

Between the Lines

Customer Newsletter Fall 2018 BentonPUD.org

Facts about the lower Snake River dams

Thanks to the tremendous network of dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers your electricity comes from carbon free, affordable, reliable hydropower. The benefits of the dams are numerous but there are some areas of misinformation being spread about the hydrosystem and the lower Snake River dams. Here are some facts:

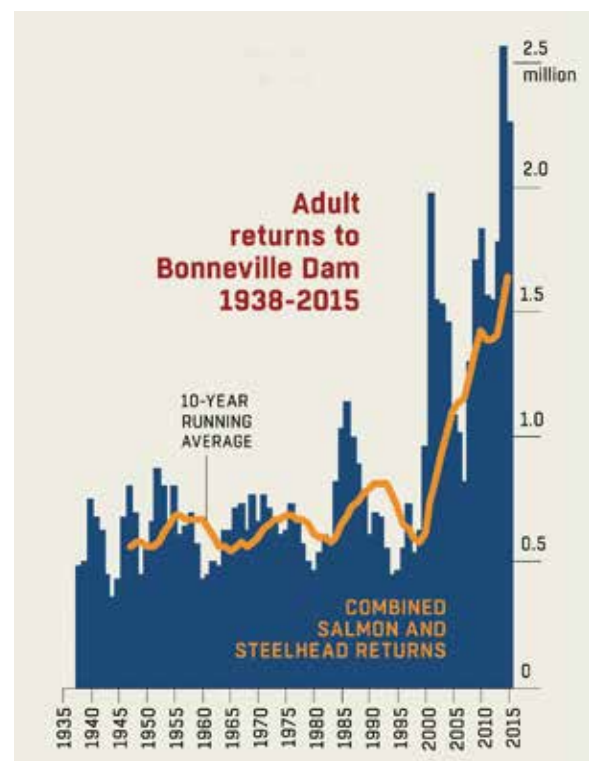
■ **Replacing renewable power generated by the lower Snake River dams would be costly and counterproductive to reducing carbon emissions.** The four lower Snake River dams generate about 1,000 average megawatts per year. Under normal operating conditions, the four lower Snake River dams supply up to one quarter of BPA's operating reserves. This power is among the most affordable electricity in the Pacific Northwest. More importantly, the dams are essential to the reliability of BPA's electric grid. As the Pacific Northwest increases its reliance on renewable resources like wind and solar, the dams play an important role in reliability, providing clean power when these sources are unavailable.

■ **Removal of the lower Snake River dams is not simple and would cost billions.** The estimated cost to remove the dams is over \$2 billion. Removal or breaching of the dams takes Congressional authorization and funding. In addition to providing clean and reliable power, dams are instrumental for irrigation, transportation and tourism – all important for our economy.

■ **Dams and fish co-exist thanks to the technology and programs developed through the years.** Some contend salmon runs have declined primarily because of the lower Snake River dams; however, history shows human activities caused significant declines in salmon abundance starting in the 1800's, long before the dams were built. In the last 80 years, the number of adult salmon and steelhead returning from the ocean to Bonneville Dam has increased, in part due to the millions of dollars spent on hatchery production and enhanced fish passages at the dams.

Looking at the ten-year orange trend line (see graph) salmon and steelhead returns improved through 2015. Salmon and steelhead returns fluctuate each year. Runs in 2018 are predicted to be lower due to poor ocean conditions in 2015 & 2016 for juvenile migrants. Even so, returns are higher than those in previous decades. Further, the Columbia and Snake Rivers produce more juvenile salmon today than they did in the years immediately prior to dams and development according to the Independent Scientific Advisory Board.

■ Recently, you may have read about the Southern Resident Killer Whales (orcas) in the news. **NOAA scientists' research shows that lack of prey, toxins, and vessel traffic are detrimental to the orcas.** The misconception often heard is that the lack of prey – Chinook salmon – is primarily attributed to the lower Snake River dams. The three orca pods rely on 15 different Chinook runs, two of them from the Snake River. In fact, according to NOAA Fisheries, the "J pod" orcas that have been in the news spend most of their lives in Puget Sound; they typically don't swim the 150 or so miles down the west coast to the mouth of the Columbia River. Instead of focusing solely on the lower Snake River dams, a science-based plan is needed that focuses on all the issues that impact their survival, particularly in the Puget Sound area where salmon runs are struggling to improve.



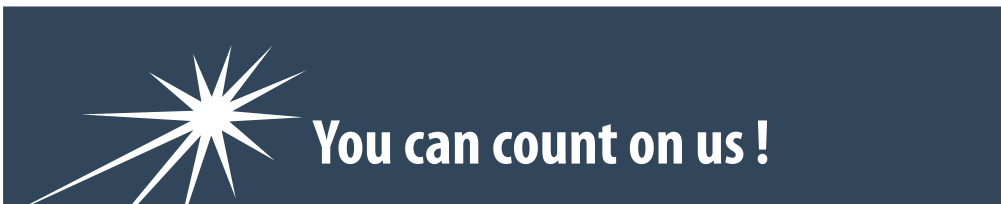
Source: Citizen's Guide to the 2016 Comprehensive Evaluation – Protecting Salmon and Steelhead in the Columbia River Basin

Thank You RiverFest

RiverFest 2018 was a big success with over 50 exhibitors and thousands of attendees. Thank you to everyone who supported this celebration of the Columbia and Snake Rivers and our dams.



For more information  BentonPUD.org or call Customer Service 509.582.2175










Weatherization and Home Automation Workshops

Tuesday, December 4 **Wednesday, December 5**
Kennewick Auditorium **Prosser Auditorium**
6:00pm **6:00pm**

Interested in learning about the latest technologies available to make your home more energy efficient? At Benton PUD's Home Weatherization and Automation Workshop you can learn about home automation devices, SmartHub® and even get some energy saving gift ideas.

12 Ways to Save Energy During the Holidays

-  **Twelve** timers for your home and holiday lights
-  **Eleven** “smart” appliances to better control and monitor your usage
-  **Ten** chargers unplugged from outlets when not in use
-  **Nine** furnace filters purchased for next year to change as they get dirty
-  **Eight** loads of full dishes washed after guests leave
-  **Seven** shorter showers
-  **Six** new cozy sweaters hanging in your closet for when it gets cold
-  **Five** strands of LED lights on your tree
-  **Four** energy saving kitchen appliances in use at your holiday party
-  **Three** degrees down on your programmable thermostat for the winter
-  **Two Weatherization and Home Automation Workshops.**
-  **One** SmartHub® account to monitor your energy usage



Rebates are available for your home and business of all sizes!
Learn more about rebates on appliances, smart thermostats, heat pumps, insulation, windows and doors at BentonPUD.org

Make a donation to Helping Hands program

Give a gift on behalf of someone special this holiday season. Whether you are looking for a way to give back or want to do something on behalf of a co-worker or client, consider making a donation to Benton PUD's Helping Hands Program. Your donation will make a difference to someone who needs help paying their electric bill.

Make a one-time donation or add an amount of \$1 or more to your bill each month. All funds are distributed by Community Action Connections to Benton PUD customers who meet program guidelines. Donations are tax deductible. Gift certificates are available to let someone know you made a donation on their behalf.



To make a donation contact Customer Service at (509) 582-2175.

Top ways to prepare for Winter Weather

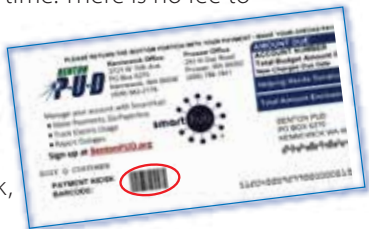
In mid-October we experienced a widespread outage. This was a good time to think about preparing for an outage during winter weather.

- Did you know you can view outage information and sign up for email or text messages in the event of an outage at your address? Once enrolled in SmartHub®, log in and select the notice(s) you would like to receive and how you would like to receive them. You can receive a notice of an outage – planned or unplanned – and when the power has been restored.
- Save Benton PUD's Outage Number in your contacts or write it down and tape to a flashlight. The number is 1-888-582-2176. Please do not report outages to 911. In the event of an outage you can call the Outage Number or log in and report it through SmartHub®. Crews are available 24/7 to respond to outages.
- Prepare an outage kit that includes flashlights or battery-operated lanterns, extra batteries, a portable radio, Mylar blanket, hat and gloves.
- During an outage, leave your refrigerator and freezer doors closed.
- Always be safe and stay away from downed lines. Contact with one could be life threatening.



New payment Kiosk

Benton PUD has installed two payment kiosks to add to the list of ways customers can pay their bill. The payment kiosks are located at the Kennewick and Prosser offices to provide easy access 24/7. The kiosk accepts cash, check, credit or debit card. The payment is applied to the account in real-time. There is no fee to use the kiosk.



To use the kiosk, you will need your account number or the barcode on your Benton PUD bill. You can use the kiosk to print a “Fast Pass” which provides a personal barcode for future use at the kiosk.

“The kiosks are another customer service that Benton PUD was able to initiate because of the implementation of advanced meters in 2012 and SmartHub last year,” said Chad Bartram, Benton PUD General Manager.

Solar Incentives Going Away

The state-funded Renewable Energy System Incentive Program provides incentives to systems certified by WSU Energy Program. The enrollment deadline is currently February 14, 2019 or when the program reaches the \$110 million statewide cap. Applicants submitting to WSU after the deadline will be added to a waitlist and processed if funds are available. WSU Energy Program cannot approve applications that will cause the cap to be exceeded. If you are interested in installing a system please be aware of the risk of potentially not receiving Washington State incentives if the cap is met.



View Benton PUD's Outage Map in the Outage Center at BentonPUD.org