

# memorandum

DATE: April 1, 2014

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Central Ferry-Lower Monumental Transmission Line Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (DOE/EIS-0422/SA-01)

TO : Chad Hamel  
Project Manager –TEP-TPP-1

**Proposed Action:** Access Road Modifications

**Location:** Garfield, Columbia, and Walla Walla counties, Washington

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

**Description of the Proposed Action:** In 2011, BPA completed the Central Ferry-Lower Monumental Transmission Line Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (DOE/EIS-0422) and issued a Record of Decision (ROD) documenting BPA’s decision to build and operate the Central Ferry-Lower Monumental transmission line.

Construction of the transmission line is anticipated to start in spring 2014. During pre-construction planning and in response to landowner requests, modifications to the access road system described in the EIS were identified. The modifications include additional improvements and/or reconstruction of about 23 miles of existing access road and construction of 5 miles of new access road.

This supplement analysis was prepared to determine whether the access road system modifications are considered a significant new circumstance or information relevant to environmental concerns or considered a substantial change to the proposal relevant to environmental concerns, such that either would warrant the need for a supplemental EIS.

**Analysis:** With the access road system modifications, the Central Ferry-Lower Monumental Transmission Project is essentially the same as described in the 2011 Final EIS and ROD. The EIS analyzed impacts to 5 miles of road improvements and/or reconstruction and 38 miles of new road. The additional road work will be the same as described in Section 2.2 of the EIS— “...a 14-foot wide travel surface (wider on curves and turnarounds), with an approximately 20- to 40-foot wide total disturbance area (including drainage ditches). Roads would be rocked where needed for dust abatement, stability, and load bearing. Other improvements could include clearing brush; widening existing roads; improving or smoothing out curves for vehicle use; upgrading existing road surfaces from native to aggregate; and adding ditches and/or culverts, rolling dips, or waterbars. Drain dips or water bars may also be installed on steep slopes or where access roads cross drainages that carry seasonal runoff.”

In addition, the acquisition of easements required for new road will be the same as described in Section 2.2 of the EIS—“...20-foot wide easements for existing roads requiring various improvements and reconstruction and 50-foot wide easements for new access road construction.”

The 23 miles of road proposed for improvements/reconstruction were acknowledged in the EIS as travel routes that would be used for construction of the Central Ferry-Lower Monumental line. The 5 miles of proposed new road is spread over 5 areas, will be adjacent to the proposed right-of-way, and was identified by landowners to lessen impacts to their agricultural uses.

The proposed access road work will not impact Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed wildlife species (based on surveys conducted in August 2013). Although the existing roads proposed for improvements run through three locations of native vegetation that could potentially contain ESA-listed plant species, limiting work to the existing road prism in these areas will avoid impacts to possible plants present. Impacts to two state-sensitive burrowing owl burrows and two mule deer bedding areas near existing roads improvement areas will be avoided by limiting work to existing road prisms in these areas and implementing a February 15 to July 1 work timing restrictions in a 150-foot-wide area around identified burrows. Through the implementation of these mitigation measures in potentially sensitive areas, impacts of the proposed road improvements/reconstruction plan on wildlife and plant species are consistent with those described and evaluated in the Final EIS.

Construction of the new access roads will require clearing of predominantly disturbed, non-native grass and agricultural lands. No native grasslands, TES species, or TES habitat were identified in the new access road survey areas. Impacts to non-native vegetation types by the project will be consistent with impacts considered and evaluated in the Final EIS.

The road work will not impact known cultural resources (surveys conducted September 2013). A historic site found adjacent to an access road improvement area was determined not eligible for listing on the National Historic Registry, but will still be fenced off and avoided during construction. Survey reports and a no effect determination were submitted on January 23, 2014 and March 14, 2014 to consulting parties in accordance with the provisions in the Central Ferry-Lower Monumental 500-Kilovolt Transmission Line Project Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

In addition, the access road system modifications will not impact wetlands, waterbodies, fish, or recreation and impacts to visual resources, geology and soils, noise, transportation, air quality and socioeconomic will not differ from impacts described in the EIS.

Because the access road work will occur in the same vicinity and will be similar to road work analyzed in the EIS and impacts to resources will not significantly deviate from those described in the EIS, the modification to access road system does not represent a significant change in the project relevant to environmental concerns.

**Findings:** This Supplement Analysis finds that (1) the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Central Ferry–Lower Monumental 500-kilovolt Transmission Line Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (DOE/EIS-0422, February 2011), and; (2) there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange

Environmental Project Manager

Concur:

/s/ Stacy Mason

Stacy Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 1, 2014