

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: August 10, 2004

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS
(DOE/EIS-0285/SA 223-Schultz –Raver No. 1-Schultz-Echo Lake No. 1)

Project #: V-N-04/11

TO: Don Atkinson
Natural Resource Specialist – TFN/Snohomish

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management along the Schultz-Raver 1 and Schultz-Echo Lake 1 (43/5 to 49/3), Schultz-Raver 2 and 3 (44/1 to 49/3), Covington-Columbia 1 (39/5 to 44/2, and Olympia-Grand Coulee 1 (84/5 to 88/2) Transmission Line Corridors.

Location: The project lines are located westerly of the crest of the Cascades Mountains at Stampede Pass, King County, WA in BPA's Snohomish.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

Description of the Proposal: BPA proposes to remove tall growing and noxious vegetation from the right of way, access roads and tower sites that can potentially interfere with the operation, maintenance, and reliability 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 selective and nonselective methods that may include hand cutting, mowing, and herbicidal treatment. This proposal covers approximately 538 right of way acres, 31 miles of access roads, and 124 tower sites.

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

The subject corridors traverses Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, City of Tacoma, Burlington Northern and Plum Creek timber companies.

Section 3 of the checklists 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 Checklists. 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. The following herbicide buffers will be implemented for the project. No herbicides will be used on Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie Forest Lands. A minimal 100-foot buffer will be observed along all riparian zones. Where anadromous fishes are suspected to be present a 200-foot buffer will be used. Only BPA approved herbicides and formulas are to be used.

City of Tacoma Green River watershed properties are located between structures 43/5 +75 to 47/4 + 900. No herbicides allowed within the above-mentioned buffers. No other drinking water, irrigation wells, or water supplies were identified along the rights of way for either line associated with this project.

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. A species list was obtained from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), identifying threatened and endangered species and critical habitat potentially occurring in the project area. In addition a review of species under the jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries was conducted. A determination of No Effect was made for all ESA listed species and designated critical habitat for the project and for Essential Fish Habitat.

Danger tree management is proposed for this project. But no danger tree cutting is to take place within designated spotted owl critical habitat without further environmental review and documentation.

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 Chehalis tribe, 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.

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 Meyer for
Mark Martin
Environmental Protection Specialist

CONCUR: /s/ Thomas C. McKinney
Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 8/10/2004

Attachment:
Vegetation Management Checklist

cc:
L. Croff – KEC-4
T. McKinney – KEC-4
J. Meyer – KEP-4
J. Sharpe – KEPR-4
M. Martin – KEPR/Covington
P. Key – LC-7
J. Hilliard Creecy – T-DITT2
K. Rodd – TF/DOB-1
A. DelaCruz – TFN/Snohomish
S. Scott – TFNF/Snohomish
Environmental File – KEC-4
Official File – KEP (EQ-14)