

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: February 12, 2007

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS
(DOE/EIS-0285/SA-330- Sandcreek Bonners Ferry #1 and #2, 1/1 to 27/6)
Project #. V-S-07/02

TO: Tom Murphy
Natural Resource Specialist – TFS-Bell-1

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management along the Sandcreek-Bonners Ferry #1 and #2, 115 & 230 kV Transmission Line Corridor Right of Way (ROW) from structure 1/1 to 27/6.

Location: The project is located in both Bonner and Boundary County, Idaho in the Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) Spokane Region.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration

Description of the Proposal: BPA proposes to remove tall growing and noxious vegetation from the right of way and access roads that can potentially interfere with the operation, maintenance, and reliability of the transmission lines. Tall growing and noxious vegetation, danger trees and reclaim trees will be removed and/or controlled inside the ROW using selective and nonselective methods that may include hand cutting, mowing, and herbicidal treatment.

Vegetation management will occur between structures 1/1 to 27/6 in selected spans of the subject transmission line. This proposal covers the right-of-way width of 100 feet totaling approximately 327 acres of potential treated area.

The proposed action will allow safe and timely access to the subject transmission line structure which will help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region. All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards.

Analysis: A Vegetation Management Checklist was completed for this project in accordance with the requirements identified in the Bonneville Power Administrations Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285).

Land along the project corridor consists of private industrial forest property (60%), small woodlot owners (30%) and cultivated fields (10%). Primary uses for lands within the project area include timber production, grazing, game hunting and recreational uses.

The ROW crosses several water resources (wetlands, streams, etc) which should be considered fish bearing. No other agencies or Tribal involvement exists.

Section 3 of the checklist identifies the natural resources present in the area of the proposed work. The following summarizes natural resources occurring in the project area along with applicable mitigation measures.

Water Resources: Water bodies (streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands) occurring in the project area are listed in Section 3.1 of the Vegetation Management Checklist. Trees in riparian zones will be selectively cut to include only those that are within 50 feet of the conductor at maximum sag. Trees will be topped where shrubs are not present to provide shade and a silt buffer. No ground disturbing vegetation management methods will be implemented thus minimizing the risk for soil erosion and sedimentation near water bodies.

The following project specific herbicides may be applied by hand using the specified buffer from any water resource (stream, wetland or sensitive habitat):

| Herbicide | Buffer Widths | |
|------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | Spot | Localized |
| Garlon 3A | up to edge | up to edge |
| Glyphosate | 25 feet from edge | 35 feet from edge |
| Garlon 4 | 35 feet from edge | 100 feet from edge |

No drinking water, irrigation wells, or water supplies were identified along the rights of way.

Threatened and Endangered Species and Habitats: Pursuant to its obligations under the Endangered Species Act, BPA has made a determination of whether its proposed project will have any effects on any listed species. A species list was reviewed from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on January 15, 2007, identifying threatened and endangered species and Critical Habitat Units potentially occurring in the project area. In addition, a review of species under the jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries was conducted.

The following species were identified as occurring within ½ mile of the project area: Bald eagle and Bull trout. By implementing the conservation and avoidance measures mentioned in the Effects Determination for this project, a determination of “No Effect” was made for all ESA listed species, designated critical habitat and Essential Fish Habitat waters that occur in the project area.

Cultural Resources: Vegetation management activities are not anticipated to affect cultural resources. If archaeological material is discovered during the course of vegetation management activities, all work will be halted and the appropriate tribe, the BPA Environmental Representative and the BPA archaeologist will be notified.

Monitoring: The right-of-way identified in the checklist will be inspected after completion of the work to determine if all hazard trees have been removed from these areas. Re-seeding using a native seed mix will occur as necessary to stabilize traveled surfaces. Follow up monitoring for vegetation control will occur in the fall of 2007 and the summer of 2008.

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. This Supplement Analysis also finds the proposed actions will not affect threatened or endangered species. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Joseph C. Sharpe (for)

Michael A. Rosales

Physical Scientist - Environmental

CONCUR: /s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 02-13-07

Attachment:

Vegetation Management Checklist/Detail Sheets

Effects Determination