

Notes to Readers

Thank you for taking time to review the I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project EIS. We acknowledge the complexity of the project and this document, and hope that these notes make the information contained in the EIS easier to find and understand. These notes are not a complete chronicling of what is contained in the EIS; rather, they highlight a few key aspects to assist readers as they navigate through this EIS.

We have included information about changes made to the EIS since the Draft EIS was released at the end of these notes.

Navigating the EIS

Summary: The summary provided as part of this EIS gives a good overview of the proposed project, project alternatives, and potential impacts associated with these actions. However, if you are interested in a better and deeper understanding of these aspects of the proposed action, other considerations and the EIS itself, we encourage you to read the main body of the EIS.

Getting Started—Read Chapters 1 through 4: At a minimum, we recommend you read these chapters first to understand the project and alternatives, and details about how a transmission project is built. The route alternatives for the I-5 Project analyzed in detail in this EIS total over 300 miles. The information in these chapters will help as you read the resource chapters and their impact analyses.

Project Need (Chapter 1): The need for the project is explained in Chapter 1. The various purposes, or goals, we are trying to meet are also described in this chapter.

Project Alternatives (Chapters 2 and 4; Appendices B and B1): How the project developed from route segments to alternatives is described in Chapter 2. We are considering four *action* alternatives, that is, these alternatives propose taking action and building a new 500-kV transmission line and two substations.

The four action alternatives are the West, Central, East and Crossover alternatives. Each action alternative also includes three options (e.g., West Option 1, West Option 2, and West Option 3). Options were developed along with each alternative so that all route segments were used, and they provide additional route segment combinations in certain areas of the alternative.

In this document when we refer to the West Alternative, for example, it does not include the options. If the options are included it will say “West Alternative and Options.” We use “action alternatives” to refer to all alternatives and options. BPA has identified the Central Alternative using Central Option 1 as the Preferred Alternative.

The action alternatives are briefly introduced in Chapter 2, but more detail about each alternative and their options, and the No Action Alternative (i.e., the project would not be built) are found in Chapter 4 and Appendices B and B1. Appendix B has a table that describes potential right-of-way configurations (types of towers, amount of right-of-way needed) for each action alternative. Appendix B also includes figures referenced in the table that show existing and proposed right-of-way configurations. Some tower heights have been updated.

general vicinity of the proposed project alternatives. Rather than having prescribed boundaries, the project area is intended to simply be those areas generally adjacent to or nearby the proposed project facilities. The project area is intended to give a general sense of the key resources in areas surrounding the proposed project. The study area is a more focused area that was determined to ensure that we identified the resources that could be affected by the direct and indirect impacts of the project. The study area may be defined for an individual resource in that resource chapter. For example, the study area for recreation is a 2,000-foot-wide corridor along the entire route of each action alternative, 1,000 feet on either side of the transmission line centerline. This area is large enough to include the proposed transmission line right-of-way, new and improved access roads, substation areas, and removed, rebuilt, and new towers on existing right-of-way. For those resources where a study area has been defined and is used, the relevant resource chapter specifically describes this in the text.

Tables: Tables used throughout the EIS display information referred to in the text. In tables where impacts are shown for an alternative and its options, the information for the options is the net impact, that is, an increase or decrease from the amount of impact in the portion of the alternative the option replaces. For example, the West Alternative creates impacts to about 141 acres of soil with moderate soil erosion potential. If West Option 1 is used, this amount would decrease by 7 acres.

After publication of the Draft EIS, the route for the Preferred Alternative (Central Alternative using Central Option 1) has been refined to further minimize and avoid impacts to the natural and human environment where possible. Numbers in the tables for the Preferred Alternative have been updated to reflect these route refinements. Because the analysis for Central Options 2 and 3 (not part of the Preferred Alternative) did not change, and the net impact relates to the original Central Alternative route, we have included the original numbers from the Draft EIS in parenthesis in the tables for the Central Alternative and Central Option 1 only. Some tables also have been revised to reflect more current information or revised assumptions in response to comments received on the Draft EIS. For example, Table 11-1 has been revised with updated Census data.

More Information: The EIS draws from many sources for information. In general, resource specialists used a combination of geographic information system (GIS) analysis of existing databases, aerial photo interpretation, reconnaissance-level on-the-ground observation, and aerial review. Supporting information is in Chapter 29, References; appendices; and on the I-5 Project website: www.bpa.gov/goto/i-5. The website provides additional information referred to in the EIS that may be helpful when reviewing the EIS.

Changes to the Final EIS

BPA has made the following changes and additions to the Final EIS:

- Volume 3 (3A through 3H), Comments and Responses. This new volume presents the comments received on the Draft EIS, and BPA's responses to these comments. The volume contains an index that lists commenters and where their comments and BPA's responses can be found in the volume.
- Additional information, corrections and suggested text changes in many chapters in response to comments, including new tables, figures and maps. If a new table or figure relates to an existing table or figure from the Draft EIS, the new table or figure has been

- given a number and letter, for example, Figure 4-2 and Figure 4-2A, to reduce text changes in the narrative.
- For the Central Alternative and Central Option 1 only, the first number listed in impact tables reflects adjusted tower and access road locations BPA has made to further reduce or avoid potential impacts along the Preferred Alternative. The numbers in parentheses are the original numbers from the Draft EIS and are included to note the change from the Draft EIS. They are also included because Central Options 2 and 3 have not changed and impact numbers for these options are based on the original Central Alternative numbers.
 - In some resource chapters (e.g., Socioeconomics), updated data and assumptions were used to update all impact numbers in the tables. In these cases, the numbers in parentheses for the Central Alternative and Central Option 1 are updated numbers using the Draft EIS project design.
 - The Casey Road Substation site figure has been updated. An additional option (Lot 11) is being considered at the Sundial Substation site and a new figure showing Lot 11 has been added. The Casey Road substation site at the north end of the proposed project and Lot 11 for Sundial Substation at the south end of the project are the preferred locations for the new substations. If the project is built, the northern substation would be called the Castle Rock Substation.
 - Information about how local electrical service would be provided at the preferred substation sites has been added.
 - Maps have been updated with some new resource data for the Preferred Alternative.
 - Appendices B1, C1, F1, and O are new appendices for the Preferred Alternative.
 - Appendix D1 is new and includes additional underground studies done in the Castle Rock, Camas, and Washougal areas.
 - Appendix G1 is new and includes additional research about health effects published since the release of the Draft EIS.
 - Appendices A, H, and M contain updated resource, census, and noxious weed data, respectively.