



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

October 28, 2009 — Vancouver, Wash.  
4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Clark College—Gaiser Hall, 1993 Fort Vancouver Way

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### **Attendees**

Four hundred sixty five (465) members of the public signed-in at this open house. Attendees included area property owners, local business owners, representatives of homeowners' associations, and staff from Clark County government, Vancouver- Clark Parks and Recreation, Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council, Clark Public Utilities, PacifiCorp, and Portland General Electric.

### **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 schedule and route elimination decisions:* Participants were interested in learning as soon as possible when potential route segments have been eliminated from consideration by the project. Attendees expressed concerns about the project's multi-year decision schedule and the uncertainty this created for property owners about where a potential transmission line could be sited. Issues of concern related to schedule and route selection included potential effects on property values and the need for disclosure information for real estate transactions.
- *Use of existing rights-of-way:* The project includes several route segments that would follow existing utility-owned rights-of-way (ROW) that are not currently being used for a transmission line. In these cases, such as with Segment 31, property owners are concerned with clearing the ROW for a transmission line, including the loss of trees and wildlife habitat.
- *Route selection:* Some attendees expressed a preference for certain route segments over others. Many suggested that BPA coordinate closely with other federal and state agencies to use public lands for a transmission route versus private lands. In particular, some expressed a preference for the Ross-Lexington route (segments 9 and 25) to keep the line in the existing ROW. Others commented on the use of the easternmost route, including Segment 29, but also wanted to see an option that was even farther east into forested lands. Still others questioned why no route options closely followed Interstate 5 or cut across the Columbia River and through Oregon to reach a proposed substation in Troutdale.
- *Transmission tower design:* Some suggested that any additional towers placed in an existing ROW be aligned with towers already in-place to minimize additional visual impacts.
- *Electric and magnetic field effects:* Many had questions and concerns about potential health effects from a transmission line.
- *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. There were also specific questions about the process and compensation for tenants who don't own the land they live on, such



as in a mobile home park. Participants also asked questions about the "Permission to Enter Property" letters and forms sent to landowners.

### **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 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](http://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](http://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.