



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 61409
Vancouver, WA 98666-1409

TRANSMISSION SERVICES

May 12, 2009

In reply refer to: TEP-TPP-3

To: People interested in the Hooper Springs Substation and Hooper Springs-Lower Valley Transmission Line Project (formerly the Caribou Valley Energy Project)

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to build a new 138/115-kilovolt (kV) substation near the City of Soda Springs, Idaho, and to partially fund construction by Lower Valley Energy (LVE) of a new 22-mile, double-circuit 115-kV transmission line. This letter invites you to comment on the preliminary environmental assessment (EA) BPA has prepared on the project.

Background

BPA needs to respond to a request from LVE to help LVE improve the stability and reliability of the transmission system in southeastern Idaho. LVE is an energy cooperative based in Wyoming and purchases power from BPA to serve their electric loads in eastern Idaho, northwestern Wyoming, and southwestern Montana.

LVE's system experiences extreme peaks in electrical load during winter, when electricity is needed for heat. If a transmission line serving the southern portion of LVE's system were to go out of service due to weather or some other event, it could cause voltage instability, and customers, including residential customers, could lose power and heat. Loads are also growing in the area about three percent each year. Because of the potentially life-threatening conditions that could occur if a line goes out of service, BPA needs to consider additional action to ensure the transmission system can adequately handle expected load growth in the area.

Project Description

BPA's proposed substation would be located next to PacifiCorp's Threemile Knoll Substation, a 345/138-kV substation that PacifiCorp has recently constructed near Soda Springs, Idaho. BPA's Hooper Springs Substation would connect to Threemile Knoll Substation so that BPA can serve LVE's proposed transmission line.

The proposed Hooper Springs-Lower Valley transmission line would be constructed, owned, operated, and maintained by LVE. BPA would partially fund, through a lease agreement, LVE's construction of this new transmission line. The proposed route for the transmission line crosses a portion of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest and Bureau of Land Management land and private land.

Preliminary Environmental Assessment

The EA describes the proposed project, alternatives including the no action alternative, potential environmental impacts of the alternatives, and mitigation measures. The EA also gives an assessment of the floodplains and wetlands potentially affected by the project in Caribou County, and lists proposed mitigation measures that could lessen or eliminate those impacts.

The EA or compact disc of the EA is enclosed if you requested it during the scoping period. Copies of the EA are also available at the local libraries listed on the next page. You can also request a copy by calling our toll-free document request line: (800) 622-4520 or view the EA online at www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/HooperSprings/.

How to Comment

BPA is accepting comments on the preliminary EA through **May 29, 2009**. You may submit comments online at: www.bpa.gov/comment, via mail to: Bonneville Power Administration, Public Affairs Office - DKE-7, P.O. Box 14428, Portland, OR, 97293-4428, or by fax to (503) 230-3285. You also may call us with your comment toll free at (800) 622-4519. Please reference "Hooper Springs Substation and Hooper Springs-Lower Valley Transmission Line Project" with your comments. BPA will post all comment letters in their entirety on BPA's Web site at www.bpa.gov/comment.

For More Information

If you have questions or would like more information about this project, you may call BPA toll free at (800) 622-4519, e-mail me at makorsness@bpa.gov, or call me at (360) 619-6326. If you have questions about the environmental process, you may call John Barco, Environmental Lead, toll-free at (800) 282-3713; direct at 503-230-3223; or email at jwbarco@bpa.gov.

You may also visit the project Web site at

www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission_Projects/. Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,



Mark Korsness
Project Manager

Enclosure:

Preliminary Environmental Assessment (if requested)

List of Libraries

Comment Form

List of Libraries

Boise Public Library - 0139
715 South Capitol Blvd.
Boise, ID 83702-7195

Grace Public Library
204 S. Main
Grace, ID 83241

Soda Springs Library
149 S. Main Street
Soda Springs, ID 83276