DOE F 1325.8e Electronic Form Approved by Forms Mgmt. 04/19/2006
(08-89)

United States Government **Department of Energy**

Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: February 12, 2016

REPLY TO ATTN OF: EPR-Olympia

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285/SA-616)

TO: Jason Hunt
Natural Resource Specialist – TFBV- Olympia

Proposed Action: Vegetation management along the Shelton-Kitsap No. 4 corridor

Pollution Prevention and Abatement Project No.: 3293

Location: Mason and Kitsap Counties, Washington: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) Olympia District

Proposed by: BPA

Description of the Proposal: BPA proposes to clear unwanted vegetation along and adjacent to the Shelton-Kitsap No 4 transmission corridor. The ROW corridor in the proposed project area varies from 90 to 704 feet wide (near Shelton Sub), but averages 288 feet in width. The corridor crosses approximately 33.5 miles of terrain through rural residential, agricultural, industrial timber, and Washington State DNR properties.

Letters, on-site meetings, emails, and phone calls would be used to notify landowners approximately three weeks prior to commencing vegetation management activities. Door hangers would also be used at properties where special treatments are anticipated.

In order to comply with Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) standards, BPA proposes to manage vegetation with the goal of removing tall growing vegetation that is currently or will soon become a hazard to the transmission line (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). The overall goal of BPA is to establish low-growing plant communities along the ROW to control the development of potentially threatening vegetation.

Starting in February, 2016, BPA would cut or treat approximately 1,130.4 acres of ROW including 464 structure sites and 1.4 miles of access roads. In addition, 1,079 trees will be side limbed and 200 danger trees would be removed. All vegetation control methods including selective cutting, mowing, and herbicide treatments are consistent with the methods approved in BPA's Transmission System Vegetation Management Program EIS. Debris would be disposed of using on-site chip, lop and scatter, or mulching techniques. All onsite debris would be scattered along the ROW.

Analysis: A Vegetation Control Prescription & Checklist was developed for this corridor that incorporates the requirements identified in BPA's Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285, May 2000) and Record of Decision (August 23, 2000). The following summarizes natural resources occurring in the project area along with applicable mitigation measures outlined in the Vegetation Control Prescription.

Water Resources: Water bodies (streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands) occurring in the project area are noted in the Vegetation Control Prescription. The project crosses multiple streams and or intermittent creeks. No streams containing threatened or endangered species are located within the project area. Trees in riparian zones would be selectively cut to include only those that will grow into the minimum approach distances of the conductor at maximum sag, other trees would be left in place or topped to preserved shade. Shrubs that are less than 10-feet-high would not be cut where ground to conductor clearance allows. No ground disturbing vegetation management methods would be implemented thus eliminating the risk for soil erosion and sedimentation near the streams. For location information, see the Vegetation Control Prescription.

Threatened and Endangered Species: Pursuant to its obligations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), BPA has made a determination of whether its proposed project would have any effects on any listed species. A species list was obtained for federally listed, proposed and candidate species potentially occurring within the project boundaries from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Based on the ESA review conducted, BPA made a determination that the project would have "No Effect" for all ESA listed species under USFWS' jurisdiction. BPA also conducted a review of species under the jurisdiction of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries). A determination of "No Effect" was made for all ESA listed species under NOAA Fisheries' jurisdiction.

Essential Fish Habitat: A review of the NOAA Fisheries database identified Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) streams occurring in the project area. Measures identified for water resources would be followed for EFH. Based on project conservation measures, it was determined that the project would not adversely affect EFH.

Cultural Resources: The proposed action is considered to be routine vegetation maintenance necessary to preserve the reliability of the transmission line and public safety. The project involves the cutting of brush within the existing managed ROW, an activity that occurs on a regularly reoccurring basis. According to the scope of the proposed work, the activity is not a type that would result in changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such historic properties are located in the area of potential effects. If a site is discovered during the course of vegetation control, work would be stopped in the vicinity and the BPA Environmental Specialist and the BPA archeologist would be contacted.

Re-Vegetation: Grasses and shrubs are present on the non-cultivated sections of the ROW and are expected to naturally seed into the areas that would have lightly disturbed soil.

Monitoring: The entire project would be inspected during the work period and additional monitoring for follow-up treatment would be conducted as necessary. A diary of inspection results would be used to document formal inspections and will be filed with the contracting officer.

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.

Greg Tippetts
District Environmental Scientist EPR-Olympia

CONCUR: _____ DATE: February 12/2016
Stacy Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

References:
Vegetation Management Prescription and Checklist
Effects Determination

bcc:
J. Sharpe – EP-4
S. Hugill – EPI-4
B. Tilley – EPI/Alvey
P.Smith –EPR-4
H. Adams – LC-7
L.Webb – TFOF-Olympia
Official File – EP (EQ-13)

GTippetts:gt:360-951-4464: EPR 2/12/2016: W:\EP\2016 FILES\EQ-13-National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)\SA\SA-616_Shelton-Kitsap No 4 SA Memo FY16.doc