

BPA NEWS

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BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION
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BPA substation added to National Register of Historic Places

The Salem Substation Historic District, which includes three historic resources, was added to the National Register of Historic Places in April.

Portland, Ore. – The Salem Substation was added to the National Register of Historic Places in April for its crucial role during the Bonneville Power Administration's Master Grid development that began in the late 1930s.

Constructed and energized in an era that marked BPA's establishment as a federal agency, the Salem Substation played a key role in energizing rural Oregon communities with hydroelectricity from the Columbia River. The substation is also historically significant for helping to power local industrial manufacturers during World War II.

The substation facilities, now known as the Salem Substation Historic District, were recommended for the NRHP by the Oregon State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation.

The NRHP is the United States' official list of buildings, districts, structures, sites and objects important to local, state or national history. The National Park Service oversees the NRHP program, which in Oregon is administered by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. Inclusion in the National Register is an honorary designation for historically significant places worthy of preservation. The substation was previously deemed historically significant by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, so there are no new requirements regarding interactions with the site. BPA will continue to carry out its National Historic Preservation Act responsibilities that balance the preservation of federally owned historic places with ongoing operation and maintenance requirements to meet the agency's mission and authorizations.

The Salem Substation Historic District covers 8.35 acres of land and includes three historic resources built between 1939 and 1942: the substation's switchyard, control house and transfer track. Notably, the control house serves as a reminder of BPA's historic architectural practices and commitment to modernity during the era. BPA completed the control house in 1942 and used the streamline moderne architectural style, which is commonly understood to represent functionality, speed and innovation. This style's influence on the control house is recognizable by the curved lines, rounded corners, block windows and aluminum detailing. A collection of historic photographs of the Salem Substation Historic District are available at river.bpa.gov/portals/Salem-Substation-OR.



For more information on the Salem Substation Historic District's new designation in the NRHP, visit the [Oregon Parks and Recreation webpage](#). More information on the NRHP is available from the National Park Service at the [National Register of Historic Places](#).

About BPA The Bonneville Power Administration is a federal non-profit power marketing administration that delivers reliable, low-cost hydropower produced in the Columbia River Basin as well as the output from the region's only nuclear plant to communities across the Northwest. BPA also owns and operates more than 15,000 circuit miles of high-voltage transmission lines. More information about these and other activities is available on our [Media Relations page](#)

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