

Dear Sir,

I am submitting the following comments and questions though I have not received a reply (nor has any member of our neighborhood group) from BPA on my 29 October request for a 30 day extension of our abbreviated comment period. We are continuing to collect information on the many costs and land use restrictions imposed by the proposed transmission line and expanded easement. We are also looking into safety and health issues as well as eminent domain/condemnation procedures.

Many of the following comments and questions pertain to both the EIS and route selection:

1. Power company web sites provide dire warnings and suggested behaviors regarding fallen wires, kite or balloon flying, equipment operation, wires on cars and etc.. Enhanced 230kV power and accordingly enlarged easement zones (80-125') can only increase the deadliness of these cited risks. The easement in question runs through or on the edge of 22 parcels in our neighborhood, over or through numerous other parcels towards the town of Libby, over or adjacent to a frequently used boat ramp, a wildlife entry path and a school bus and road turn around point. Hikers, fishermen and families with children frequent these areas.

The prudent power company warnings make a very strange mix with a proposal to significantly increase the EMF and to double the number of power cables in the neighborhood.

To quote from one power company's safety notice: "Operating near or under power lines poses unique hazards, and the following precautions should (must) be followed:

- Don't operate heavy equipment under power lines.
- Don't operate right-of-ways as a jump or cargo drop spot.
- Don't drive with long antennas under power lines.
- Don't park under power lines. The EMF can induce an electrical charge in ungrounded equipment and shock anyone touching the vehicle.
- All personnel should be cautioned that smoke may become charged and conduct electrical current.
- If power lines fall on your vehicle, DON'T leave the vehicle until the power company comes. If the vehicle is on fire or fire is near, jump clear, don't hang on, keep feet together, and bunny hop away."

When talking about these extreme risks, other power companies add:

- "Overhead wires can cause serious injury or death".
- "Metal balloons and kites-very dangerous- don't let them get away. If they contact wires, short circuits and possible can result".
- "Keep away from downed lines (if your lucky enough to know they are) that touch the ground. They can shock or kill you, electrical current can pass through the ground and into your body".
- "Post storm debris can hide fallen lines. The ground and metal fences can energized".

The concept "Prudent Avoidance" seems indicated when considering running power lines through neighborhoods when other options are available.

Can we help but wonder if even a warned 7 year old would let go of his or her precious kite or balloon if wind unexpectedly pushed the object into wires... wires that ran through his or her yard or a neighboring yard? Wires do run through yards now, but only half as many and not nearly as powerful as those being considered. Children don't fly kites in the forest over the hill to the North of us and now we have opportunity to get rid of all power transmission wires. Why don't we take it?

We received your notice about the 17 November public meeting that will cover the EMF levels associated with the three proposed design alternatives. We believe only one (power) design alternative is feasible and has substance (and so does BPA) and since there are hundreds of web pages that cover this topic (health and safety, etc.), would you please devote the largest part of the meeting to safety, proposed route costs and eminent domain issues? It is very difficult for us get information on eminent domain, its costs and what owners can receive "fair market value" for? We haven't yet determined who pays legal fees and how much they can be. Another issue of importance is what activities are restricted under or near easements and how BPA will monitor emission levels and safety. Will recommended follow on childhood leukemia studies be conducted? Please advise us prior to 15 November if you can cover these more meaningful topics in your presentation.

As stated earlier, our neighborhood and other households to the East were not notified about the power line "Enhancement Project" by BPA earlier this summer costing us over 100 days of preparation time. We are making every effort to learn about our situation, but we will need at least another 30 days to collect information and prepare comments. We are not yet sure all parcel owners have received official notification or other pertinent information.

Please advise us regarding the request for more time.

Thank you,  
John and Margaret Smith