

EABD-0001²
DEC 29 2004

How to Comment – If you would like to submit comments relevant to the determinations to be made in the Supplement Analysis, please submit your comments to BPA by March 1, 2005. You may submit comments online at our Web site: http://www.bpa.gov/efw/Environmental_Planning_and_Analysis/Business_Plan_SA/ or by mail at:

Bonneville Power Administration
Communications - DM-7
P.O. Box 14428
Portland, OR 97293-4428
Fax: 503-230-3285

Please note that all comments submitted will be posted on our Supplement Analysis Web site. We will post the comments so that others can reflect on the comments and make comments of their own.

For More Information – If you need more information or have any questions, please call either of the project leads, Rick Yarde (503-230-3769) or Mike Mayer (503-230-4022). Thank you for your interest in our analysis.

Sincerely,



Gregory K. Delwiche
Vice-President, Environment Fish and Wildlife



Attachment

I feel sick!! I will be 65 years old in January
The environment was way past gone by the time
I came. We know down through history to stop
The waste!! Few did that. 1) We are almost
out of air. 2) We are almost out of water
3) The water, air, food ~~is~~ toxic. People are
dying needlessly. Few care, the old, poor,
children, and disabled ~~are~~ denied resources
while most pretend to look away,
only "shadows of human beings" would form
organizations to make deals with our life
support systems.

Shame on you.



EADD-0002
FEB 22 2005

From: AnonymousComment@somewhere.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 22, 2005 11:08 AM
To: BPA Public Involvement
Subject: Comment on Supplement Analysis to the 1995 Business Plan EIS

Comment on Supplement Analysis to the 1995 Business Plan EIS
View open comment periods on <http://www.bpa.gov/comment>

No E-mail Address Submitted

BELLINGHAM WA 98226
AS AN ALCOA EMPLOYEE I HAVE A VESTED INTREST IN THE OUTCOME OF THE BPA
POWER RATES. PLEASE CONSIDER A FAIR AND EQUITABLE SOLUTION TO OUR NEEDS
OF ECONOMICAL POWER RATES . THANK YOU

2/22/2005

EA 80 - 0003
FEB 25 2005

From: scott.uren@hwr.com
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2005 5:24 PM
To: BPA Public Involvement
Subject: Comment on Supplement Analysis to the 1995 Business Plan EIS

Comment on Supplement Analysis to the 1995 Business Plan EIS

View open comment periods on <http://www.bpa.gov/comment>

Olympia WA 98502

Please accept Alcoas proposal. As one of the last remaining aluminum producers in our area, they are also the most efficient. They also employ and contribute to our employment base in Washington, and have been recognized as "Good Corporate Citizens"..as a refractory supplier to this industry (also one of the last remaining) I know the industry well, and respect these folks for all they have done during a very turbulent last 5 years.. Whether a Republican or Democrat, keeping these plants open is a good thing..Raising their rates won't make up for the revenue lost on the other closed plants due to high rates and the Enron fiasco..Give them good rates, give Evergreen aluminum the same deal. Your base will increase as well as your revenues !

EABO-out
FEB 25 2005

From: steve@nwenergy.org
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2005 8:33 AM
To: BPA Public Involvement
Subject: Comment on Supplement Analysis to the 1995 Business Plan EIS

Comment on **Supplement Analysis to the 1995 Business Plan EIS**
View open comment periods on <http://www.bpa.gov/comment>

Steven Weiss
NW Energy Coalition
steve@nwenergy.org
503-851-4054
4422 Oregon Trail Ct. NE
Salem OR 97305

This comment includes an attachment!

**Comments of the
NW Energy Coalition**

**Supplemental Analysis to
the Bonneville Power Administration's
1995 Business Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement
February, 24, 2005**

The NW Energy Coalition (NWECC) is pleased to offer these comments regarding BPA's Supplemental Analysis to its 1995 Business Plan EIS. For questions, please contact Steve Weiss, Sr. Policy Associate, at 503-851-4054 or steve@nwenergy.org.

NWECC believes that in the ten years since the Business Plan EIS was issued there have been significant developments that would dictate a thorough revision of that EIS. The relevance of the '95 EIS must be called into question from changes that impact it from two directions. First, the environmental conditions and business assumptions used to analyze the alternatives have changed significantly. Second, Bonneville's current "Preferred Alternative," as described in its Regional Dialogue decisions, is worlds apart from the Market-Driven Alternative that was analyzed in the EIS.

I. Environmental conditions have changed since 1995.

At the time BPA prepared its EIS, global warming was still a debatable proposition. Though many in the scientific community suspected that society's production of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases was harmful to the environment, the evidence was not deep and scientific consensus had not been reached. Since then, however, the certainty of human cause and its possibly catastrophic significance has solidified to the extent that the only debate now regards global warming's widespread impact and pace, and the means and policies that are needed to reverse its course.

In retrospect, it can now be seen that the '95 EIS seriously underestimated the costs of global warming, and thus gave little weight to policy choices that might, or might not, lead to decisions by Bonneville (and its customers and other regional players that would be influenced by BPA's decisions) to produce less greenhouse gases.

Thus alternatives that would result in more or less emissions were not judged accurately given the now-understood importance of this issue.

II. Business conditions have changed.

The competitive, deregulated business environment in which BPA was expecting to have to operate in 1995 has not occurred as expected. First, retail deregulation has not materialized significantly in the region. Second, wholesale competition has revealed an inability to control volatility or to avoid "boom and bust" development cycles. These two results lead to a third conclusion: the responsibility for resource development, posited to be left to the market, has fallen back to integrated load-serving utilities. Fourth, due to

long-term fundamentals in the natural gas industry, Bonneville's rates, forecast to be dangerously close to market, have stabilized to a range expected to be well below market for the foreseeable future. Fifth, the region suffered through a horrendous energy crisis in 2001. This taught the region several painful lessons regarding the risks of trusting in the market and the price volatility of natural gas. Finally, due to these changes and the threats of global warming discussed above, the value of conservation and renewables has increased dramatically.

III. Resource choices have changed.

The resource of choice in 1995 was gas-fired combustion turbines. Gas costs were in the \$1.50-2.00 /mmbtu and expected to stay that way. Because of this low cost, much less conservation and no renewables could meet the cost-effectiveness test. Also, investments in energy efficiency lower end-users' costs; that can raise rates (because a utility's fixed costs must be spread over a smaller volume of sales). Therefore Bonneville's competitive problems made it very difficult for the agency to invest in conservation at that time.

Renewables costs, particularly wind, have come down since 1995 just as gas costs have risen. Now wind is the lowest cost supply-side resource.

Just last month the Power Planning Council approved its 5th Power Plan. Its conclusions are markedly different from those relied upon by BPA in conducting its '95 EIS. This Plan, which BPA is supposed to follow, investigated the market and resource changes that have occurred, and steers the region in a different direction than before. The Plan's recommendations call for a heavy emphasis on energy efficiency and wind power. It also calculated the risks and costs to the region if we should fail to acquire enough of these resources.

III. The Drivers for BPA's Preferred Alternative have changed.

Because the drivers, described above, that Bonneville used to choose its Preferred Alternative (PA) a decade ago have changed so much, it no longer makes sense. While NWECC disagreed with BPA's '95 PA, it at least made some sense given the milieu Bonneville felt it was going to have to compete in. BPA's rates were dangerously close to market, and therefore, along with the new deregulation paradigm, it was more difficult for BPA or other utilities to plan on keeping loads or to invest heavily in energy efficiency. Global warming was in the back of everyone's mind, but had not reached the danger point it has now. Natural gas prices were low and expected to stay that way. Given those drivers, Bonneville's Market-Driven Alternative was at least supportable.

Now, however, BPA has admitted that it needs to develop a *new* Preferred Alternative that responds to current reality: it's called the Regional Dialogue. Bonneville is proposing to limit its resource development role through an allocation of the FCRPS, leaving new resource development to its customers. The long-term Regional Dialogue discussion is the venue for describing this new PA, and Bonneville recognizes that this new direction is a significant departure from the past –a past described by the '95 PA.

Thus it would be appropriate to label the new Regional Dialogue outcome as the correct PA as regards this Supplemental Analysis.

IV. The Supplemental Analysis should evaluate BPA's new Preferred Alternative and a second alternative that reflects the intent of the Regional Act.

We urge BPA, therefore, to explicitly study its Regional Dialogue position as its new PA. And this new PA would be evaluated in light of the changes in the environmental and business conditions that we discussed here. That analysis should be contrasted with an alternative we propose that reflects the intent of the Regional Act. This second alternative might be called the "One-Utility Model."

The Power and Conservation Act had the clear intent of having BPA as the prime mover for new resources for the region. It created a planning process (accomplished by the Power Council) and gave the means and direction to Bonneville to acquire resources to meet all of its customers load growth. The mechanisms in the Act were meant to facilitate a "one-utility" model. Congress *could* have enacted a law that required a more limited role for Bonneville--including allocation, tiered rates, etc.--more like WAPA or BPA's current Regional Dialogue direction, but didn't. Instead Congress envisioned BPA's role to be much more central in determining (e.g., the Act's priorities for resource development) and acquiring resources for the region. At a minimum, the Supplemental Analysis should contrast the Act's vision with BPA's new proposed direction.

Attached below is a presentation NWECC made to Bonneville policy analysts in November of last year that we believe is an example of the analysis BPA should conduct.

NWECC hopes these comments have been helpful and appreciates this opportunity to comment.

* *

ATTACHMENT
Presentation to BPA Policy Analysts

A. Problems BPA identified as purpose for Regional Dialogue -- "Why we are doing this now."

- a. "Infrastructure investment decisions are being delayed by uncertainty about how much power BPA will sell to customers. So it is important to determine BPA's long-term obligation to serve load...to facilitate timely resource decisions by BPA, its customers, developers and others."
- b. "Conflict over the issue of the IOU residential exchange threatens the region's long-term access to federal system benefits.... Developing a sustainable approach...will help resolve this conflict."
- c. "DSIs have a need for clarity about their access to federal system benefits, so that they can make investment decisions in their Northwest facilities."
- d. There will be increased threats to regional retention of federal system benefits. "This makes the need for new long-term contracts more urgent."

By setting the agenda for the Regional Dialogue in this manner, Bonneville shaped the discussion. But are the above four issues the right problems, much less the only problems that should be addressed, especially considering that new long-term contracts establishing its relationship to customers are being contemplated? We would suggest adding at least two more:

- e. How can the region avoid another energy crisis?
- f. How can the region help prevent global warming?
- g. Others?

B. Evaluating Solutions -- What are the criteria BPA should use to decide between alternative solutions to the above problems?

[It must be noted here that there is little evidence to suggest that Bonneville even evaluated alternatives to the solution it has selected.]

In evaluating which policy alternative could best respond to the problems listed above, BPA must also weigh the alternatives against its other policy goals. Generally the purposes BPA is supposed to encourage are mandated in the Pacific NW Power Planning and Conservation Act of 1980 ("Regional Act"). They include:

- (a) conservation and efficiency;

- (b) development of renewables; and,
- (c) assure the region an adequate,
- (d) efficient,
- (e) economical, and
- (f) reliable power supply.
- (g) In particular BPA is specifically required to follow the Power Council's Power Plan, which takes into account environmental externalities: and,
- (h) protect, mitigate and enhance fish and wildlife affected by BPA;s facilities in a manner that provides "equitable treatment" for such fish and wildlife with the other purposes of the system.
- (i) Finally, Bonneville is required to recover all its costs subject to "sound business principles," and repay its federal debt over a "reasonable period of years."

Many of these goals are not specific nor always consistent. Many are also exposed to different types and amounts of risk. Congress did, however, provide BPA with ample room for interpretation of these purposes and flexibility of action. But because there is such a need for tradeoffs among them, Bonneville's ultimate position is deeply affected by politics: it must continually judge which goals (or, ultimately, whose interests) should carry more weight.

C. BPA's Regional Dialogue policy choice -- How does it score?

Two Proposals:

Plan "A" (BPA's preferred alternative, favored by its customers and the Power Council.) -- 20-year contracts; allocate system so load growth is responsibility of customers; voluntary adequacy standards; conservation acquired through contract, but only covering BPA share of loads; utility sees marginal price signal; BPA "facilitates" renewables development; financial settlement with IOUs; limited DSI service.

Plan "B" (NVEC proposed alternative) -- Same as Plan A, except: BPA doesn't allocate the system, continues to meld, acquires new resources for load growth; customers see melded price on margin.

Problem or Purpose	Solution "A" (BPA's proposal)	Solution "B" (NVEC alternative)
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Four problems identified by BPA	BPA's long-term obligation defined; IOU and DSI issues settled and determined; long-term contract barrier to Congressional action.	Same
Prevent future energy crisis?		
Helps lessen global warming?		
Other?		
Encourages conservation?		
Encourages renewables?		
Adequate power supply?		
Efficient power supply?		
Economic power supply?		
Reliable power supply?		
Likelihood that Council's Plan, incorporating environmental externalities, implemented?		
Equitable for fish?		
High probability of repaying Treasury on time?		

D. Bonneville's failures of analysis resulted in a poor decision.

1. BPA essentially let one group--customers--set the agenda. This limited the problems that were being discussed. Other problems, in our opinion more serious, were therefore kept off the table: avoiding another energy crisis, easing global warming, and achieving other purposes in the Regional Act.
2. BPA failed to analyze alternative solutions that may have been simpler, less risky to the region, and more likely to achieve a large number of goals.
3. BPA listened too closely to those who aren't used to compromising--i.e., those with too much power--while ignoring other interests, such as NVEC,

who have experience crafting win-win solutions, or who have political clout that can't be ignored.

28 February 2005

EABD-0005
FEB 28 2005

VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION
Bonneville Power Administration
Communications - DM-7
P.O. Box 14428
Portland, Oregon 97293-4428
[www.bpa.gov/efw/Environmental
Planning and Analysis/Business
Plan SA/](http://www.bpa.gov/efw/Environmental_Planning_and_Analysis/Business_Plan_SA/)

Re: Comments on 1995 Business Plan Supplemental Analysis.

Dear Sir/Madam:

BPA is preparing a Supplemental Analysis to its 1995 Business Plan EIS (BP EIS). The following responds to BPA's letter of 17 December 2004 soliciting comments.

agrees that BPA should review the Business Plan EIS to determine whether a Supplemental EIS is needed. For the following reasons believes that circumstances and proposed actions have changed sufficiently to require preparation of a Supplemental EIS.

A. Operations of the Federal Dams to Benefit Endangered Fish Populations

The BP EIS analyzes two "bookends" for operations of the federal hydro-electric system to benefit endangered and threatened fish species. The first is the 1995 current operations (operations that constituted "no action" in 1995). This alternative is described as having the least impact on federal power marketing. The second is "Coordination Act Report Operation," which became the System Operations Review, System Operations Strategy 9(a). This is the alternative that assumed reservoir drawdown of the federal dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers and

flow targets to assist migrating fish. It was viewed at the time as the alternative having the greatest negative impact on power marketing.¹

This may no longer be the worst case scenario for power marketing. The Updated Proposed Action (UPA) for the federal hydro system describes a new operations scenario commonly referred to as the "fish friendly operation." BPA, along with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and Corps of Engineers, proposed this operation as a way to configure and operate the dams that minimizes all discretionary effects of the federal hydro system on threatened or endangered Columbia River Basin salmon and steelhead populations.

The "fish friendly operation" attempts to mimic roughly natural river flows by increasing in-river flows and spill at the dams and by severely limiting storage in the region's storage reservoir. The "fish friendly operation" could significantly limit both the total energy in the system as well as the system's generating flexibility.

BPA must assess the potential impacts of the "fish friendly operation" to determine if it represents a worse "worst case" than SOS 9(a) and, therefore, the appropriate bookend for its analysis.

B. Resource Development

In the BP EIS, BPA assumed that the market would very strongly favor the development of gas-fired combustion turbines.² For example, were the status quo maintained, the BP EIS assumes that the region would add approximately 1,740 MW of combustion turbines, 0 MW of coal-fired generation and 100 MW of renewable generation.³ The BP EIS makes similar assumptions for the other BPA marketing scenarios. These assumptions have proven to be incorrect in practice and new information indicates that these assumptions will continue to be incorrect.

The facts underlying the assumption that CTs would be far and away the preferred source of new generation are that (a) in 1995 gas was a relatively inexpensive generation fuel and (b) combustion turbine technology is driving down the cost of new gas-fired generation. With regard to the first point, it is no longer the case that gas is inexpensive. Gas prices have increased substantially and the price is unlikely to come

¹ BP EIS, p. 4-62.

² BP EIS, p. 2-24 - 2-27 sets out the relationships that drive decisions.

³ BP EIS, p. 4-79.

down soon. Demand for gas has increased and is likely to continue to do so. More importantly, the price of gas is unlikely to decline in the West because Alberta has completed a major gas pipeline to the midwestern United States and prices in the Northwest are now significantly influenced by prices in that region, where prices are higher. As a fuel for electric generation, gas is also becoming less attractive because the price of gas has become increasingly volatile over the last few years. This makes long-term price certainty much more difficult to achieve. Partly as a result of these factors, utilities and their regulators now look closely at the diversity of their resource portfolios.

Although new CT technology has made gas-fired generation attractive to the market, new technology is also driving down the cost of wind generation. Also, tax credits have been and are currently available to offset some of the costs of developing renewable resources. These facts, combined with the greater emphasis both on resource diversity and on the need for renewable energy sources, have made wind an increasingly popular choice for new generation. Some western states are considering or imposing renewable resource portfolio requirements on their utilities.

In June 2004 the Western Governors Association adopted the *Clean and Diversified Energy Initiative for the West*.⁴ The initiative sets a goal of developing 30,000 MW of "clean energy in the West by 2015 from resources such as energy efficiency, solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, clean coal technologies, and advance natural gas technologies."⁵ Regardless of whether this goal is achieved, it demonstrates the impact of air shed limitations and state policy choices on the mix of resources that will be developed in the West in the next few decades. Because the relative environmental impacts of conservation and renewables, on the one hand, and increased coal generation, on the other, are significant, these facts need to be taken into consideration in assessing the environmental impact of potential BPA marketing policies.

C. Transmission Services Marketing

BPA proposes to tier off of the BP EIS decisions having to do with transmission services marketing. These include decisions about whether to join an RTO and the adoption of transmission adequacy standards. The BP EIS, however, focuses on the impacts of BPA power marketing decisions. Transmission issues are dealt with only as offshoots of those

⁴ <http://www.westgov.org/wga/policy/04/clean-energy.pdf>

⁵ *Id.* at Governors' Policy Statement, ¶ 2.

decisions. For example, it examines whether a power marketing decision that would cause the region to develop non-federal generation resources is likely to cause increased transmission development in the region.

The issue of whether BPA should join a regional transmission organization (RTO) is a different sort of decision altogether. The issue in that case is whether BPA will cease to make independent decisions about how transmission services are marketed and to whom. BPA would lose a substantial amount of discretion with regard to the rate design for those services. Most importantly, BPA would be unable to send signals to resource developers about where to site their resources.

A Northwest RTO would be likely to adopt a rate design that recovers the fixed costs of the transmission system such that a coal-fired generator in Montana would pay the same rate to recover fixed costs as would a generator sited next to its load. Such a rate design would probably promote more coal-fired generation, and perhaps new coal-fired generation development, in locations remote from load centers on the West Coast. The impact of transmission rate design is not studied in the BP EIS.⁶

With regard to transmission adequacy standards, a policy adopted by BPA to require the transmission system to meet enhanced reliability standards would likely require the construction of new transmission and may promote the operation and development of remote generation. Conversely, a policy that emphasizes cost-effectiveness might result in more generation by sited near their loads. Nowhere does the BP EIS consider these questions in any depth.

D. Service to Direct Service Industrial Customers

The BP EIS assumes that BPA would continue to serve its historical Direct Service Industrial customers (DSIs). Most of that load, however, has disappeared. Except for a few smelters, the aluminum industry has ceased to exist in this region and the chances of their return are small.⁷

This has resulted in a number of changes that should be accounted for in a Supplemental EIS. First, the loss of the load from the region frees up energy and capacity on the system for other loads, putting off somewhat

⁶ does not regard pages 4-22 through 4-24 as an adequate study. BP EIS sets out alternatives but makes no efforts to analyze them thoroughly.

⁷ A number of these smelters have been or are being dismantled.

the need to construct new generation. Second, we have seen that loss of these loads has led to transmission problems that have in turn resulted in acceleration of transmission project construction and changed system operations.

E. Conclusion

The examples set out above provide sufficient reason for BPA to revisit the BP EIS and prepare a Supplemental EIS. We believe that it should do so and look forward to discussing these matters with you in the future.

EABD-0006
MAR 02 2005

Portland, OR 97204

March 1, 2005

Mr. Gregory K. Delwiche
Vice-President, Environmental Fish and Wildlife
Bonneville Power Administration
Communications – DM-7
P.O. Box 14428
Portland, Oregon 97293-4428

Re: Business Plan EIS SA

In response to the Bonneville Power Administration's ("BPA") request for comments regarding its Supplemental Analysis ("SA") for the 1995 Business Plan Environmental Impact Statement ("1995 EIS"),

submits the following comments. believes that there have been substantial changes surrounding BPA's business activities that warrant a complete revision of its existing 1995 EIS. BPA should review the specific environmental consequences of each of its proposed decisions instead of relying upon an outdated EIS that does not reflect current conditions.

BPA has requested comments regarding whether: 1) there have been substantial changes in BPA's proposed actions that are relevant to environmental concerns; and 2) there are significant new circumstances or information relating to environmental concerns regarding BPA's proposed actions. BPA has reached a preliminary conclusion that there have been no significant changes and BPA does not need to conduct a Supplemental EIS. BPA's steadfast commitment to its 1995 EIS is demonstrated in the Administrator's recent record of decision ("ROD") regarding BPA's power supply role for fiscal years 2007-2011. Despite finding significant changes regarding BPA's operations, the Administrator concluded that:

Implementation of this Regional Dialogue Policy would not be expected to result in significantly different environmental impacts from those examined for the Market-Driven alternative analyzed in the Business Plan EIS and adopted in the Business Plan ROD. Therefore, I have determined it is appropriate to tier this decision to implement this policy for BPA's Power Supply Role for FY 2007-2011 to the Business Plan ROD, as provided for in the Business Plan EIS and Business Plan ROD.

Mr. Gregory K. Delwiche
March 1, 2005
Page 2

BPA National Environmental Policy Act ROD, Policy for Power Supply Role for Fiscal Years 2007-2011, Regional Dialogue Policy at 23 (Feb. 4, 2005).

There have been substantial changes to BPA's business practices since the 1995 EIS that have or will have resulted in environmental impacts not previously considered by BPA. These new business practices are likely to result in significantly different environmental impacts than BPA could have expected in the 1995 EIS. Some significant changes are listed below:

- Direct Service Industry ("DSI") loads in the region were up to six times larger in 1995 than now. Moreover, the DSIs' 1995 load has a high load factor as the DSIs operated virtually around the clock. This resulted in very different resource operations in the region, and consequent environmental impacts. BPA's loads in 2005 are not comparable.
- In the early 1990s, BPA had extensive resource surpluses. The surpluses created the following results: 1) BPA rates were potentially above market, causing a significant push to reduce BPA costs; 2) very little new construction was needed; and 3) the consequent environmental impacts were smaller. Today, the West is much closer to a load/resource balance, with shortfalls predicted in parts of the West that will result in the construction of new generation resources. Thus, while BPA was taking actions to increase power sales in the 1990s, it is now taking actions to limit power sales.
- Natural gas prices have tripled since the early 1990s and the resulting alteration of the fuel-choice alternatives creates different environmental consequences.
- At the time of the 1995 EIS, planning was generally done on an integrated transmission/generation basis because there was no separation of the transmission and generation functions. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issued Order 888 has required public utilities subject to its jurisdiction to separate the generation and transmission functions. BPA has voluntarily complied with Order 888. Thus, planning for generation supply has become divorced from planning for transmission. Market participants, rather than utilities, make more of the decisions regarding location and type of resource. Due to those changes, the local environmental impacts analyzed in the 1995 EIS are outdated.
- The region is moving toward establishing an independent Regional Transmission Organization, which will have impacts on resource location and operation not contemplated in the 1995 EIS.

Mr. Gregory K. Delwiche
March 1, 2005
Page 3

In summary, conditions surrounding the alternatives BPA considered in the 1995 EIS have changed markedly since the early 1990s. The market has changed from surplus to deficit. Prices of natural gas that fuel power plants have tripled. BPA is no longer concerned that it will not sell enough power. The separation of the generation and transmission functions of BPA and the market significantly alter the environmental impact of any BPA decision. These significant changes will have environmental consequences that BPA could not have considered in the 1995 EIS. Therefore, the current relevance of the 1995 EIS is questionable.

BPA's decision regarding whether to continue to rely upon the 1995 EIS raises a larger issue regarding whether BPA will ever have to conduct additional environmental impact analyses. BPA can consider everything from the impacts of the Great Depression to the greatest economic boom ever and conclude that BPA has considered everything and need never perform another EIS.

The intent of the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") was to provide federal decision-makers with information necessary to understand the environmental impacts associated with their proposed actions. NEPA was intended not to require a broad analysis that considers everything under the sun, but to look at conditions at a point in time more narrowly. And as conditions change dramatically, as they have in recent years, an EIS should be refreshed in its entirety. In addition to revisiting its 1995 EIS, BPA should also conduct additional EISs that specifically review the environmental consequences of each proposed action, rather than an analysis that is so broad it fails to review any specific actions. BPA will have circumvented the intent of NEPA if it continues to rely on an outdated EIS that does not review the actual environmental consequences of its actions.

In conclusion, a broad EIS does not obviate the need to perform additional EISs to consider new circumstances and proposed actions. The fact that BPA looked at a very broad set of circumstances in its 1995 EIS should not allow BPA to avoid developing and producing a new EIS with information factually different from the circumstances upon which the 1995 EIS was based.

Sincerely,