

**Supplement Analysis**  
for the  
**Transmission System Vegetation Management Program EIS**  
(DOE/EA/EIS-0285/SA-826)

**Pollution Prevention and Abatement Project Number 4,841**  
**Natural Resource Specialist/Project Manager: Cozette DeTray, TFBV-BELL-1**

Bonneville Power Administration  
Department of Energy



**Proposed Activities**

BPA proposes to remove approximately 480 danger trees within and immediately adjacent to the right-of-way (ROW) of the Walla Walla-Tucannon River No. 1. high-voltage transmission corridor. The sections of the corridor in the proposed project area are located in Walla Walla and Columbia counties, Washington. The corridor measures between approximately 100 feet in width and, in total, approximately 15 miles of corridor would be treated. The purpose of the proposed action is to protect the power system by minimizing the risk of trees contacting energized transmission lines.

BPA defines danger trees as those trees with a 50 percent or greater probability of structural failure within five years due to physical damage or environmental conditions. This project would utilize conventional cutting methods to cut trees. Prescriptions for retention or removal of cut trees are dependent on the area and volume in which they occur. All debris would be disposed of onsite, along the ROW, using cut, lop, and scatter techniques and in accordance with underlying landowner agreements.

The corridor runs primarily through private farm and timber land in rural Washington. Letters, on-site meetings, emails, and phone calls would be used to notify landowners approximately three weeks prior to commencing vegetation management activities. Door hangers would also be used at properties where special treatments are anticipated. Any additional measures proposed by landowners or land managers through ongoing communication would be incorporated into the vegetation management plan during project implementation.

**Analysis**

A Vegetation Control Cut Sheet was developed for this corridor that incorporated the requirements identified in BPA's Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS and Record of Decision (August 23, 2000). The following summarizes natural resources occurring in the project area along with applicable mitigation measures outlined in the Vegetation Control Cut Sheets.

**Water Resources**

Water bodies (streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands) occurring in the project area are noted in the Vegetation Control Cut Sheets. Trees in riparian zones would be selectively cut to include only those that would grow into the minimum approach distances of the conductor at maximum sag; other trees would be left in place or topped to preserve shade. Shrubs that are less than 10-feet high would not be cut where

ground to conductor clearance allows. No ground-disturbing vegetation management methods would be implemented, thus eliminating the risk for soil erosion and sedimentation near the streams.

#### Endangered Species Act and Magnuson-Stevens Act

Pursuant to its obligations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), BPA made a determination of whether its proposed project would have any effects on any ESA-listed species. A species list was obtained for federally-listed, proposed, and candidate species potentially occurring within the project boundaries from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Based on the ESA review conducted, BPA made a determination that the project would have “No Effect” for all ESA-listed species and designated critical habitat under USFWS’ jurisdiction.

BPA conducted a review of ESA-listed species, designated critical habitat, and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) (as defined by the Magnuson-Stevens Act), under the jurisdiction of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Given the scope of project work, there would be no effect to ESA-listed fish species and designated critical habitat under NMFS’ jurisdiction. BPA made a determination that the project would have “No Effect” for all ESA-listed fish species and designated critical habitat under NMFS’ jurisdiction, and the project would not adversely affect EFH.

#### Cultural Resources

On July 15th, 2022, BPA engaged in consultation with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Nez Perce Tribe, and the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). BPA developed an area of potential effect (APE) for the project and sent determination letters stating that the undertaking would have no adverse effect to historic properties to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Nez Perce Tribe, and the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). The Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) responded in concurrence to BPA’s determination of no effect. The Nez Perce Tribe and the Umatilla Indian Reservation did not respond regarding the determination during the statutory 30-day comment period. If a site is discovered during the course of vegetation control, work would be stopped in the vicinity and the BPA Environmental Specialist and the BPA archaeologist would be contacted.

#### Re-Vegetation

Existing naturalized grasses and woody shrubs are present on the entire ROW and are expected to naturally seed into the areas that would have lightly-disturbed soil predominantly located on the ROW roads.

#### Monitoring

The entire project would be inspected during the work period - October 2022 through September 2023. A follow-up treatment may occur after the initial treatment. Additional monitoring for follow-up treatment would be conducted as necessary. A vendor scorecard would be used to document formal inspections and would be filed with the contracting officer.

#### Findings

BPA finds that the types of actions and the potential impacts related to the proposed activities have been examined, reviewed, and consulted upon and are similar to those analyzed in the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285) and ROD. There are no substantial

changes in the EIS's Proposed Action and no significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns bearing on the EIS's Proposed Action or its impacts within the meaning of 10 CFR § 1021.314(c)(1) and 40 CFR §1502.9(d). Therefore, no further NEPA analysis or documentation is required.

*/s/ Zoe Wellschlager*  
Zoe Wellschlager, EPR-4  
Physical Scientist

Concur:

*/s/ Sarah T. Biegel*  
Sarah T. Biegel                      Date: October 3, 2022  
NEPA Compliance Officer

References:  
Vegetation Control Cut Sheets

CC:

Z. Wellschlager – EP-4

C. Colson – EP-AMPN-2

O. Jahn – EPI-4

C. Browning – EPR-COVINGTON

S. Barndt – EPR-TRI CITIES

M. Burgan – TFBV-BELL-1

C. DeTray – TFBV-BELL-1

Official File – EP (EQ-13-SA)

ZWELLSCHLAGER:zw:360-904-1212:9-29-2022:W:\EP\2022 Files\EQ-13 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)\SA\Walla Walla-Tucannon Rvr. FY23 DTs\SA\_826\_EP\_Veg Management\_WAWA-TUCR-1\_FY23\_DT.docx