

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: April 4, 2007

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS
(DOE/EIS-0285/SA-338- Priest River Tap to Albeni Falls-Sand Creek #1, 1/1 to 3/20)
Project No. V-S-07/05

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

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management along the Priest River Tap to Albeni Falls-Sand Creek #1, 115 kV Transmission Line Corridor Right of Way (ROW) from structure 1/1 to 3/20.

Location: The project is located in Bonner County, Idaho in the Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) Spokane Region.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration

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. Tall growing and noxious vegetation, danger trees 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. Low growing vegetation will be protected along the right of way with the exception of at structure sites and access roads.

Vegetation management will occur between structures 1/1 to 3/20 of the subject transmission line. This proposal covers the right-of-way width which varies from 50 to 55 feet totaling approximately 68 acres of treated area.

The proposed action will allow safe and timely access to the subject transmission line structure which will help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region. All work 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 Bonneville Power Administrations Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285).

Land along the project ROW consists of private ownership and is managed for timber and small woodlot production. Approximately 10% of the project area is cultivated fields and open range.

The ROW crosses or is located within ½ mile of water resources some of which may be fish bearing streams.

No other agency or Tribal involvement exists.

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. No ground disturbing vegetation management methods will be implemented thus minimizing the risk for soil erosion and sedimentation near water bodies.

The following project specific herbicides will be applied by hand using the specified buffer width from the edge of any water resource (stream, wetland or sensitive habitat):

Herbicide	Buffer Widths	
	Spot	Localized
Garlon 3A	up to edge	up to edge
Glyphosate	25 feet from edge	35 feet from edge
Garlon 4	35 feet from edge	100 feet from edge

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 March 27, 2007, 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 fish species 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 right-of-way identified in the checklist will be inspected after completion of the work to determine if all hazard trees have 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 occur in the fall of 2007 and summer of 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/ Michael A. Rosales

Michael A. Rosales
Physical Scientist - Environmental

CONCUR /s/Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: April 6, 2007

Attachment:
Vegetation Management Checklist
Effects Determination