



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 61409
Vancouver, WA 978666-1409

TRANSMISSION SERVICES

December 14, 2012

In reply refer to: TEP-TPP-3

To: Parties Interested in the Grand Coulee-Creston Transmission Line Rebuild Project

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to rebuild nearly 28 miles of the Grand Coulee-Creston No. 1 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line between the cities of Coulee Dam in Grant County and Creston in Lincoln County, Washington (*please see the enclosed project map*). This letter briefly explains what is being proposed, outlines our environmental review process and schedule, and invites you to meetings where you can learn more about and comment on the proposal.

Proposal: The proposed project would include replacing all wood-pole structures (including poles, cross arms, cross braces, guys, anchors and insulator assemblies) and conductor (including groundwire and fiber communications), improving existing access roads, and developing temporary access roads. If approved, the rebuilt line will continue to operate at 115-kV. The intention is that the rebuilt line will maintain at the same structure locations and similar pole heights as the existing line. The existing line was built in 1941 and is in need of replacement due to age, rot, and deterioration. Rebuilding the line would help maintain reliable electrical service and avoid risks to the safety of the public and maintenance crews.

To understand the potential environmental impacts of this proposal, BPA will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. We are presently considering two alternatives to be studied in detail in the EA: the proposed system rebuild described above and a “no action” alternative in which BPA would not rebuild this transmission line. The EA will describe anticipated impacts to natural and human resources and will include mitigation measures to avoid or minimize those impacts. During this process, BPA will be working with federal, state and local agencies, tribes, landowners, and interest groups.

Public Meetings: BPA will soon start to assess the potential environmental impacts of the proposed alternatives, and we would like to hear from you. What questions do you have? What resources should we analyze? Do you have information or concerns about specific areas? BPA is seeking public input and comments through January 24, 2013. We have scheduled two open house scoping meetings to hear your input and accept comments related to the scope of the EA that will be prepared:

Wednesday, January 9, 2013
4:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Coulee Dam Town Hall
300 Lincoln Avenue
Coulee Dam, WA 99116

Thursday, January 10, 2013
4:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Wilbur Community Center
5 SW Railroad Avenue
Wilbur, WA 99185

We do not plan to give a formal presentation, so you may come any time during either of the meetings. Several members of the project team will be available to answer your questions and listen to your ideas.

Other Ways to Comment: If you are unable to attend a meeting, you can still comment. Comments may be submitted online at www.bpa.gov/comment, or you may return the enclosed comment form or other written correspondence in the postage-paid envelope provided, or you may fax your comments to (503) 230-4019. You also may call us with your comments toll free at (800) 622-4519. Please submit comments to us by **January 24, 2013**, and reference the “*Grand Coulee-Creston Transmission Line Rebuild Project*” with your comments. We will post all comments we receive on our website at www.bpa.gov/comment.

Process and Schedule: Starting as early as winter 2012, you may see BPA staff or contractors in the area as they conduct engineering and environmental surveys. If we need to enter property where we do not have existing access rights, we will contact property owners for permission through a separate mailing.

BPA is planning to produce a Preliminary EA for review and comment in the fall of 2013. If you would like to receive a copy of the Preliminary EA, please indicate on the enclosed comment form as to how you would like to receive it once it is available. If you would like to be taken off the project mailing list, please mark the box on the form. If you do not return the form, you will still receive notice when the Preliminary EA is available.

BPA will produce a Final EA in summer of 2014. Based on the analysis in the Final EA, BPA will either prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact and may decide to proceed with the project, or BPA will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement if there is the potential for significant environmental impacts.

For More Information: To find out more about the project, please go to BPA’s project website at www.bpa.gov/goto/CouleeCrestonRebuild.

If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact the environmental project lead, Andrew M. Montaña, toll-free at (800) 282-3713, directly at (503) 230-4145 or by e-mail at ammontano@bpa.gov. If you have other questions or would like more project information, please contact me at the toll-free number listed above, directly at (360) 619-6559 or e-mail at etorth@bpa.gov.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

/s/ Erich T. Orth

Erich T. Orth
Transmission Project Manager

Enclosures:
Project Map
Comment Form
Return Envelope