



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 491
Vancouver, Washington 98666-0491

TRANSMISSION SERVICES

October 22, 2013

In reply refer to: TEP-TPP-3

To: Parties interested in the Hooper Springs Transmission Project

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to build a new 115-kilovolt transmission line in northeastern Caribou County. This letter describes our expected next steps toward completing the environmental impact statement (EIS) process for this project and reaching a decision.

Proposal and Recent Developments

BPA is proposing the Hooper Springs Transmission Project to improve voltage stability on the transmission grid to meet future load growth in southeast Idaho and northwestern Wyoming. BPA described and analyzed transmission route alternatives and options in a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) released in March 2013. Since we released the DEIS, we've continued to evaluate comments and suggestions received. As a result of this evaluation, we've identified a potential new routing option for a portion of the South Alternative. Among other things, this new routing option would cross through Idaho Department of Fish and Game's Blackfoot River Wildlife Management Area (see Option 3A, on the enclosed map).

While similar to South Alternative routing options included in the DEIS, the new routing option was not specifically evaluated in the DEIS. BPA therefore will prepare a supplemental draft EIS (SDEIS) to include evaluation of this routing option in detail.

Preparing the SDEIS and Next Steps

BPA is beginning work on the SDEIS for the project. The SDEIS will include responses to all comments we received on the draft EIS and consideration of Option 3A as a routing option to the South Alternative. We also plan to identify BPA's preferred alternative in the SDEIS.

As we prepare the SDEIS, BPA staff and contractors will continue to refine and evaluate project alternatives and options so you may see these specialists working in the area. They will only access properties that BPA has permission to enter. BPA expects to complete and publish the SDEIS in spring 2014, and will host a public meeting to gather comments at that time. We expect to publish a final EIS in late fall 2014 followed by a record of decision in early winter 2014 that will explain BPA's decision about whether to build the project and, if so, the alternative or option selected.

For additional information

BPA is committed to providing reliable, low-cost transmission products and services to the region while minimizing environmental impacts. Please visit the project website at www.bpa.gov/goto/HooperSprings if you would like more information. If you have questions or would like additional information about the project, please call us toll free at 800-622-4519 or email me at etorth@bpa.gov. Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

/S/ Erich T. Orth

Erich T. Orth
Project Manager

Enclosure:
Project Map