

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: July 29, 2003

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Grand Coulee-Bell 500-kV Transmission Line Project FEIS (DOE/EIS-0344/SA-1)) for Tower Design Change from Double Circuit to Single Circuit on Towers 82/5, 83/1, 83/2, and 83/3

TO: Mark A. Korsness,
Project Manager, Grand Coulee-Bell No. 6 Project

Proposed Action: Design Change for Four 500-kV lattice steel towers from Double Circuit to Single Circuit during Construction of Grand Coulee-Bell 500-kV Transmission Line (No. 6)

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration

Location: Mead, Washington, in Spokane County

Description of Proposal: During construction of the project, BPA proposes to construct towers 82/5, 83/1, 83/2, and 83/3 as single-circuit lattice steel towers, instead of the double-circuit design that was described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and ROD for the Grand Coulee-Bell 500-kV Transmission Line Project. As described in the FEIS, there is an unusually narrow segment of right-of-way in mile 83 (near Bell Substation) in Mead, Washington, where the line crosses State Highway 2 and E. Hawthorne Road. To provide a pathway for an additional 500-kV line sometime in the future, the Proposed Action in the Final EIS included about one mile of double-circuit towers (two lines or circuits on the same tower) for this area. Four of the towers were to be double-circuit lattice steel. This would allow BPA the option of routing a second line out of BPA's Bell Substation through this narrow right-of-way and onto the wider right-of-way heading west, if another 500-kV transmission line were needed sometime in the future.

Additional studies of the transmission system needs have been completed since the Final EIS and ROD. These show that it is unclear as to when, or if, a new 500-kV transmission line might be needed, or which direction out of Bell Substation a future line would take. Therefore, at this time we propose to construct a single-circuit 500-kV lattice steel transmission line through this section instead of the four double-circuit towers originally proposed. The single-circuit towers would be a delta configuration that would match the rest of the towers on the line.

Analysis: Evaluation of the proposal to change the design from double-circuit to single-circuit for the four towers through the narrow portion of right-of-way is not a significant change or amendment to the project. There is no significant change to impact analysis or outcomes, with the exception of lessening the visual impacts, because the single-circuit towers are 50 feet shorter and less massive than the double-circuit towers originally proposed. A slightly smaller area of vegetation would need to be cleared for the single-circuit towers. The public health and safety impacts would remain the same for the single-circuit line, having a moderate to high impact on uses of the right-of-way. Impact levels are dependent on public and occupational use

of the land. A high impact precludes the use of the right-of-way or nearby areas for pre-existing activities. A moderate impact alters pre-existing right-of-way activities on or near the ROW.

Findings: This Supplement Analysis finds that 1) the proposed action is substantially consistent with the Grand Coulee-Bell 500-kV Transmission Line Project FEIS (DOE/EIS-0344) and Record of Decision; and 2) there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed action or its impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Inez S. Graetzer 7-29-2003

Inez S. Graetzer
Environmental Project Lead for
Grand Coulee-Bell 500-kV Transmission Line Project EIS

CONCUR: /s/ Thomas C. McKinney

DATE: 7-29-2003

Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

cc:

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