DOE F 1325.8-e Electronic Form Approved by CGIR - 01/20/95
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United States Government **Department of Energy**

Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: MAR 1 1 2009

REPLY TO ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285/SA-394 Green Bluf Tapp to Bell-Trentwood #2 Transmission Line Corridor)
Project No. **PP&A1196**

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

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management along the Green Bluff Tap to Bell-Trenwood #2, 115 kV Transmission Line Corridor Right of Way (ROW) from structure 1/1 to 8/3.

Location: The project is located in Spokane County, Washington.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposal: BPA proposes to remove tall growing and noxious vegetation from the right of way, structure sites, and access roads that can potentially interfere with the operation, maintenance, and reliability of the transmission lines. All vegetation management activities will be performed in accordance with the BPA Master Agreement Statement of Work for Vegetation Control on Bonneville Power Administration Transmission Line Rights-of-Way (MA) and in accordance with the specific details identified on the vegetation management checklist and detail sheet.

Tall growing and noxious vegetation 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. Danger trees adjacent to the right of way will also be removed and/or controlled. Low growing vegetation will be protected along the ROW with the exception of brush at the base of transmission structures, tower sites and within access roads. This proposal covers 65 acres of transmission line right of way, 36 transmission sites and 1.4 miles of access roads scheduled for vegetation control.

Initial treatment will begin in 2009 and the transmission line right of way, structure sites and access roads will be maintained on a 5-year cycle.

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

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

Land along the project ROW consists of private woodlot ownership, some of which is managed for occasional cattle grazing. The ROW crosses or is located within ½ mile of water resources which have the potential to be fish bearing. There are no other agencies or Tribes involved.

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 10 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. Only BPA-approved herbicides using the specified buffer width from the edge of any water resource will be used for stump treatment. 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 December 2008 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.

There are no ESA listed species or Designated Critical Habitat or Essential Fish Habitat present in or near the project area. A determination of "No Effect" was made for all ESA listed species, designated critical habitat and Essential Fish Habitat for the project.

Cultural Resources: Vegetation management activities are not anticipated to affect cultural resources as there will not be any ground disturbing activities. 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 ROW identified in the checklist will be inspected after completion of the work to determine if all target vegetation has 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 combine work in progress inspections and next-season site reviews to determine the effectiveness of control methods.

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.

Michael A. Rosales
Physical Scientist - Environmental

CONCUR: Katherine S Pierce DATE: March 11, 2009
Katherine Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachment:
Vegetation Management Checklist
Effects Determination

cc:
K. Pierce – KEC-4
J. Meyer – KEP-4
M. Rosales – KEPR-Bell-1
J. Sharpe – KEPR-4
H. Adams – LC-7
D. Labrosse – TFS-Bell-1
L. Benzinger – TFSF-Bell
Official File – KEP-4 (EQ-14)

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