



Department of Energy

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

TRANSMISSION SERVICES

May 14, 2010

In reply refer to: TEP-CSB-1

To those interested in BPA construction on Antelope Mountain Communication Site:

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to construct a new communications building and microwave tower at the Antelope Communications Site on Pine Mountain near Bend, Oregon. This letter describes the proposed construction and invites you to submit comments on the proposal.

This is your opportunity to provide comments and coordinate with BPA as a facility owner, facility manager or interested party. BPA will accept comments through June 14, 2010.

Background

The proposed building and tower are part of a larger BPA project to replace outdated communications equipment with more reliable technology. These changes would also increase reliability for the operation of the power system in central Oregon.

The advent of new technologies and a rapidly growing population in central Oregon have increased demands on communication sites. This has placed a burden on the Antelope Communications Site as there is limited space on one of the few strategically located peaks within U.S. National Forest Service lands. A site management plan was developed to address not only visual quality but the orderly development of the site. BPA's proposal will abide by the terms and conditions of the site management plan.

Proposed action

The Department of Energy and BPA propose that the Forest Service allow construction of a new 616-square-foot, single-level building and associated 80-foot tower that would enable BPA to maintain and operate the power transmission system safely and reliably. The new building and tower would replace existing BPA facilities. The new location has been extensively surveyed to ensure that the building, tower, antenna placement and beam paths do not interfere with the existing user operations. Due to the building design and regulatory restrictions, co-location will be considered and limited to other federal or public agencies. If approved, construction would begin this summer.

BPA has coordinated with the Deschutes National Forest – Bend Fort Rock Ranger District regarding all regulations related to environmental, historic and archeological reviews. Actions associated with this proposed action will be designed to meet the Deschutes National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan's visual quality objectives.

Actions associated with the development of this site also would include adequate and safe access to the developments, trenching for underground buried utilities (where required), modest reconstruction and grading of the existing site access, and the removal and disposal of vegetation to accommodate installation of the new facilities.

The enclosed proposed construction plot plan shows the location of existing and proposed structures. The plot plan also shows the expected beam paths for the new radio system.

Radio frequencies are not included on the enclosed technical data sheet because they are considered sensitive information. However, BPA is proposing to use frequencies in the restricted government band 7-8GHz. The radio frequencies have been submitted to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to preclude any radio interference with current site users regulated by the Federal Communications Commission.

How to comment

For more information regarding frequencies, site construction plans and joint use, request information as soon as possible and not later than May 28, 2010. Such requests shall be addressed jointly by the Forest Service and BPA. Comments will be accepted through **June 14, 2010**. You may submit comments online at www.bpa.gov/comment or mail the enclosed comment form to: Bonneville Power Administration, Public Affairs Office - DKE-7, P.O. Box 14428, Portland, OR 97293. You may also call us with your comment toll free at 800-622-4519. Please reference "Antelope Mountain Communications Project" with your comments.

BPA will post all comments online at www.bpa.gov/comment. You may send comments directly to the Forest Service by e-mail to semcbride@fs.fed.us. The Forest Service will be reviewing the scoping responses prior to issuing a decision, and these scoping responses will become part of the project file.

Sincerely,

/s/ Dave Tripp
Dave Tripp
Project Manager

Enclosures:
Technical data sheet (FS 2700-10)
Plan of proposed construction
Comment form