

United States Government
memorandum

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

DATE: August 4, 2005

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS
(DOE/EIS-0285/SA-262-Walla Walla-North Lewiston Transmission Line)
Project #: V-P-05/05

TO: Bill Erickson
Natural Resource Specialist – TFP/Walla Walla

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management along the Walla Walla – North Lewiston 115 kV Transmission Line Corridor.

Location: The project area is located in Columbia, Garfield, Asotin and Whitman Counties, Washington and Lewis County, Idaho, all being in Walla Walla Region.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

Description of the Proposal: BPA proposes to perform noxious weed management on the transmission line right-of-way (ROW), around transmission towers and landings and along the associated access roads to control weeds that may impede the operation, maintenance, safety and reliability of the subject transmission line. The width of the ROW is 60 feet. Unwanted, tall growing and noxious vegetation will be removed and/or controlled along the ROW using selective and nonselective methods that may include herbicidal treatment, hand cutting and mowing. BPA plans to conduct vegetation control with the goal of removing tall growing vegetation that is currently or will soon be a hazard to the transmission line maintenance. BPA's overall goal is to have low-growing plant communities along the right-of-way to control the development of potentially threatening vegetation. All work will be accomplished in a manner using methods to assure that there is little potential harm to non-target vegetation and to low-growing plants. The work will provide system reliability. All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards.

Analysis: A Vegetation Management Checklist was completed for the project corridor in accordance with the requirements identified in the Bonneville Power Administrations Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285).

The subject corridor traverses private agricultural lands, industrial lands belonging to the Port of Lewiston and state (DNR) lands. Lands consist of dry croplands and grazing lands.

Sections 3 of the checklists identify the natural resources present in the areas of the proposed work. The following summarizes natural resources occurring in the project areas along with applicable mitigation measures.

Water Resources: Water bodies (streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands) occurring in the project area is listed in section 3.1 of the Vegetation Management Checklist. No ground disturbing vegetation management methods will be implemented minimizing the risk for soil erosion and sedimentation near the streams. All available herbicidal, manual and mechanical methods will be used. The following herbicide buffers will be implemented for the project. Outside a 100 foot buffer from any T&E listed stream, ponds or wetlands or a 35 foot buffer from any other stream, pond or wetland, Triclopyr BEE (common formulations: Garlon 4 and Tahoe 4E) may be applied. Formulations of Triclopyr TEA (common formulations Garlon 3A and Tahoe 3A) may be applied for spot or localized applications up to one yard of the waters edge for T&E listed streams, ponds or wetlands or up to the waters edge of any other water body or sensitive habitat. For any initial or follow up broadcast treatment with Triclopyr TEA on sprouting brush, a 35 foot buffer will be maintained from any stream, pond, wetland of sensitive areas. Other approved herbicides and buffers as reference in the project vegetation management checklist may also be used.

No drinking water wells, irrigation wells or water supplies were identified along the right-of-way.

Threatened and Endangered Species/Essential Fish Habitat: Pursuant to its obligations under the Endangered Species Act, BPA has made a determination of whether its proposed project will have any effects on any listed species. Species lists were obtained from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on April 19 and 22, 2005, identifying threatened and endangered species potentially occurring in the project area. A determination of no effect was made for all ESA listed species and designated critical habitat for the project and for Essential Fish Habitat.

Cultural Resources: The vegetation management activities for this project are non-ground disturbing and will not effect cultural resources. If a site is discovered during the course of vegetation control, work will be stopped in the vicinity and the BPA Environmental Specialist, and the BPA Archeologist will be contacted.

Re-Vegetation: Re-vegetation needs will be determined onsite. Any areas identified with limited ground cover will be replanted with native plant species. Areas will be replanted or reseeded with low-growing species. This should be done if there are no existing low-growing species or if there is a low potential for natural re-vegetation by low-growing species and a high potential for natural re-vegetation by tall-growing species.

Monitoring: The entire project will be inspected during the work period. Additionally the line will be patrolled annually after treatment to monitor the effectiveness of the treatment and any issues associated with the project.

Findings: This Supplement Analysis finds that (1) the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285) and ROD, and; (2) there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. This Supplement Analysis also finds the proposed actions will not affect threatened or endangered species. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ James R. Meyer for
Ken Hutchinson
Environmental Scientist

CONCUR: /s/ Katherine S. Pierce
Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 8/5/05

Attachments:
Vegetation Management Checklist
Effects Determination