



## Department of Energy

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

TRANSMISSION SERVICES

November 17, 2014

In reply refer to: TEP-CSB-2

### **To: Parties Interested in the Northern Mid-Columbia Joint Project**

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) has prepared a draft environmental assessment (draft EA) for the proposed Northern Mid-Columbia Joint Project (Joint Project), a proposed 230-kV transmission line and associated facilities to be located in the northern mid-Columbia area of Washington State. The draft EA describes the project and why it is needed, discusses the environmental impacts the project could create, and lists the mitigation measures that would avoid or lessen those impacts. This letter requests your comments on the draft EA, invites you to public meetings, and outlines the next steps for the project.

The proposed transmission line would be permitted, constructed, owned, and operated by Public Utility District No. 1 of Douglas County (Douglas PUD). BPA would partially fund construction of this new line and add equipment at BPA's existing Columbia Substation to interconnect the line to the Federal Columbia River Transmission System (FCRTS). Douglas PUD coordinated with BPA in the environmental review for the Joint Project. During this process, BPA and Douglas PUD have been working with federal, state and local agencies, Tribes, landowners, and other interest groups.

The draft EA analyzes potential impacts from three routing alternatives for the Joint Project. These alternatives all extend from Douglas PUD's Rapids Switchyard near the City of Rock Island in Douglas County, Washington to BPA's Columbia Substation in Douglas County, Washington and vary in length from 8 to 11 miles long. The draft EA also analyzes the no action alternative, which assumes the project would not be built and any impacts associated with construction would not occur. At this point in time, BPA has a preference for the West Route alternatives, which mostly parallels existing transmission lines.

### **Public Meetings**

We have scheduled two informal, open-house meetings to answer questions and accept comments on the draft EA that we have prepared:

**Tuesday, December 9, 2014**  
**4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.**  
Rock Island Elementary School  
5645 Rock Island Road  
Rock Island, Wash. 98850

**Wednesday, December 10, 2014**  
**4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.**  
Alcoa Inc.  
6200 Malaga Alcoa Hwy.  
Malaga, Wash. 98828

## How to Comment

Please send any comments you have on the draft EA to BPA by **January 14, 2015**. All comments will be posted in their entirety on the project website. There are several ways that you can comment:

<b>Mail:</b>	Bonneville Power Administration Public Affairs – DKE-7 P.O. Box 14428 Portland, OR 97291-4428	<b>Toll-free:</b>	800-622-4519
		<b>FAX:</b>	503-230-4019
		<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="http://www.bpa.gov/comment">www.bpa.gov/comment</a>

## Schedule

The expected schedule for the EA process is as follows:

Draft EA available for public comment	November 17, 2014 to January 14, 2015
Final EA	Summer 2015
Finding of No Significant Impact (If warranted)	Summer 2015
If decision to build, construction could start	2016

## Next Steps

We will consider all comments submitted during the comment period and provide responses to substantive comments in the final EA. If BPA decides to implement the proposed project, the final EA and a finding of no significant impact would likely be available in summer 2015.

## For More Information

The draft EA is available for your review and comment at [www.bpa.gov/goto/NorthernMidColumbia](http://www.bpa.gov/goto/NorthernMidColumbia), or if you requested a copy of the document, it is enclosed. If you would like a hard copy (about 300 pages), please call our toll-free document request line at 800-622-4520. Please leave a message with the project name, your name, and complete mailing address.

If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact the Environmental Protection Specialist, Kimberly St.Hilaire, toll-free at 800-282-3713, directly at 503-230-5361, or by e-mail at [krsthilaire@bpa.gov](mailto:krsthilaire@bpa.gov). If you have questions on the transmission line route or design, please contact Douglas PUD's Distribution Engineering Manager, Dennis Baker, at 509-881-2903 or Property Supervisor, John Brown, at 509-881-2297. If you have other questions or would like more project information, please call me at the toll-free number listed above, directly at 360-619-6331, or by e-mail at [ahhsu@bpa.gov](mailto:ahhsu@bpa.gov).

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Alaric Hsu*

Alaric Hsu  
BPA Project Manager

## Enclosures (if requested):

Draft EA  
Comment Form  
Return Envelope