



Inside the Control Room: Grid Operators Help Keep Your Energy Reliable — and Affordable

Ever wonder what it takes to keep your lights on, your fridge running, and your oven cooking those holiday meals? At Idaho Power, it's a team effort, and our Load Serving Operations (LSO) team is one of many essential groups working behind the scenes. They work 24/7 to make sure your electricity is safe, reliable, and cost-effective.

Operators manage energy coming from a complex mix of sources — from hydroelectric dams and gas-fired plants to wind farms, solar arrays, geothermal plants and battery systems. They have to monitor transmission lines, regional energy markets, and constantly shifting customer demand.

Their goal? To deliver the right amount of energy, at precisely the moment you need it, at the lowest possible cost.

It's like solving a complicated puzzle every hour.

"We're always adjusting based on weather, demand, and available resources," said Jody Bateman, a Load Serving Operator.

Planning Ahead to Save You Money

It all starts with a forecast. One member of the team predicts how much electricity customers will need

the next day and builds a plan using the most affordable and reliable resources available. Hydropower, for example, is one of the lowest-cost sources — so they prioritize it when water is available.

Conditions change constantly — clouds roll in, temperatures spike, customers return home from work and turn on lights and appliances. Operators make real-time decisions to keep the system balanced. That means choosing which power plants to run, when to tap into battery storage, and whether to buy or sell energy on the market.

"I can think pretty quick on my feet, but it takes a specific temperament to do this work," Bateman said.

This planning and careful management of resources helps Idaho Power avoid expensive emergency purchases and keeps prices stable for customers.

Staying Ahead of the Unexpected

When things run smoothly, the operations center is quiet. A giant wall projection displays the entire system — power plants, transmission lines, substations — like a NASA control room. Operators monitor up to 20 computer screens at each workstation.

"It's smooth in here right now," Operator J.D. Skalsky said. "But you've got to know how to snap out of that mode."

From wildfires and car accidents to the occasional critter in a substation and sudden weather changes, surprises happen. That's why operators always keep reserve energy ready to go.

Others within the LSO monitor the high-voltage lines that carry energy from where it's produced to where it's needed. If a section goes offline, or capacity on a line is reached, they coordinate with others to keep the system operating while safely managing employees in the field working on the lines.

Why It Matters to You

Every decision the LSO team makes affects your energy bill and your service. By using the most efficient resources and responding quickly to changes, they help keep costs low and reliability high — even during extreme conditions.

So next time you flip a switch, know that a dedicated team is working behind the scenes to make sure your power is there when you need it. They are just one part of the larger network of dedicated employees who keep your power flowing every day.



Smart Energy Choices Help Keep Your Power Affordable

Our Load Serving Operators use a variety of resources to balance the available energy with how much electricity our customers need in every moment in ways that help keep costs down.

Hydropower: Clean, Reliable, and Cost-Effective

Clean, renewable hydropower is one of the lowest-cost sources of electricity. Operators can quickly adjust output from our 17 hydroelectric plants to meet changing demand, helping avoid expensive alternatives.

Natural Gas: Flexible and Reliable

We own three natural gas plants and co-own a fourth. Natural gas is a dependable resource that can ramp up or down quickly, making it a valuable tool for meeting peak demand and keeping prices stable.

We also co-own two coal plants, with plans to convert more of that capacity to natural gas.

Renewable Energy Producers

Idaho Power buys energy from independent operators of wind and solar projects, geothermal plants, and numerous small hydro and biomass projects.

Battery Storage: Saving Energy for When It's Needed Most

Five large battery installations allow us to store energy when it's abundant (and inexpensive) and deliver it when it's needed.

Transmission: Connecting Resources to Customers

High-voltage transmission lines carry electricity from where it's generated to where it's needed. They also allow us to buy and sell energy with other utilities, increasing system reliability and helping us secure the best prices for our customers.

Learn more at idahopower.com/energy.

Dam Operations Change to Support Spawning Salmon

Our Load Serving team considers many factors when deciding which resources to use to get power to our customers. This includes minimizing impact on fall Chinook Salmon spawning in the Snake River below Hells Canyon Dam.

During the fall, Salmon are completing their journey from the Pacific Ocean to lay their eggs. We control the water released from the Hells Canyon Complex from October through December to provide stable spawning conditions for adults returning to the Snake River below Hells Canyon Dam. Flows are typically held steady around 8,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) during the spawning season and not lowered below this level until the eggs hatch the following spring.

To do this, we sometimes lower the water in Brownlee Reservoir upstream of Hells Canyon Dam. This enables Brownlee to absorb increased flows coming in while maintaining a steady flow going out. These lower water levels can reduce our ability to generate hydropower, which means we must rely on power from other sources.

Click the link below to watch a short video that provides a glimpse into how we support migrating salmon and steelhead.



www.youtube.com/idahopower

From the Electric Kitchen Southwestern Beef Stew

November 2025
Stew

- 1 tsp oil
- 2 lbs beef stew meet, cubed
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 cups water
- 1 cup salsa
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 2 tsp beef bouillon granules
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 3 carrots, chopped
- 1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes
- 1 ½ cups frozen cut green beans
- 1 ½ cups frozen corn
- 1 (4 oz) can chopped green chilies
- 1 cup cilantro, chopped



In a 4-quart saucepan over medium heat, brown meat and onion in oil. Add water, salsa, garlic, bouillon, cumin, and carrots; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 1 hour. Add tomatoes, beans, corn, chilies, and cilantro; return to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 20–30 minutes or until beef and vegetables are tender.

Makes 8 servings, 1 ½ cups each.

Recipe selected from Idaho Power's Centennial Celebration Cookbook.

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Did You Know?

Reliable hydropower helps keep Idaho Power's prices 20-30% lower than the national average.

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