



BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project Scoping Meeting Summary

October 29, 2009 — Longview, Wash.
4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Mark Morris High School, 1602 Mark Morris Court

Attendees

Six hundred fourteen (614) members of the public signed-in at this open house. Attendees included area property owners, local business owners, representatives of homeowners' associations, Rose Valley Grange, Washington Trails Association, and staff from Cowlitz County government, Cowlitz County PUD, Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council, and Washington State Department of Natural Resources. State Representative Ed Orcutt also attended.

Overview of comments heard

Open house attendees shared their comments and questions about the I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project with Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) staff. Some common themes from the evening's discussions included the following:

- *Project benefits*: Attendees had questions about who will directly benefit from this project and where the power carried by a new transmission line will be delivered. Some commented that this project was meant to benefit primarily out-of-state users.
- *Project schedule and route elimination decisions*: Attendees were concerned about the project's multi-year decision schedule. Many property owners spoke about the uncertainty the decision timeframes creates for their plans to build homes, subdivide property, or sell their property. Property owners also commented about how the lack of more specific information about where a transmission line would be sited may devalue their homes and/or land. Participants were interested in learning as soon as possible when BPA eliminates potential route segments from consideration.
- *Land and property acquisition process*: Attendees had specific questions about the process once BPA makes a decision about siting a transmission ROW on their property, including what this would mean in terms of purchase and/or compensation, timing, negotiations, land ownership, and assessment of property taxes. Concerns were raised over property values that have fallen in the past two years and the potential for permanent losses if land valuation occurs at a low point in the housing market.
- *Permission to enter property process*: Property owners asked specific questions about the "Permission to Enter Property" letters and forms they received. Questions and comments included the purpose and need for survey work on their property, concerns with statements about tree-cutting and hole-digging activities, and the process for denying permission for access and/or specific activities mentioned in the letter and form.
- *Route selection*: Some attendees expressed a preference for certain route segments over others. Many suggested that BPA use public lands for a transmission route versus private lands. In particular, some expressed a preference for using the easternmost routes (such as segments 28 and 29) or even farther east into forested lands. Others stated a preference for a transmission line to follow Interstate 5 to reach a proposed substation in Troutdale.
- *Access to project information*: Several attendees were concerned about continuing to receive updates on the project's progress if they do not have access to the project Web site.



- *Electric and magnetic field effects:* Many attendees had questions and concerns about potential health effects, noise, and electronic interference from a transmission line.
- *Natural and cultural resources:* Attendees identified specific natural and cultural resources on their properties including springs, wetlands, floodplains, salmon habitat, and wildlife species. Participants also had questions about the specific studies that would be completed to assess the condition and extent of natural resources in the project area.

Meeting purpose

The purpose of this open house meeting was to provide the public with information about BPA's I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project and to have members of the project team available to answer questions and accept oral and written comments. BPA is proposing to build the I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project, a new 500-kilovolt transmission line that would run between Castle Rock, Wash., and Troutdale, Ore. BPA will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed project. The first step is requesting comments about environmental impacts and other issues that should be considered in the EIS, and comments on preliminary transmission line route segments and proposed substations.

Meeting format

The meeting followed an open house format. The format of this open house was modified based on feedback and experience at the first meeting in Amboy, WA and the second meeting in Vancouver, WA to better accommodate the large numbers of participants. Upon arrival, attendees were guided through a series of project maps to locate their property and were provided copies of detailed property maps to use at the meeting and take home. BPA employees continued to staff several stations to take comments and address questions on the following topics:

- Existing System and Project Need
- Transmission Line Siting and Design
- Substation Design
- Maintenance Activities and Access Roads
- Environmental Resources
- Land and Permission to Enter Property (PEP) Process

Resource stations included project information in the form of proposal descriptions, maps, schematics, and schedules. An additional station provided attendees with an area for learning more about the public process and how to provide comments.

Project next steps

BPA is currently gathering public input on the scope of EIS for this project and is accepting these comments through November 23, 2009. BPA will compile a summary of public comments received in a Scoping Summary Report that will be available in early 2010.

In 2010, BPA will conduct field work and environmental analyses to prepare a draft EIS on a number of defined project alternatives. In spring 2011, BPA expects to issue a draft EIS for public review and comment. A final EIS and agency decision is anticipated in spring 2012.

Learn more and stay connected

There are a number of ways the public can learn more about the project and submit their comments:

- *Visit the I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project Web site:* Project updates, property maps and information can be found at www.bpa.gov/go/i5.
- *Sign up for the mailing list:* To be added to the mailing list, visit the project Web site and view the "Get Involved" link or call (800) 230-6593 to leave your contact information.
- *Submit comments:* Online at www.bpa.gov/go/i5; by mail at BPA I-5 Corridor Reinforcement, PO Box 9250, Portland, OR 97207; toll free at (800) 230-6593; by fax at (888) 315-4503.
- *Attend open houses:* A total of six open house scoping meetings are being held throughout the project area. A list of open house dates and locations can be found on the project Web site.