

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: JAN 23 2009

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS
(DOE/EIS-0285/SA-389 Lower Columbia River Transmission Line PP&A Project #: 1166)

TO: Edward Tompkins
Natural Resource Specialist – TFBV-LMT

Proposed Action: BPA proposes to conduct vegetation management activities along the entire Right-of-Way corridor and associated access roads.

Location: The transmission line is located in Columbia and Clatsop Counties, Oregon and a small portion of Wahkiakum County, Washington.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

Description of the Proposal:

BPA proposes to clear unwanted vegetation along and adjacent to the transmission line corridors which includes Allston-Clatsop No. 1 230 KV, Allston-Astoria No. 1 115 KV, Allston-Driscoll No. 1 230KV, Driscoll-Wauna No. 1 230 KV, Driscoll TAP to Allston Clatsop No. 1, TAP to Cathlamet (1/1 to 6/1). Total length of lines to be managed is more than 50 miles and less than 55 miles. The project is in BPA's Longview-Ross District.

BPA plans to manage vegetation with the goal of removing tall growing vegetation that is currently or will soon become a hazard (A hazard is defined as one or more branches, tops, and/or whole trees that could fall or grow into the minimum safety zone of the transmission line(s) causing an electrical arc, relay and/or outage.) to the transmission line. New Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) standards have been adopted that decrease the allowable height of vegetation. BPA's overall goal is to have low-growing plant communities along the Right-of-Way (ROW) to control the development of potentially threatening vegetation.

A combination of selective and nonselective vegetation control methods will be used to perform the work. All methods including selective cutting, mowing, and herbicide treatments are consistent with the methods approved in the Vegetation Management Program EIS. The work will provide system reliability. Debris will be disposed of using onsite chip, lop and scatter, or mulching techniques. All onsite debris will be scattered along the ROW.

Analysis: A Vegetation Management Plan was developed for this Corridor that incorporates the elements of the checklist requirements identified in the Bonneville Power Administration's Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS. The following summarizes natural resources occurring in the project area along with applicable mitigation measures outlined in the Vegetation Management Plan (VMP).

Water Resources: Water bodies (streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands) occurring in the project area are listed in the Water Resources Section of the VMP. As conservation and avoidance measures, only spot and basal treatment with Garlon 3A (Triclopyr TEA) will be used within a 100-foot buffer up to the water's edge of any stream containing threatened or endangered species. Trees in riparian zones will be selectively cut. No ground disturbing vegetation management methods will be implemented thus eliminating the risk for soil erosion and sedimentation near the streams.

No drinking water, irrigation wells, or water supplies were identified along the rights of way for this project.

Threatened and Endangered Species: 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 for federally listed, proposed and candidate species potentially occurring within the project boundaries from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) websites for Columbia and Clatsop counties, Oregon and Wahkiakum County, Washington. Based on the ESA review conducted, BPA made a determination that the project will have "No Effect" for all ESA listed species under USFWS jurisdiction.

BPA also conducted a review of species under the jurisdiction of National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA) Fisheries. A determination of "No Effect" was made for all ESA listed species under NOAA jurisdiction.

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 cultural resources are known for the project area. 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: Native grasses are present on the entire right-of-way and are expected to naturally seed into the areas that will have lightly disturbed soil predominately located on the right-of-way roads.

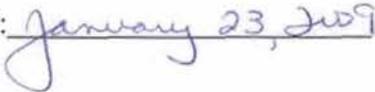
Monitoring: The entire project will be inspected during the work period. Additionally, monitoring for follow-up treatment will be conducted once each year.

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. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.


for Greg Tippetts
Environmental Scientist

CONCUR: 
Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 

References:

Vegetation Management Checklist
Effects Determination

cc:

K. Pierce – KEC-4

J. Meyer – KEP-4

P. Smith – KEP-4

J. Sharpe - KEPR-4

G. Tippetts – KEPR-4

H. Adams – LC-7

K. Howell – TFV/Longview

T. Anderson – TFVK-LMT

Official File – KEP (EQ-14)

Gtippetts:gt:4338;1/23/2009 (KEP-KEP-4-W:\EP\2009 FILES\EQ-14-Supplemental Analysis\FEIS-0285-SA-389-Alliston -Clatsop (Lower Columbia River).doc)