



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 491
Vancouver, Washington 98666-0491

TRANSMISSION SERVICES

December 21, 2009

In reply refer to: TEP-TPP-3

To: Parties Interested in the I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project

Thank you for taking the time to share your ideas and concerns about this project with us.

After several months of study, the Bonneville Power Administration has determined it will no longer consider four of the 52 potential route segments for its proposed I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project between the Castle Rock, Wash., area and Troutdale, Ore. The segments no longer being considered stretch from northeast of Amboy, Wash., to northwest of Camas, Wash., and are shown as segments 27, 31, 42 and 44, on the enclosed project map.

For the past few months, BPA has been identifying and investigating the potential line routes it will consider in its environmental review consistent with requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. BPA initially included the segments that are being eliminated from further consideration because they follow an existing vacant easement owned by PacifiCorp. The existing easement is only 100 feet wide. BPA would need to acquire 50 additional feet of right-of-way width to accommodate its proposed 500-kilovolt transmission line. After on-the-ground review, we have concluded this expansion is substantially less feasible than other segments. Other segments currently under consideration either already have a BPA line on an existing right-of-way or allow for wider study corridors in less populated areas. We will now devote our resources and efforts to studying these remaining segments.

BPA is proposing the I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project because congestion on its transmission system in southwest Washington and northwest Oregon has reached limits that now threaten power system reliability. BPA has not built new transmission in the area for 40 years. The agency has used a combination of aggressive conservation measures and technical solutions to keep pace with the area's energy needs.

Energy demand in the Portland/Vancouver area is generally forecast to grow at about 1 to 2 percent per year, including demand for new renewable energy resources. However, in recent years, growth has exceeded that amount and in some cases grown up to 5 percent per year.

Next Steps

BPA staff and contractors will continue studying the route segments and substation areas to collect more information for the draft environmental impact statement. You may see these specialists working in the area. They will either stay on existing rights-of-way or access only those properties that landowners have given BPA permission to enter.

In late January, the agency will conclude its scoping efforts by issuing a “scoping summary.” In spring 2010, the agency intends to release a more detailed description of the potential routing alternatives that it will consider. Between now and spring 2010, BPA may drop, modify and, possibly, add other segments. All alternatives will be evaluated and refined, and the draft EIS will include a thorough analysis of potentially viable alternatives. The draft EIS is slated for completion in early 2011. BPA will publicly circulate the draft EIS and take additional comments, after which it will prepare a final EIS. The agency expects to decide whether to build the line in 2012. At that time, if the decision is to build, a final route would be identified.

For more information

We are committed to keeping all parties – from individual landowners to state agencies and elected officials – fully informed at every step of the project by sharing information, providing timely updates and notifying them of changes. Please visit the project Web site at www.bpa.gov/go/I-5 if you would like more information.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

/s/ Mark Korsness, 12/21/09

Mark Korsness
Project Manager

Enclosure:
Updated I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project Study Area Map