



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 491
Vancouver, Washington 98666-0491

TRANSMISSION SERVICES

March 1, 2010

In reply refer to: TEP-TPP-3

To: Parties Interested in the Walla Walla-Tucannon River Transmission Line Rebuild Project

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to rebuild a transmission line in your area. This letter briefly explains what is being proposed, outlines our environmental review process and schedule, and invites you to two meetings where you can learn more and comment on the proposal.

Proposal - BPA is proposing to rebuild the 47 mile long, Walla Walla - Tucannon River 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line located in Walla Walla and Columbia Counties, Washington (see the enclosed map). The wood pole line was constructed in 1940 and most of the structures, conductor, and associated structural components (cross arms, insulators, and dampers) are physically worn and structurally unsound in places. Based on the deteriorated condition of this line, there is a need to rebuild the line to maintain reliable electrical service and to avoid risks to the public and ensure worker safety.

Proposed activities would include improving existing access roads, establishing temporary staging areas for storage of materials, removing some vegetation, removing and replacing existing wood pole structures, associated structural components and conductor, and revegetating areas disturbed by construction activities. The existing structures would be replaced with structures of similar design within or near to their existing locations. The line would continue to operate at 115-kV.

To understand the potential environmental impacts of this proposal, BPA will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA). As a federal agency, we follow procedures of the National Environmental Policy Act. Two alternatives will be studied: to rebuild the line or not to rebuild, continuing with current operation and maintenance practices. The EA will describe anticipated impacts to natural and human resources and include mitigation measures that would enable BPA to avoid or minimize impacts. During this process, BPA will be working with federal, state and local agencies, landowners, interest groups, and tribes.

Public Meetings - We will soon start to assess the potential environmental impacts of the proposed alternatives and would like to hear from you. What questions do you have? What resources should we analyze? Do you have information or concerns about specific areas? BPA will seek public input and comments during the upcoming scoping process. The initial comment period ends April 18, 2010. We have scheduled two public scoping meetings:

Wednesday, March 17, 2010
4 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Walla Walla Parks & Recreation Department
Council Chambers, 2nd Floor
15 North 3rd Avenue
Walla Walla, WA 99362

Thursday, March 18, 2010
4 p.m. - 7 p.m.
The Delany Room of the Dayton Library
111 S. 3rd Street
Dayton, WA 99328

We do not plan to give a formal presentation at the meetings, so come any time during the meeting. Several members of the project team will be available to answer your questions and listen to your ideas.

Other Ways to Comment - If you cannot come to one of the meetings, you can still comment. You may submit comments to BPA online at: www.bpa.gov/comment, return the enclosed comment form or other written correspondence in the postage-paid envelope provided, or fax your comments to (503) 230-3285. You also may call us with your comments toll free at (800) 622-4519. Please submit comments to us by **April 18, 2010** and reference "Walla Walla-Tucannon River Transmission Line Rebuild Project" on your comments. We will post all comments we receive on our Web site at www.bpa.gov/comment.

Process and Schedule - Starting this spring and summer you may see BPA staff or contractors in the area as they conduct engineering and environmental surveys. If we need to enter property where we do not have existing access rights, we will contact property owners for permission through a separate mailing.

BPA will produce a Preliminary EA that will be available for review and comment in the fall or winter 2010. If you would like to receive a copy of the Preliminary EA, please indicate on the postcard whether you would like to receive it by regular or electronic mail. If you would like to be taken off the project mailing list, please mark the box on the reply card. If you do not return the reply card, you will still receive notice when the Preliminary EA is available.

BPA will produce a Final EA in winter 2010. Based on the analysis in the Final EA, BPA will either prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact and decide whether to proceed with the project, or will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement if there is the potential for significant environmental impacts.

For More Information - To find out more about the project please go to BPA's project Web site at: http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/Walla_Walla-Tucannon_River_Rebuild/.

If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact the environmental project lead, Stephanie Breeden, toll-free at (800) 282-3713, directly at (503) 230-5192 or e-mail sfbreeden@bpa.gov. If you have other questions or would like more project information, please call me, Erich Orth, at the toll-free number, directly at (360) 619-6559 or e-mail etorth@bpa.gov.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

/s/ Erich Orth

Erich Orth
Project Manager

Enclosures:
Project Map
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