U.S. Department of the Interior Crow Tribe Apsáalooke Nation

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For Immediate Release: March 31, 2015
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WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Department of the Interior, in partnership with the Crow Tribe, will enter into an agreement for hydropower development on the Yellowtail Afterbay Dam, downstream of Yellowtail Dam and Powerplant, on the Bighorn River near Fort Smith, Montana.

The agreement is part of the Crow Tribe Water Rights Settlement Act of 2010. Under the settlement, the Tribe holds the exclusive right to develop and market power generation on the Yellowtail Afterbay Dam.

“The Crow Tribe is excited to embark on the Tribe’s exclusive right under our water settlement to develop hydropower at Yellowtail Afterbay Dam and to begin the critical work to bring the benefits of hydropower to the Reservation and our tribal membership,” said Crow Chairman Darrin Old Coyote.

“This is an excellent opportunity for development of new hydropower capacity on existing infrastructure,” said Deputy Secretary of the Interior Michael L. Connor. “Working through the Bureau of Reclamation, Interior is pleased to assist the Crow Tribe on its Yellowtail Afterbay hydro development, resulting in clean, renewable energy, and creating vital jobs in the process.”

The Tribe is responsible for overall management of the hydropower project and for coordination of activities associated with the project. The Bureau of Reclamation will provide technical assistance in reviewing designs and making sure the new hydro coexists with the existing Yellowtail Afterbay Dam in a safe and reliable manner.

The next steps include completion of design data collection, followed by design and implementation of Reclamation’s dam safety processes for the proposed modifications to the existing structure.