



## Department of Energy

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

TRANSMISSION BUSINESS LINE

June 25, 2004

In reply refer to: T-DITT-2

### **To: People Interested in the Schultz-Wautoma Transmission Line Project**

Bonneville Power Administration would like to update you on our progress in the construction of the new 63.7-mile Schultz-Wautoma 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line project. This project connects the Schultz Substation (north of Ellensburg) with a new substation (Wautoma Substation), two miles south of Highway 24 in Benton County. This letter briefly describes an update on construction activities and provides contact information if you have questions or would like additional project information.

#### **Background**

This project will improve reliability and ensure that BPA can continue to meet its statutory and contractual obligations to deliver power to where it is needed in Washington state and the Pacific Northwest. The new line will primarily use 500-kV, single-circuit steel lattice structures on new 150 to 180-foot wide right of way. Through an agricultural area near Mattawa, approximately nine miles of new line will replace the existing Midway-Vantage 230-kV line to reduce impacts to agriculture and residences. In the agricultural segment the 230-kV structures will be replaced with 500-kV double-circuit lattice structures, which will hold the new 500-kV line and the existing 230-kV line.

#### **Construction Activities**

Construction on the Wautoma Substation (south end of the project) started in April 2003 and will be complete in October 2005. All outdoor work, such as buildings and structures, has been completed at Wautoma. Work will continue on all indoor activities with the installations of wires and equipment. All implosive work for the installations of the conductors associated with the minor line work has been completed. The minor line and fiber construction started in January 2004 has been completed and the main Schultz-Wautoma line construction started in March 2004. All construction work should be completed by November 2005 and the line energized soon after.

The major line construction portion has started with installations of tower footings and new roads. Some existing roads will be reconstructed or improved as necessary. From now until July 2004, construction will be mainly between the existing Schultz Substation and the I-90 Interstate highway. Sometime in July, construction of access roads and installation of tower footings will move south of I-90 and continue towards the Wautoma Substation.

As part of the installation of tower footings, drilling and blasting may be needed to open holes in rock. In addition, tower bodies will be assembled in designated areas along the new transmission

line right of way. Towers are scheduled to be flown to the individual tower sites in winter 2004 or spring 2005. Installation of conductors will begin in the spring of 2005.

### **Crops and Potential Site Damage**

Representatives from BPA and the contractor are coordinating with landowners to minimize damage to crops, including applicable crop damage compensation. The contractor is taking precautions to avoid or minimize damage to crops, trees, irrigation lines, soils, etc. The contractor will also be saving topsoil for post-construction site restoration. In cultivated fields, large stones, deleterious material and debris will be set aside or removed prior to reseeded. The final site mitigation will consider the type of field, crop and landowner's preference. The landowner will be asked whether they prefer sterilized, weed-free mulch to be used, or the area be re-seeded with seed provided by the landowner or BPA. In non-cultivated areas, the contractor will re-seed the disturbed ground with a native grass seed mixture.

The contractor will also minimize impacts to the natural environment by staying only on designated roads and working in designated areas at each tower site. Construction activities are also being monitored where there are sensitive environmental areas (plants, animals and cultural) to make sure construction workers stay out of these sensitive areas. BPA and the contractor each have environmental staff helping workers stay out of sensitive areas.

### **For More Information**

For land or realty questions about the project, please call Realty Specialist Mari Rosales toll-free at 1-877-417-9454 or directly at 509-290-3389. For other information about the project, call toll free 1-888-276-7790. Project information is also posted on our web site at: [http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission\\_Projects/](http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission_Projects/). Thank you for your continued interest in this project.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Lou Driessen, 6/25/04*

Lou Driessen  
Project Manager