FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT and PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENTS for the BOARDMAN TO HEMINGWAY TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT

DOI-BLM-ORWA-V000-2012-0016-EIS
OROR-065375
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Volume 1A: Front Matter through Section 3.2.12
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Volume 1B: Section 3.2.13 through Appendix J
Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Land Use Plan Amendments for the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project


Cooperating Agencies: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (Wallowa-Whitman National Forest)
U.S. Department of the Army, Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Department of the Navy, Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (for Naval Weapons Systems Training Facility, Boardman)
U.S. Department of Energy, Bonneville Power Administration (DOE/EIS-0507)
U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Idaho Governor’s Office (Idaho Office of Energy Resources)
Oregon Department of Energy

Cooperating Agencies: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Morrow County, Oregon
Umatilla County, Oregon
Union County, Oregon
Baker County, Oregon
Malheur County, Oregon
Payette County, Idaho
City of Boardman, Oregon
Owyhee Irrigation District, Oregon
Joint Committee of the Owyhee Project, Oregon

Type of Action: Right-of-way grant from the Bureau of Land Management
Special-use authorization from the U.S. Forest Service

Project Location: Oregon: Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Baker, and Malheur counties
Idaho: Owyhee County

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Availability period: 30 days after the publication of the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register

Abstract

This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been prepared to analyze and disclose the impacts of granting a right-of-way across federal land to Idaho Power Company (the Applicant) for the purpose of constructing, operating, and maintaining the single-circuit alternating-current, 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line and amending Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) land-use plans to accommodate the proposed transmission line. The Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project also would include (1)
constructing a 500-kV connection in the proposed Longhorn Substation; (2) constructing an internal communication system to control the transmission line and manage the flow of electricity, with regeneration sites approximately every 40 miles; (3) potentially relocating approximately 0.9 mile of existing 230-kV transmission line in the vicinity of Flagstaff, Oregon (east of Baker City) to allow for efficient placement of the 500-kV line; (4) potentially relocating an approximately 5.3-mile-long section of existing 138-kV line in the vicinity of Weatherby, Oregon, with an existing 69-kV line; the structures would be rebuilt to accommodate the two transmission lines (i.e., double-circuit 138/69-kV, including a 12.5-kV line underbuild) enabling use of the 138-kV line right-of-way for the proposed 500-kV transmission line. Also, although not part of the Applicant’s Proposed Action, if an alternative route along the west side of Bombing Range Road is selected, the existing Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) 69-kV line would have to be partially relocated. This additional action of replacing a portion of the BPA 69-kV transmission line is a connected action under NEPA, the effects of which have been analyzed and addressed in the Final EIS. The EIS analyzes the Proposed Action and several alternatives, including taking no action, and assesses the potential impacts on the natural, human, and cultural environment of implementing the Proposed Action or an alternative. Under the Proposed Action, the BLM would issue a right-of-way grant and the USFS would issue a special-use authorization for constructing, operating, and maintaining the proposed transmission line and associated facilities. Depending on the route selected for the transmission line, other potentially affected agencies may tier to the analysis in this EIS in issuing decisions and similar use authorizations.