



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 61409
Vancouver, WA 98666-1409

TRANSMISSION SERVICES

March 24, 2023

In reply refer to: TEPL-TPP-1

To: People interested in the Richland Substation to Stevens Drive Transmission Line Rebuild Project

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to rebuild an existing transmission line in your area. This letter explains what is being proposed, outlines our anticipated environmental review process and schedule, and invites you to a public meeting where you can learn more and comment about the proposal.

Proposal: BPA proposes to rebuild an approximately 3-mile-long segment of the White Bluffs to Richland No. 1 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line from Stevens Drive Substation south to the Richland Substation within the City of Richland, Washington (see enclosed project map). The rebuild is necessary to ensure unplanned outages in the Tri-Cities area are less likely to occur. Over the past five years, the BPA transmission system has experienced 15 unplanned outages on the Richland – Stevens Drive 115 kV line. Six of these outages were resolved by dispatchers who were able to remotely reclose breakers to restore service without investigation or repairs. Five of these outages occurred during peak loading periods in the spring and summer. If BPA takes no action, these outages could increase in frequency and result in longer, more widespread power interruptions to customers in the area.

The project is needed as BPA has obligations to ensure that its transmission system is safe and reliable, and has sufficient capability to serve its customers and to prevent overloading under certain outage conditions of other transmissions lines. Between Stevens Drive and Richland substations, the existing transmission line is a single circuit line consisting of wood H-frame and monopole structures. The existing line would be rebuilt as a 115-kV double circuit transmission line (i.e., two transmission lines on the same structure) on steel monopole structures. Along the existing transmission line corridor, the work would include replacing the existing conductors, H-frame wood pole structures, wood monopoles, selected steel structures, and all hardware. Rebuilding the transmission line would also require equipment upgrades at BPA's Richland Substation and City of Richland's Thayer Drive, Stevens Drive, First Street, and White Bluffs substations.

To facilitate the removal of the existing White Bluffs to Richland No. 1 transmission line, the proposed work would take place at the substations and each structure located along the transmission line. The design of new steel monopoles versus wood pole transmission line would reduce the total number of structures along the transmission line corridor. Some structures would be installed in the same place as the existing transmission structures; however, alternative locations would be required to accommodate new steel monopoles. All structures, regardless of their placement, would be expected to remain in the existing established transmission line right-of-way (ROW) or additional easements would be obtained.

Environmental Review: To understand the potential environmental impacts of this proposal, BPA may prepare an environmental assessment (EA). If BPA determines that an EA should be prepared, the EA will describe anticipated impacts to natural and human resources and include mitigation measures that

would help avoid or minimize impacts. **We are asking for your comments to help determine the issues that should be addressed in the environmental review.** During this process, BPA will work with Federal, State, and local agencies, Tribes, potentially affected landowners, and other interest groups. The proposed schedule for the environmental review process is as follows:

Comment scoping period	March 24, 2023 thru April 26, 2023
Public scoping meeting	April 12, 2023
EA determination (if warranted)	Summer 2023
Draft EA available for public comment (if warranted)	Summer 2023
Final EA (if warranted)	Winter/Spring 2024
Finding of No Significant Impact (if warranted)	Winter/Spring 2024
If decision to build, construction start	Summer/Fall 2024

Public Meeting: We have scheduled a scoping meeting to answer questions and accept comments about the scope of the environmental review:

April 12, 2023
6:00 pm -8:00 pm
Richland Public Library
955 Northgate Drive
Richland, WA 99352

How to Comment: Please submit your comments by April 26, 2023, and reference the Richland-Stevens Drive Transmission Line Rebuild Project. All comments will be available on the project website at www.bpa.gov/nepa/richland-stevens-drive. There are several ways to comment:

Mail: Bonneville Power Administration Public Affairs – DKE-7 P.O. Box 14428 Portland, OR 97291-4428	Toll-free: 800-622-4519 FAX: 503-230-4019 Online: www.bpa.gov/comment
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For More Information: BPA staff or contractors are already in the area conducting 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. Please note that separate from this process, regular line and vegetation maintenance activities may continue to occur along the line to keep it safely operating.

If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact the Environmental Protection Specialist, Christopher Furey, toll-free at 800-622-4519, directly at 503-230-3371, or by e-mail at chfurey@bpa.gov.

If you have other questions or would like more project information, please call me at the toll-free number listed above, directly at 360-619-6234, or by e-mail at tawehner@bpa.gov.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

/s/ Todd Wehner
Todd Wehner
Transmission Project Manager

Enclosures: Project Map, Comment Form, Return Envelope