

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: April 17, 2007

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285/SA-334-Covington-Creston #1 and Covington-Duwamish #1 Transmission Line Vegetation Management) **Project #: V-N-07/01**

TO: Don Atkinson
Natural Resource Specialist – TFN-Snohomish

Proposed Action: The project activities will be conducted along the Right-of-Way (ROW) of the 230 kV Covington-Creston # 1 transmission line corridor between Covington and Creston substations. The corridor along this section includes the 230 kV Covington-Duwamish #1 and averages 250 feet in width and crosses approximately 11 miles of terrain through urban, rural, residential, grazing land, business/light industrial and King County Parks.

Location: The project is located in BPA's Snohomish Region in King County, Washington.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

Description of the Proposal: BPA is proposing to conduct vegetation control activities along its Covington-Creston #1 and Covington-Duwamish #1 Transmission line corridor to remove Douglas fir, True Fir, Poplar, Hemlock, Red Alder, Big Leaf Maple and Cottonwood trees present in the ROW. This will allow low growing plant communities to get established, reducing the number of invasive weeds. The noxious weeds to be controlled are Scotch broom and Himalayan blackberry.

Vegetation will be removed using manual or mechanical methods. Debris will be disposed of using either chip, lop and scatter or mulching techniques. All debris will be scattered along the ROW.

Herbicides will be selectively applied using stump treatment applications to prevent resprouting. Garlon 4 (33% Triclopyr) and WEB Oil in accordance with label directions in non-water resource areas, buffer 35 feet for treatments, or per local ordinance for broadcast treatments.

The project is to be completed by the end of summer of 2007. Follow-up foliar treatment of resprouts will occur 6-12 months later using the following mixture: 1.5% Garlon 4 (33% Triclopyr), 5% WEB Oil, and 93.5% water 100 feet from water's edge for Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed waterways (if present). Garlon 3A will be used to spot treat to water's edge.

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

The following summarizes natural resources occurring in the project areas along with applicable mitigation measures.

Water Resources: Waterbodies (streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands) occurring in the project area are listed on the Vegetation Prescription Checklist. Trees in riparian zones will be selectively cut to include only those that will grow into the minimum approach distances of the conductor at maximum sag. Shrubs will not be cut that are less than 10 feet high where ground to conductor clearance allows. No ground disturbing vegetation management methods will be implemented thus eliminating the risk for soil erosion and sedimentation near the streams. Adjacent to water resources only spot (cut-stump) and localized chemical treatments using practically non-toxic triclopyr (TEA) will be used.

Private water wells/springs were identified along the right of way. No herbicide application will be made within a 164-foot radius of the wellhead/spring as specified in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). For location information, see section 3.2 of the attached project checklist.

Threatened and Endangered Species: Pursuant to its obligations under the Endangered Species Act, BPA has made a determination of whether the proposed project will have an effect on any listed species. A species list was obtained from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) website in February 2007 for threatened and endangered species potentially occurring in the project area. In addition, a review of species under the jurisdiction of (NOAA) Fisheries was conducted. A determination of "No Effect" was made for all ESA listed species and designated critical habitat for the project.

Essential Fish Habitat: A review of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) database identified Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) streams occurring in the project area. Measures identified for water resources will be followed for EFH. A determination was made that this project will have "No Effect" on essential fish habitat.

Cultural Resources: No cultural resources are known for the project area. If a site is discovered during the course of vegetation control, work will be stopped at that location and the BPA Environmental Specialist, and the BPA archeologist will be contacted.

Re-Vegetation: Native grasses are present on the entire right-of-way and are expected to seed into the areas that will have lightly disturbed soil predominately located on the right-of-way roads.

Monitoring: The entire project will be inspected during the work period. Additionally, monitoring for the follow-up herbicide treatment will be in 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/ Shawn Barndt

Shawn L. Barndt

Environmental Scientist

CONCUR: /s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: April 19, 2007

Attachments:

Vegetation Prescription Checklist

Effects Determination