

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

Memorandum

DATE: January 15, 2008

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285/SA-355 – Metaline Falls Tap to Colville-Boundary #1 Transmission Line Corridor) **Project # 722.**

to: Tom Murphy
Natural Resource Specialist – TFS/BELL-1

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management along the Metaline Falls Tap to Colville – Boundary #1, 115-kV Single Circuit Transmission Line Corridor right-of-way from structure 1/1 to structure 1/11.

Location: The project is located in Pend Oreille County, Washington in the Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) service territory.

Proposed by: BPA

Description of the Proposal: BPA proposes to remove tall-growing and noxious vegetation from the right-of-way and access roads that can potentially interfere with the operation, maintenance, and reliability of the transmission lines. Tall-growing and noxious vegetation and reclaim trees will be removed and/or controlled inside the right-of-way using selective and nonselective methods that may include hand-cutting, mowing, and herbicidal treatment. Low-growing vegetation will be protected along the right-of-way with the exception of brush at the base of transmission structures and within access roads.

Vegetation management will occur along the Metaline Falls Tap to Colville-Boundary #1 transmission line corridor. This proposal covers the right-of-way width of 100 feet totaling approximately 12 acres of vegetation control.

The proposed action will allow safe and timely access to the subject transmission line, which will help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region. All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA safety standards.

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

Land along the project ROW consists of private woodlot ownership. Other observed uses are occasional cattle grazing. There are no water resources present within the project area. No other agency or Tribal involvement exists.

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

Threatened and Endangered 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 the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on January 11, 2008, identifying threatened and endangered species and Critical Habitat Units potentially occurring in the project area was reviewed. In addition, a review of species under the jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries was conducted.

The following species were identified as occurring within ½ mile of the project area: Canada lynx. The ROW does not possess sufficient vegetation cover and is not considered an adequate travel corridor for this species. In addition, project activities are not expected to affect existing denning habitat or create unsuitable conditions within lynx habitat; therefore, this project will have a “No Effect” on Canada lynx or its habitat.

Cultural Resources: Vegetation management activities are not anticipated to affect cultural resources, as there will not be any ground-disturbing activities. 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 archaeologist will be notified.

Monitoring: The right-of-way identified in the checklist will be inspected during vegetation control activities and next season to determine the effectiveness of control methods. If needed, re-seeding using a native seed mix will occur to stabilize traveled surfaces.

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.



Michael A. Rosales
Physical Scientist - Environmental

CONCUR 
Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: January 15, 2008

Attachments:
Vegetation Management Checklist/Detail Sheets
Effects Determination