

HYDROPOWER: Putting Excess Water Supply to Good Use

Renewable, weather-dependent power generation can also sit idle when there is plenty of supply but not enough electricity demand. When hydropower projects are idle, water goes downstream without the opportunity to generate power.

Douglas County PUD in Central Washington is investigating using their excess supply of hydropower in the spring to create a hydrogen-based, non-polluting, carbon-free fuel. Like a battery, hydrogen fuel cells can be used to operate everything from forklifts, cars and buses, to providing back-up power for buildings and equipment.

This carbon-free power innovation is potentially a perfect marriage in two ways. First, creating hydrogen fuel is very power intensive, making low-cost hydropower an excellent partner. And second, one carbon-free generation resource (hydropower) is being used to create another carbon-free generation resource (fuel cells) that can be exported and stored for later use. This supports regional and national goals to reduce carbon emissions across industries. 🌍

