



## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 61409  
Vancouver, WA 98666-1409

TRANSMISSION SERVICES

February 24, 2009

In reply refer to: TEP-TPP-3

### **To: People Interested in the McNary-John Day Transmission Line Project:**

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) has completed environmental review of the McNary-John Day Transmission Line Project and will proceed with building the project. This letter briefly describes the project, its history, and next steps.

#### **Project Background**

The project involves the construction of 79 miles of new 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between BPA's McNary and John Day substations. The line would be located next to existing transmission lines, and the route would start in Oregon, cross the Columbia River below McNary Dam, run parallel to the north side of the Columbia through Benton and Klickitat counties, and cross back into Oregon near John Day Dam.

In 2002, BPA completed an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the project and decided to build the line. However, due to changing energy market conditions, the project was put on hold. In spring 2008, BPA received requests from power generators for use of the transmission system in this area; this line is needed to meet those requests.

To help determine whether to proceed with building the project, BPA prepared a Supplement Analysis (SA) that reviewed the 2002 EIS to see if there had been significant changes in the project or its environmental impacts. As part of the analysis, BPA sent letters in October 2008 to potentially affected landowners, federal, state, and local agencies, tribes, interest groups, and the public that explained the project's status and requested comments. BPA also held two open house style public meetings in the project vicinity in early November 2008. We appreciate the feedback from those who were able to attend the meetings and provide comment.

Using the public input that we received and our own consideration of potentially significant changes, BPA completed the SA for this project earlier this month. The SA confirms that the environmental analysis contained in the 2002 EIS remains valid and that no further NEPA documentation is required. In part due to this determination, the BPA Administrator announced on February 19, 2009 that BPA will proceed with construction of the project. The SA, public comments received, and the mitigation measures developed to help avoid or lessen impacts are enclosed.

#### **Next steps**

BPA will soon begin ordering material for the project and is planning on beginning transmission line construction in June 2009. Construction of the line is expected to take about four years. BPA will work with landowners, local officials, and Tribes to prepare for construction activities.

**For more information**

If you would like more information about the project please visit our Web site: [www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission\\_Projects/](http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission_Projects/). You may also contact BPA toll free by calling (800) 622-4519. Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Mark Korsness, 2/24/09*

Mark Korsness  
BPA Project Manager

Enclosures:  
Supplement Analysis  
Public Comments  
Mitigation Action Plan