

State Representative
Cliff Bentz
House District 60

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Opportunity to Comment on Columbia River Treaty

SALEM—The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (U.S. Army Corps) are soliciting comments on the upcoming Columbia River Treaty negotiations with Canada. Representative Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario) encourages interested constituents to submit public comments if they are concerned about the Columbia River Treaty negotiations.

Issues which residents of Malheur, Baker, and Grant Counties might be concerned about include: water levels in the Brownlee Reservoir, water supply, effects on fish, revised approaches to flood control, flood risk management, conservation and alternative sources of power, Canadian entitlement monies, preferential customers, and system reliability and flexibility, among many others.

The BPA and the U.S. Army Corps are the “U.S. Entity.” These agencies, in collaboration with northwestern state Technical Representatives, residents of Oregon, Idaho, Washington, and Montana, and other interested water users, are in the process of studying the overall effects of a change to the Treaty and the resulting impact on the Columbia River Basin and will make their final recommendations to the U.S. Department of State before the end of this year. The U.S. Department of State will use this recommendation to inform its negotiations of the Treaty with Canada.

“If the Treaty is modified there could be significant changes in the timing of flows of water in the Columbia River, responsibility for flood control, and loss (or gain) of water for power generation and irrigation,” Rep. Bentz noted.

The U.S. Entity is hosting a series of 16 meetings in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana to better understand local issues and inform their final recommendation, which must be provided by December 2013. Information regarding these hearings can be found at:
<http://www.crt2014-2024review.gov/CurrentMeetingMaterials.aspx>.

“The Treaty will have significant and direct impacts on Oregon,” Rep. Bentz stated. “Allocation of the responsibility for flood control (thus the water level in the Brownlee Pool), the value of

power generation, and access to water for irrigation and recreation will be renegotiated. It is critical that those most affected share their concerns.”

The Entity requests that all public comments be submitted by May 31, 2013. Comments should be emailed to treatyreview@bpa.gov, faxed to 503-230-4563, or mailed to BPA at P.O. Box 3621 in Portland.

For more information on the Columbia River Treaty, visit: <http://www.crt2014-2024review.gov/>.

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