



Transmission Business Policy

Environmental Impact Statement

The Bonneville Power Administration is committed to supplying and transmitting power reliably to the Pacific Northwest. As the leading provider of high-voltage electric transmission in the Northwest, BPA's lines carry power from dams and other power plants to public and private utility customers and direct-service industries throughout the Northwest region.

Project Description

BPA owns and operates over 15,000 miles of transmission lines in the Pacific Northwest. In addition to this regional transmission network, BPA operates large inter-regional transmission lines that connect to Canada, California, the Southwest and eastern Montana. New challenges to transmission activities continue to emerge, contributing to the difficulty of solving existing policy issues. To address these challenges, BPA's Transmission Business Line is developing a Transmission Business Policy Environmental Impact Statement.

The EIS will look at a broad range of policy options for supporting decisions on issues related to the planning, construction, operation and maintenance of the transmission infrastructure. In addition, it will support decisions on other issues associated with: non-wire options to improve reliability, the development of a Regional Transmission Organization, marketing, sales and rate-making obligations.

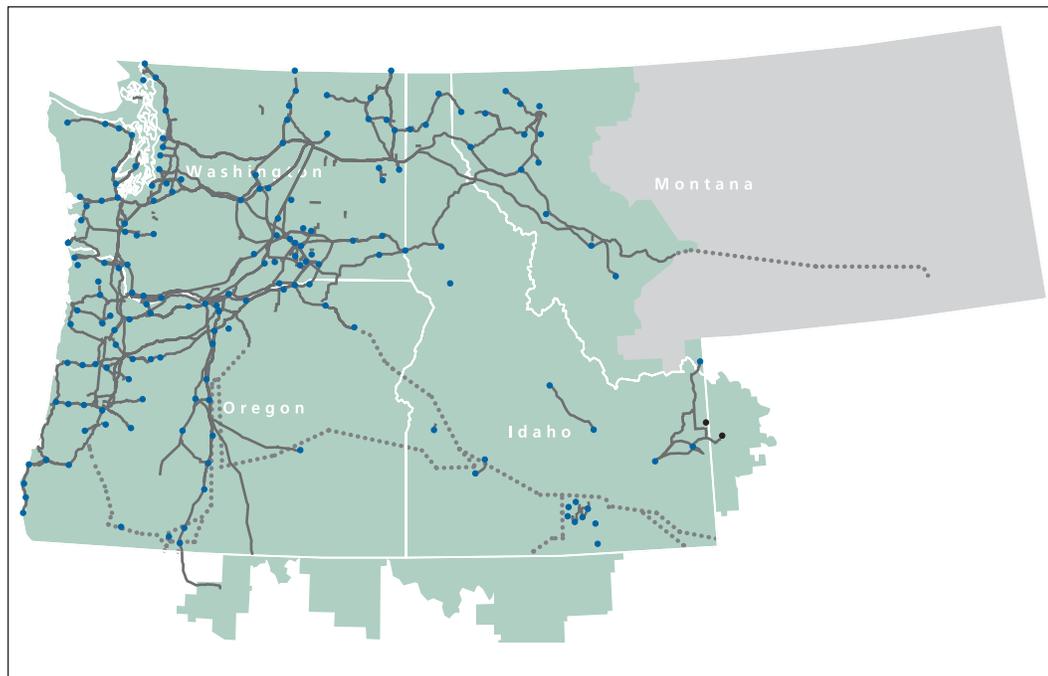
TBL is taking this opportunity to further its understanding of the environmental impacts of managing the Federal Columbia River Transmission System. This EIS will also help enhance and inform BPA's decisionmaking by providing a comprehensive and cumulative analysis of the many issues facing its TBL. Development of the EIS started in December 2003 and is scheduled to be complete June of 2005.

Goals of the Transmission Business Policy EIS

- **Identify key transmission issues and policy concerns.** This EIS will identify and explain different perspectives.
- **Analyze trade-offs among various benefits, costs and risks.** The EIS will enable BPA to evaluate such things as different kinds of investments, different business models, and other policy options that affect transmission reliability, availability, congestion, cost-effectiveness, regulatory change and others.
- **Set a foundation for deciding policy issues.** This document will provide a cumulative impact analysis of transmission issues and help in the resolution of many policy issues (e.g., RTO, tiered rates, infrastructure planning, non-wires solutions).
- **Allow BPA to be more responsive to future events.** Over time, BPA will need to take action in response to events such as the establishment of a national Energy Plan, demand for new products or services or new environmental requirements. The Transmission Business Policy EIS will better position the agency to make timely, informed decisions so actions can be implemented without unnecessary delays.



BPA Transmission Grid



- **Provide an enhanced understanding of transmission issues.** The Transmission Business Policy EIS will expand on the analysis of transmission in the Business Plan EIS and update our understanding of national and regional events that affect BPA's transmission business.
- **It provides a tool for BPA to help meet the intent of NEPA to fully inform the BPA administrator and the public on transmission decisions.** The Transmission Business Policy EIS will further the understanding of the information in the EIS and reaffirm the Tiered record of decision process to assure National Environmental Policy Act compliance for future BPA actions.

Decision Making

The development of the Transmission Business Policy EIS will result in the issuance of a record of decision. Prior to the completion of the Final EIS and issuance of the initial ROD, any TBL decisions, either on site-specific infrastructure projects or programs and policies, will have an independent NEPA analysis. The TBL will continue with its current decision-making strategy, supporting decisions with the appropriate NEPA analysis. NEPA compliance tools include EISs, environmental assessments, categorical exclusions, supplement analyses and RODs tiered off of the existing Business Plan EIS. After the administrator issues the initial Business Policy ROD, the TBL may support decisions on subsequent actions in tiered RODs.

Working with the Community

Public participation in the development of the environmental impact statement is critical. Public scoping meetings will be held this winter to answer questions and to refine the focus of the Business Policy EIS analysis. The information provided below will help you track activities and participate in the EIS process.

Schedule

The scoping period will be about 95 days, starting from the time of Federal Register publication of the Notice of Intent in December 2003 through March 31, 2004. Although the official scoping period will close at the end of March, we will continue to accept, and consider, comments until it is impractical to address them in the Draft EIS. Those late comments will be included with the comments received during the public and agency review of the Draft EIS, and considered in the Final EIS. Once the formal scoping is complete, it will take time to develop the draft document, seek additional feedback and then to finalize the EIS. The entire process is expected to be completed sometime in the first half of 2005.

Questions or Comments

If you have questions or would like more information about the project, please contact BPA Public Affairs toll free at 1-888-276-7790 or visit BPA's Web site at http://www2.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Policy_EIS/.