

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: June 8, 2006

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285/SA-307 – Big Eddy-Chenoweth, Nos. 1 &2). Project #: **V-R-06-06**

TO: Elizabeth A. Johnson
Natural Resource Specialist – TFR/Redmond

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management along the seven mile Big Eddy-Chenoweth, No. 1 and 2 line. Three miles of adjacent corridor on the Big Eddy-Midway (1/1 to 2/3) and Chenoweth-Goldendale (1/1 to 2/3) lines will be managed at the same time.

Location: The project is located in BPA's Redmond Region and falls within Wasco County, Oregon and Klickitat County, Washington.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

Description of the Proposal: BPA proposes to remove tall growing and noxious vegetation from the right-of-way, along access roads and around towers that might interfere with the operation and maintenance of the transmission lines. Unwanted tall growing and noxious vegetation, danger trees and reclaim trees will be removed and/or controlled inside the ROW using manual, mechanical and herbicide treatments.

This proposal covers the right-of-way width ranging in width between 305 and 500 feet along 10 miles of right-of-way.

All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards. The work will provide system reliability.

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

Section 3 of the checklist identifies the natural resources present in the area of the proposed work. The following summarizes natural resources occurring in the project area along with applicable mitigation measures.

Water Resources:

Water bodies (streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands) occurring in the project area are listed in Section 3.1 of the Vegetation Management Checklist. As conservation and avoidance measures, no herbicides or mechanized equipment will be used within 400 feet of the Columbia River. In addition, a 35 foot buffer of no herbicide or mechanized treatment will be maintained for an intermittent stream that might feed into the Columbia River. Danger trees in riparian zones will

be selectively cut to include only those that are within 50 feet of the conductor at maximum sag. Trees will be topped where shrubs are not present to provide shade and a silt buffer. Shrubs will not be cut that are less than 10 feet high where ground to conductor clearance is more than 50 feet. No ground disturbing vegetation management methods will be implemented thus minimizing the risk for soil erosion and sedimentation near the streams.

Threatened and Endangered (T&E) Species and Habitats:

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. A species list from United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was reviewed on May 23, 2006 to identify threatened and endangered species and Critical Habitat Units that might exist in the project area. This review also covered species under the jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries.

A determination “No Effect” has been made for Endangered Species and Critical Habitat.

Essential Fish Habitat: A review of the NOAA database identified Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) streams occurring in the project area. Measures identified for water resources will be followed for EFH. A determination of “No Effect” was made for Essential Fish Habitat waters that occur in the project area.

Cultural Resources:

No ground disturbing activities are scheduled for the proposed vegetation management activities and the site is primarily on an industrial site. For this reason, cultural resources are not anticipated to be impacted. If archaeological material is discovered during the course of vegetation management activities, the BPA Environmental Representative and BPA archeologist will be notified for additional assessment.

Monitoring:

The right-of-way identified in the checklist will be inspected after completion of the work to determine if all hazard trees have been removed from these areas. Follow-up monitoring for vegetation control will occur in the fall of 2006.

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/ Andrew B. Chang
Andrew B. Chang
Biological Scientist - Environmental

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

DATE: 06-09-06

Attachment:
Vegetation Management Checklist
Effects Determination