation and recreation.

In 1948, Columbia River flooding destroyed the town of Vanport, Ore. and impacted cities throughout Oregon and Washington. Property was damaged and 32 lives were lost. The flood forced 50,000 people to be evacuated and caused an estimated \$100 million in damages. This prompted the development of a multiple-use reservoir storage system and a coordinated plan with Canada.

coordinated effort of the operators of the hydro plants on our rivers, major problems were prevented.

Here in the Northwest, the Columbia and Snake rivers are valued for flood control and for their economic and recreational significance. These rivers and dams are vital to power production and the region's economic health.



Manager's Notes
by Ray Ellis

Dams capture floodwaters and provide water storage. And the dams control the amount of water flows to the river below. Dam operators work together to manage the water levels to protect property and lives when there is the threat of flooding.

In February 1996, heavy rains and melting snowpack due to mild temperatures created some of the highest water flows in more than 30 years in the Northwest, yet dam operations were able to keep the river level nearly two feet lower than it would have been otherwise. Flood control prevented an estimated \$3.2 billion in damages.

This year, water levels again reached record-breaking highs, threatening Portland and Vancouver, Wash. and other lowland areas. But thanks to the

The Multi-purpose Hydro System – Flood control

- Melting snow and exceptionally rainy weather this spring had the Columbia River at a record-breaking high. Minor flooding occurred along the Columbia River, but thanks to the integrated hydro system, the dams and their operators played an important part in the prevention of major flooding.

- The Columbia River reached over 17
- Continued on page 5*



Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

News & Views

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Lincoln Electric's board of trustees meets monthly at the Eureka office. The regular meetings are scheduled for the third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. Members with items of interest are encouraged to contact the general manager in advance of the meeting.

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- Jim Reynolds – Dist. 4,
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- Mike Workman – Dist. 5,
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General Manager Ray Ellis

In case of power failure:
Call 889-3301 or 1-800-442-2994
Anytime day or night
After hours voice-mail for
messages 889-3304

Visit us on the Web at:
www.lincolnelectric.coop
e-mail: info@lincolnelectric.coop

Business and Boardroom Briefs

The regular meeting of the board of trustees was conducted July 18, 2011. A quorum of trustees was present and the board took the following action:

- Approved changes to Policy 103-Disclosure of Cooperative Information
- Approved a \$500 donation to Kidsville at the Lincoln County Fair
- Approved donating materials and labor to the Tobacco Valley Business Park

	Year to Date 6/30/11	Year to Date 6/30/10
YTD Kwh Sales	63,464,471	57,292,368
YTD Revenue	\$4,745,940	\$3,896,380
YTD Cost of Power	\$1,668,701	\$1,511,540
YTD Operating Exp	\$2,298,837	\$1,996,611
YTD Margins	\$797,459	\$406,748
# of Members	4,023	3,948
# of Meters	5,298	5,214
Miles of Line	927	920
Total Utility Plant	\$29,140,877	\$27,763,195
Member Equity	\$7,818,884	\$7,012,682
Avg Residential Usage (kWh)	1,023	946
Avg Residential Billing	\$86.68	\$70.88

dams *Continued from page 4*

feet at Portland, more than a foot above the 16-foot flood stage. At the 18-foot level, moderate flooding of lowland farmland and property is anticipated.

- With the exception of 2006, runoff for the past 11 years has been below average. This year, 2011, is considered one of the wettest years on record.
- The water supply at The Dalles dam on the Columbia River was 132 percent of normal on June 29, 2011. Grand Coulee dam was 126 percent of normal.
- In 1948, prior to the development of the multiple-use reservoir storage system and a coordinated plan with Canada, there was a dramatic surge of water that reached 32 feet. That's when Vanport, Ore., was destroyed and 32 lives were lost.
- In February 1996, heavy rains and melting snowpack due to mild temperatures created some of the highest water flows in more than 30 years in the Northwest, yet dam operators were able to keep the river level nearly two feet lower than it would have been otherwise. Flood control prevented an estimated \$3.2 billion in damages. This spring, water levels again reached record-breaking highs and threatened Portland and lowland areas. But thanks to the coordinated effort of the operations of the dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers,



- major problems were prevented.
- The Pacific Northwest has one of the largest hydroelectric systems in the world. There are 55 major hydroelectric projects located on the Columbia River and its tributaries. Thirty are federal dams owned and operated by the Corps of Engineers or Bureau of Reclamation. Twenty-five are non-federal owned by various public and private utilities.
- Flood control was one of the original purposes for the many dams on the river and remains a high priority for system operations during high runoff years like those seen this spring.
- The Bonneville Power Administration markets power from the federal dams within the con-



straints and requirements for other river purposes. Flood control, protection of fish listed under the Endangered Species Act, compliance with the Clean Water Act and other requirements take precedence over power production.

Fish price tag

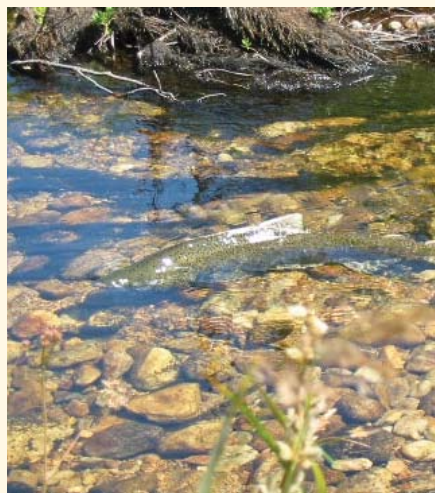
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B" projects should be eliminated from BPA's program. Why? For starters, independent science reviewers had problems with many of the projects. And many aren't related to impacts of the federal dams, which is BPA's mitigation responsibility under the law.

Take for example, coded-wire tags that state biologists use to mark hatchery fish and distinguish where they come from. BPA customers pay millions of dollars for these tags used primarily to manage fish harvest.

Sturgeon? Co-op members shell out for sturgeon studies when the main problem these fish are experiencing is one of over-harvest. And research in the ocean? It's interesting, but why should

BPA customers fork over nearly \$4 million annually to fund it, when most of the dollars go to another federal agency, NOAA Fisheries.



Despite our good arguments, it looks like these projects will continue at least for some time. We wish the Council had made immediate reductions, but we made progress and will continue to work with them and our team to press for cuts.

Fish and wildlife budgets have to be transparent, accountable and clearly target BPA's mitigation responsibilities. We must find savings and reprioritize funds to ensure that dollars from Northwest families and businesses go to on-the-ground efforts that directly benefit fish and wildlife – not to “nice but not necessary” research or to shore up bureaucracies. Nothing says that more clearly than an \$802 million annual price tag, and an \$11.8 billion cumulative total!

Outsmart the vampires



Have you ever gone to unplug an AC adapter from a wall outlet or surge protector and noticed it was warm to the touch? That heat is energy and it's costing you money, even when the electronic device that's plugged into it is turned off. Devices that draw power even when they are off are said to be using "standby power." Many have dubbed them "vampires" because the plugs look like two fangs that suck electricity at night while you sleep.

The Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) (<http://standby.lbl.gov/>) estimates that a typical American home has 40 products constantly drawing power.

Although various agencies have reported energy losses

from these devices, most agree that together vampire devices amount to at least 10 percent of residential electricity use.

So what can you do to stop the vampires? Aside from garlic and a wooden stake (which don't work on this particular variety), you could always unplug the devices each time you're finished using them. However, that could be problematic because it requires a significant change in behavior. Also, your outlets might be located in awkward places that are not easy to reach. In addition, unplugging and re-plugging devices can lead to frayed wires, causing a fire hazard.

Enter the Smart Strip! Here is a product that stops the vampires without changing the way you use your

devices. It does however, require a little bit of knowledge and planning.

A Smart Strip is basically a surge protector with some added functionality. Most are color-coded and labeled to avoid confusion. One outlet on the strip will be marked as the "Control Outlet." The Control Outlet is wired to the outlets marked "Switched Outlets." A sensor monitors the flow of electricity to the Control Outlet and when there is a significant drop (as when you turn the device off), then the Control Outlet switches power off to the Switched Outlets. There are several other outlets on the Smart Strip marked "Constant Hot Outlets." These outlets act like the standard outlets on a surge protector in that they always receive power regardless of what the device plugged into the Control Outlet is doing. Let's look at a real-world example of this:

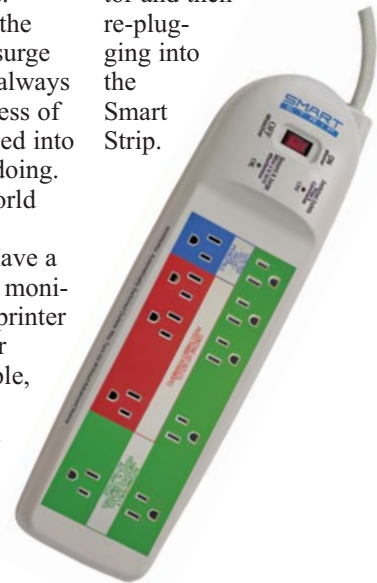
On your desk you have a computer, a computer monitor, some speakers, a printer and maybe some other devices. In this example, let's add a cell phone charger and a scanner.

For a setup like our example, you would plug your computer into the Control Outlet. Then,

you would plug the monitor, speakers, printer and scanner into the Switched Outlets.

Now, every time you turn your computer off, the Smart Strip stops sending power to those devices you only use when the computer is on. You don't choose to plug the cell phone charger into the switched outlet because you sometimes charge your cell phone even when your computer is off.

Smart Strips are especially effective when used in places where multiple devices are plugged in. Generally, changing to a Smart Strip is only a matter of unplugging the devices from your existing surge protector and then re-plugging into the Smart Strip.



Co-op Members exceed \$100,000 in savings with Co-op Connections pharmacy discount program

Prescription discounts, a major benefit of the Co-op Connections Program, can save Lincoln Electric Cooperative members up to 70 percent on prescription purchases. The program has saved Lincoln Electric members nearly \$101,000 since it's rollout a year ago.

Prescription discounts offer significant savings for members who are uninsured or underinsured. For people on

fixed incomes, it can make a substantial difference in their lives.

The card is free to all LEC members. It doesn't expire and there are no charges or annual fees. Any member of the family can use the card. In addition to prescription coverage, the card is good for discounts at hundreds of businesses online.

To find a list of offers, go to Lincoln Electric's website at: www.lincolnelec-

trac.coop and click on the Co-op Connections link.

