

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
SOUTHWESTERN POWER ADMINISTRATION**

**Use of Herbicide for Vegetation Control Along
Transmission Line Rights-of-Way**

AGENCY: Southwestern Power Administration, Department of Energy (DOE)

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the use of herbicides for vegetation control along transmission line Rights-of-Way.

SUMMARY: Southwestern Power Administration (Southwestern) has performed an Environmental Assessment (EA) for Vegetation Control Along Transmission Line Rights-of-Way. The EA studied four methods of vegetation control: (1) mechanical/manual control (no action), (2) fire control, (3) biological control, and (4) a combination of mechanical/manual and herbicide control (the proposed action). Based on the analysis developed in the EA, Southwestern has concluded, that with proper herbicide application restrictions, there will be no significant environmental impact to the following:

1. **Air Quality - Restrictions:** Spray pressure and wind velocity limits shall be used to minimize mist formation, duration, and drift.
2. **Surface Water Quality - Restrictions:** Only herbicides registered by EPA for use in surface waters shall be used where surface water is present. Buffer zones and other erosion control methods shall be used near streams and other bodies of water wherever temporary loss of vegetation could cause movement of herbicide and sediment into surface water.
3. **Ground Water Quality - Restrictions:** Herbicides that have high soil adsorption and therefore, will have low likelihood of reaching ground water, shall be used. Herbicides shall not be used within 15 feet (4.6 meters) of sinkholes, visible rock fractures in outcrops, sinking creeks, and caverns identified in the Rights-of-Way. Training will be provided to enable applicators to identify these features.
4. **Wetlands - Restrictions:** Herbicides that cause only short term loss of vegetation and have a low toxicity to wildlife shall be used.

5. **Vegetation - Restrictions:** Herbicides that cause only short term loss of vegetation shall be used. Herbicides shall not be used on tracts where there are crops or gardens or are actively used as farmland.
6. **Wildlife - Restrictions:** Herbicides shall show low oral toxicity to wildlife.
7. **Aquatic Life - Restrictions:** Herbicides shall not be used within 15 feet (4.6 meters) of running water and lakes or ponds where fish may be present.
8. **Threatened and Endangered Species - Restrictions:** Herbicides shall not be used on the likely habitat of T&E species. Ground surveys shall be performed by qualified personnel to identify these areas. Herbicides that are highly toxic to fish shall not be used in areas where streams and recharge zones provide habitat for T&E fish species.
9. **Cultural Resources - Restrictions:** None, subsurface areas are not disturbed during herbicide application.
10. **Recreation and Aesthetics - Restrictions:** None, only temporary "brown outs" shall be acceptable.
11. **Human Health Effects - Restrictions:** Herbicides shall not be used where grazing and haying restrictions specified by the herbicide manufacturer cannot be followed by the landowner. Herbicides shall not be used where landowners or tenants have allergies or other health related conditions which could be affected by herbicide use on the Rights-of-Way. Landowners shall be informed of these restrictions to assist in determining if herbicides may be used on their portion of the Rights-of-Way. Application procedures and Personal Protective Equipment recommended by the manufacturer shall be used to protect application personnel.
12. **Transportation - Restrictions:** Herbicides shall be transported in the manufacturer's original containers. Material Safety Data Sheets and spill clean-up materials shall be transported with the herbicides.
13. **Disposal of Waste Materials - Restrictions:** Waste herbicide materials and containers shall be disposed according to manufacturers recommendations and applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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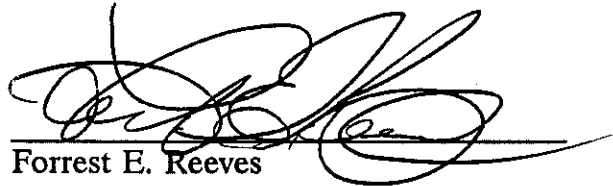
PUBLIC AVAILABILITY:

Copies of the EA and this FONSI are available from Southwestern at the above address.

DETERMINATION:

The impacts to the environment and public health implicit in the above 13 items are all temporary. Based on these considerations, Southwestern has concluded that there will be no significant impact to the human environment within the meaning of, 42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq. Therefore, the preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required, and Southwestern Power Administration is issuing this FONSI.

Issued in Tulsa, OK this 28th day of APRIL 1995.



Forrest E. Reeves
Acting Administrator
Southwestern Power Administration