



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH & WILDLIFE

In reply refer to: EC-4

December 2, 2021

To: Parties Interested in the Bonneville Power Administration Transmission System Vegetation Management Program

Proposal: Bonneville Power Administration (Bonneville) is planning to prepare a supplement analysis to its 2000 Transmission System Vegetation Management Program Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Bonneville invites public input relevant to proposed changes in vegetation management techniques and herbicide use that should be considered in the supplement analysis.

Background: In June 2000, Bonneville issued the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program Final EIS that considered alternative ways to manage vegetation along Bonneville transmission facilities. In July 2000, the Bonneville Administrator issued a Record of Decision (ROD) that selected alternatives from the Final EIS for various components of vegetation management and set the policy and direction for managing vegetation at and along Bonneville transmission facilities, including in rights-of-way and access roads throughout the service area. Bonneville adopted a vegetation management program direction that is cost-effective, sensitive to environmental concerns, responsive to public and agency comment, and consistent with integrated vegetation management strategies.

Since 2000, more than 800 site-specific vegetation management projects were implemented by providing supplement analyses tiered to the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program Final EIS and ROD. The Transmission System Vegetation Management Program EIS and ROD, as well as the associated tiered supplement analyses, are available at: https://www.bpa.gov/efw/Analysis/NEPADocuments/Pages/Vegetation_Management.aspx. BPA's transmission line system can be viewed on BPA's geospatial portal at: <https://bpagis.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>, select the BPA Transmission Assets map).

The Final EIS outlines a process to approve new techniques and additional herbicides for identified use. The Final EIS provides that Bonneville will analyze and document new techniques and additional herbicides in a supplement analysis.

Proposed Additional Techniques and Herbicides: Since the Vegetation Management Program Final EIS and ROD were issued, new techniques and herbicides for vegetation control have become available. Bonneville expects to prepare a supplement analysis to determine if the new techniques and herbicides represent substantial changes and if significant new circumstances have occurred, consistent with 10 CFR 1021.314(c) and 40 CFR 1502.9(c).

Bonneville is planning to evaluate inclusion of aerial management techniques such as heli-saw and heli-feller operations as vegetation management techniques. Bonneville is also planning to evaluate inclusion of Aminocyclopyrachlor [Method 240SL], Indaziflam [Esplanade 200 SC], 2,4-D Choline Salt [Freelexx], Aminopyralid + Florpyrauxifen-Benzyl [TerraVue], and Triclopyr Choline [Vastlan] to Bonneville's list of approved herbicides for selective and total vegetation control in Bonneville rights-of-way, access roads, electric yards, and non-electric facilities. These techniques and herbicides would help with more efficient removal of

vegetation near Bonneville transmission lines and facilities and assist in efforts to minimize the effects of associated potential wildfires. The use of the new techniques and herbicides would be implemented in accordance with all local, state, and Federal regulated practices.

We Invite Your Input: Bonneville encourages comments relevant to the potential environmental impacts of the proposed additional techniques and herbicides described above. Bonneville anticipates making the supplement analysis publicly available in Winter/Spring 2022.

How to Comment: If you would like to submit comments relevant to the supplement analysis, please submit them to Bonneville by January 18, 2022. All comments will be available on the project website at https://www.bpa.gov/efw/Analysis/NEPADocuments/Pages/Vegetation_Management.aspx. Comments may be submitted via:

Mail: Bonneville Power Administration
Public Affairs – DKE-7
P.O. Box 14428
Portland, OR 97291-4428

Toll-free: 800-622-4519
FAX: 503-230-4019
Online: www.bpa.gov/comment

For More Information: If you need more information or have any questions about the supplement analysis and NEPA process, please contact me at 503-230-3769, or by e-mail at dkkennedy@bpa.gov. If you have questions about Bonneville's vegetation management program, please contact Charles Sheppard at 360-418-2987, or by email at casheppard@bpa.gov. Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

/s/ David K. Kennedy

David K. Kennedy

Executive Manager, Environmental Planning & Analysis