

# memorandum

DATE: August 31, 2006

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285/SA-317 - Lower Monumental-Little Goose #1 and #2 (1/1 to 18/3+450) 500 kV, Lower Monumental Powerhouse-Lower Monumental #1 (1/1 to 1/3) 500 kV and Lower Monumental Powerhouse-Lower Monumental Station Service #1 (1/1 to 1/9) Transmission Line Corridors **Project #: V-P-06/10**

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

**Proposed Action:** Vegetation Management along the Lower Monumental-Little Goose #1 and #2, Lower Monumental Powerhouse-Lower Monumental #1 and Lower Monumental Powerhouse-Lower Monumental Station Service #1 Transmission Line Corridors

**Location:** The project is located in Walla Walla County being in the Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) Walla Walla Region as shown in the table below.

County	Township	Range	Section
Walla Walla	12 N	34 E	1, 2, 3
Walla Walla	13 N	34 E	35, 36
Walla Walla	13 N	35 E	31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36
Walla Walla	13 N	36 E	31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration

**Description of the Proposal:** BPA, in cooperation with the Walla Walla County Noxious Weed Control Board, will provide resources to assist landowners in controlling yellow star thistle and other noxious weeds and brush. Historically BPA provides resources to the landowner but also controls noxious weeds and brush as part of routine maintenance on the ROW.

The noxious weeds are non-native species that need to be controlled to prevent any additional spread of these weeds and encroachment of habitat for native species in affected areas of the ROW. Sagebrush and other low growing woody species are also present. These will effect road travel and work around towers. All will be controlled using an Integrated Vegetation management approach using a combination of manual, mechanical, herbicidal and if applicable, biological methods.

Vegetation management work will occur along approximately 18 miles of selected sections of the right of way of the subject transmission lines. This proposal covers the ROW widths of 300 and 600 feet and associated roads.

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 BPA's Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285).

Land along the project corridor consists of agricultural, grazing, Corps of Engineers and Washington state DNR lands. Most of the acres are either dry cropland or rangeland. No other agencies or Tribal involvement exist in the areas of treatment.

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:** The Snake River is present in the project area as referenced in Section 3.1 of the Vegetation Management Checklist. No ground disturbing vegetation management methods will be implemented near this water body, minimizing the risk for soil erosion and sedimentation into the river. All available herbicidal, manual and mechanical methods will be used for vegetation management. 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, irrigation wells, or other water supplies were identified along the right of way.

**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 was reviewed from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) link on August 2, 2006, identifying threatened and endangered species and Critical Habitat Units potentially occurring in the project area. In addition, a review of species under the jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries was conducted.

Bull trout, spring, summer and fall chinook and summer steelhead were identified as occurring within ½ mile of the project area. By implementing the conservation and avoidance measures referenced in the Effects Determination for this project, a determination of "No Effect" was made for all ESA listed species, designated critical habitat and Essential Fish Habitat waters that occur in the project area.

**Cultural Resources:** Vegetation management activities are not anticipated to affect cultural resources. If archaeological material is discovered during the course of vegetation management activities, all work will be halted and the appropriate tribe, the BPA Environmental Representative and the BPA archeologist will be notified.

Monitoring: The right-of-way identified in the checklist will be inspected during the work to determine if all noxious vegetation has been treated in the project area. In addition, routine BPA ground and aerial patrols along with Weed Board member patrols will be used to determine the effectiveness of the treatment. Follow up activities will be determined by results from the patrols.

**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/Joseph C. Sharpe (for)

Kenneth C. Hutchinson  
Environmental Scientist

CONCUR: /s/Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce  
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 8/31/06

Attachment:  
Vegetation Management Checklist  
Effects Determination