

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: January 22, 2007

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS
(DOE/EIS-0285/SA-326) Benton - Franklin No. 1 & No. 2 **Project #: V-P-07/02**

TO: Bill Erickson
Natural Resource Specialist – TFP/WALLA WALLA

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management will be performed along the Benton – Franklin No. 1 and No. 2, 115 kV Transmission Line Corridor, between structures 4/2 and 4/3.

Location: The project line is located in Franklin County, Washington and is located in BPA's Walla Walla Region.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

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. Unwanted, 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. Vegetation management work will occur in the transmission line corridors described above. The entire easement widths of all subject lines will be managed. The total project area consists of approximately 2.6 acres

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).

The subject corridor traverses agricultural land. The Landowner will be notified of the upcoming work by letters.

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. Shrubs will not be cut that are less than 10 feet high where ground to conductor clearance is more than 50 feet.

Low pressure ground disturbing vegetation management methods will be implemented thus minimizing the risk for soil erosion and sedimentation near the streams. Aquatic formulations of Triclopyr TEA (common formulations Garlon 3A & Tahoe 3A) may be applied within 35 foot buffer for non ESA streams and 100 feet for ESA streams. Spot or localized applications may be applied up to the waters edge.

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 current species list was obtained from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) 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 federally listed ESA listed species and designated critical habitat for the project.

Essential Fish Habitat: A review of 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 ground disturbing activities are planned for this project which may affect the cultural resources, however, if a site is discovered during the course of vegetation control, work will be stopped in the vicinity and the BPA Environmental Specialist, and the BPA archeologist will be contacted.

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)

Oden W. Jahn
Physical Scientist

CONCUR: /s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 1-22-07

Attachments:
Vegetation Management Checklist
Effects Determination