

memorandum

DATE: March 15, 2011

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285/SA 442) - Bell Complex fee owned land), Project No. PP&A 1894

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

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management within Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) fee owned land surrounding the Bell Complex.

Location: The project is located in Spokane County, Washington; T26N R43E S16

Proposed by: BPA

Description of the Proposal: BPA proposes to remove tall growing and noxious vegetation from the rights-of-way (ROW), structure sites and access roads within BPA's fee owned land surrounding the Bell Complex that can potentially interfere with the operation, maintenance and reliability of the various 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 and in accordance with the specific details identified in the vegetation management checklist and detail/prescription sheet.

Tall growing and noxious vegetation and reclaim trees will be removed and/or controlled inside the 4-mile long ROW using selective and nonselective methods that may include hand cutting, mowing and herbicidal treatment. Danger trees adjacent to the ROW 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.

Debris disposal will be a by mechanical chipping. Re-seeding using a native seed mix will occur as necessary to stabilize traveled surfaces. Germination success will be monitored during the next growing season and follow-up seeding will be performed as needed. Initial treatment will begin in 2011 and the transmission line ROW, structure sites and access roads will be maintained on an 8-year cycle.

The proposed action will allow safe and timely access to the various transmission lines, 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 BPA's Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285).

Land along the project ROW consists of BPA fee owned land. No other agency or tribal involvement exists.

Section 3 of the checklist identifies any 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 resources are not present within project area.

Threatened and Endangered Species and Habitats: Pursuant to its obligations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), 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) in March 2011, 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 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries was conducted.

There are no ESA-listed species, 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 from any ground disturbing activities.

However, Evergreen Cemetery is present within the project area. Vegetation management activities will not be performed within the cemetery area until consultation efforts with the Washington State Historic Preservation Office and affected tribes have been completed.

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. Follow up monitoring for vegetation control will combine work in progress inspections and next-season site reviews to determine the effectiveness of control methods. Follow-up herbicide application will be performed as needed 6 to 9 months after initial treatment.

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 Record of Decision, 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/ Philip W. Smith, for:
Michael A. Rosales
Physical Scientist - Environmental

CONCUR: /s/ Katherine S. Pierce
Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

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Attachments:
Vegetation Management Checklist
Vegetation Detail Sheets
Effects Determination

cc: