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United States Government **Department of Energy**

Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: May 15, 2001

REPLY TO ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285/SA-12)

TO: Donald F. Atkinson - TFN/Snohomish
Natural Resource Specialist

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management along the Olympia-Grand Coulee No.1 Transmission Line ROW.

Location: The ROW is located in Pierce and King Counties, WA, being in the Snohomish Region.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to clear unwanted vegetation in the rights-of-ways and around tower structures that may impede the operation and maintenance of the subject transmission line. Also, access road clearing will be conducted. All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards. BPA plans to conduct vegetation control with the goal of removing tall growing vegetation that is currently or will soon be a hazard to the transmission line. BPA's overall goal is to have low-growing plant communities along the rights-of-way to control the development of potentially threatening vegetation.

Analysis: This project meets the standards and guidelines for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

Planning Steps

1. Identify facility and the vegetation management need.

The work involved will be to clear tall growing vegetation that is currently or will soon pose a hazard to the lines; treat the associated stumps and re-sprouts with herbicides to ensure that the roots are killed preventing new sprouts and selectively eliminateing tall growing vegetation before it reaches a height or density to begin competing with low-growing vegetation. All work will take place in existing rights-of-ways.

Also, all off right-of-way trees that are potentially unstable and will fall within a minimum distance or into the zone where the conductors swing will be removed. The width of the ROW is 125 feet. All work will be accomplished by selective vegetation control methods to assure that there is little potential harm to non-target vegetation and to low-growing plants. The work will provide system reliability.

Access roads will be treated using mowing and herbicide applications.

The vegetation control is designed to provide a 5-15 year maintenance free interval. The overall vegetation management scheme will be to initially clear and remove all trees using cut, lop and scatter methods. Subsequent work will include cut stump applications using Garlon 3A. See Attachment A for treatment zone methods and planned herbicide use.

Future cycles of work will involve the treatments used in the previous phases of work.

2. Identify surrounding land use and landowners/managers.

The subject corridor traverses mountainous terrain mostly owned by large timber companies. During routine patrols, tall, encroaching trees and vegetation issues are identified and marked. If a danger or reclaim tree is identified as a potential threat to the integrety of the transmission line, appropriate action to remove the tree is taken. There are no landowner agreements or specific landowner measures required.

3. Identify natural resources.

Some riparian and riparian T&E streams have been identified in the areas of the proposed work. These areas have been tentatively identified during patrols and by using existing data sources. They will be positively identified by the Project Manager as work progresses along the corridors. No other T&E/wildlife issues, visually sensitive areas, cultural resources or other natural resource issues have been identified along the other work corridor.

Steep slopes and spanned canyons are present along the subject transmission line ROW. See Attachment A for treatment zone methods and planned herbicide use in these areas.

Prior to the beginning of the work, the contractor will be provided with a set of the project maps, as well as with a list of management prescriptions from the Vegetation Management EIS.

The herbicides used for vegetation management will be consistent with what is specified in the Vegetation Management EIS.

4. Determine vegetation control and debris disposal methods.

A licensed contractor would undertake the proposed work. The unwanted vegetation would be removed by employing mulching, lop and scatter methods and follow-up stump treatment with Garlon 3A and 4. The chemical means would be employed to prevent resprouts from the cut stumps. Prevention of resprouts encourages low-growing plant communities to establish themselves and flourish on the right-of-way. This impact avoidance approach both maximizes the use of limited resources and minimizes environmental impacts. Herbicides used would be applied by licensed applicators following manufacturers' label instructions and BPA's management prescriptions. Herbicide used would be consistent with the guidance outlined in the Vegetation Management EIS.

Treatments on the steep slopes and spanned canyons will be consistent with that outlined in the Vegetation Management EIS and as shown on Attachment A.

The contractor will receive a list of required mitigation measures (management prescriptions) to follow as well as a set of maps delineating the transmission line and potential sensitive resource areas. The contractor will follow manufacturers' label instructions when applying herbicides.

5. Determine revegetation methods, if necessary.

No re-vegetation will be conducted at this time.

6. Determine monitoring needs.

An inspector will monitor the work being performed at the time of the initial work. Follow-up inspections will be preformed during routine regular patrols. Additional required work would be identified at that time.

7. Prepare appropriate environmental documentation.

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.

/s/ Mark Martin
Mark Martin
Environmental Protection Specialist - KEPR

CONCUR: */s/ Thomas C. McKinney* DATE: *5/15/01*
Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

cc:
K. Nakata – DOE/EH-42
M. Hermeston – KEP-4
J. Meyer – KEP-4
M. Martin – KEPR/Covington
J. Sharpe – KEPR-4
P. Key – LC-7
D. Hollen – TF/DOB-1
S. Davis – TFN/Snohomish
L. Alverez – TFN/Snohomish
D. Hoxworth – TFNK/Covington
Environmental File – KEC (EQ-14)
Official File – KEP-4 (EQ-14)

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