



United States Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Wenatchee Field Office
915 Walla Walla Avenue
Wenatchee, WA 98801-1521



United States Army
Yakima Training Center
Directorate of Public Works
970 Firing Center Road, Bldg 810
Yakima, WA 98901

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5101 (ORW020) WAOR 65753

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Vantage-Pomona Heights 230kV
Transmission Line Project

January 15, 2010

Dear Interested Party,

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the US Army Yakima Training Center (YTC) intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to address potential effects of granting a right-of-way to Pacific Power to build and operate a proposed new 230kV electric transmission line. The proposed transmission line is known as the Vantage-Pomona Heights 230kV Transmission Line Project. The BLM and YTC are seeking comments on this proposal to consider in the environmental analysis. Also, we invite you to participate in public meetings to learn more about the project.

Proposal: Pacific Power has applied for rights-of-way (ROW) for the use and occupation of BLM and YTC administered lands for construction and operation of a new 230kV transmission line. The new transmission line is being proposed to address customer reliability and energy demand growth in the Yakima region by providing a stronger transmission system that will serve growing needs while ensuring continued reliable service to existing customers. The Vantage-Pomona Heights 230kV Transmission Line Project also responds to the mandatory reliability standards of the National Energy Policy Act of 2005.

The new 230kV transmission line would be constructed from Pacific Power's existing Pomona Heights substation east of Selah, Washington to the Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) existing Vantage substation east of Wanapum Dam on the Columbia River (see attached map). Pacific Power desires to place the line in service in late 2012.

The BLM and YTC have identified three alternative routes for the proposed transmission line. These alternative routes vary in length from 38 to 60 miles in length and would include existing and new rights-of-way or parallel existing rights-of-way. The alternatives for the proposed line would pass through private, state and federally managed lands. Federally managed lands include lands administered by the BLM, US Army Yakima Training Center and the Bureau of Reclamation. The proposed alternatives are also shown on the enclosed map.

Agency Jurisdiction, Roles and Responsibilities: To understand the potential impacts of the proposed project, the BLM and YTC will prepare and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The BLM and YTC are joint lead federal agencies for the preparation of the EIS. The BLM and YTC will consult with affected landowners, Tribes and other federal, state and local agencies and interest groups.

The first step in the EIS process is to seek comments on the scope of the EIS to help identify potentially significant issues that may result from the proposed project. Information and comments from all interested and potentially affected parties, including landowners, citizens, tribes, government agencies and interest groups will help identify potential environmental impacts.

Once the scoping period ends, the BLM and YTC will use the comments received to begin work on the Draft EIS. The EIS will describe alternatives and identify potential environmental impacts and mitigation to reduce impacts. When complete the BLM and YTC will release the Draft EIS for public review and comment and will hold public meetings. The BLM and YTC will respond to comments on the Draft EIS in the Final EIS. After the BLM and YTC review all the information in the Final EIS they will make decisions about the project, which will be explained in a Record of Decision.

Public Scoping Meetings: The BLM and YTC will soon start to assess the potential impacts of the proposed project and would like to hear from you. What questions do you have? What resources should be analyzed? Do you have comments on the alternative transmission line routes? The agencies have scheduled two public scoping meetings to allow you the opportunity to provide comments, issues, concerns on the proposed project and issues to consider in the environmental analysis.

The meetings will be conducted in an "open house" format; no formal presentation will be given at the meetings. Maps and other information about the project will be available and BLM and YTC staff and the representatives from Pacific Power will be available to answer your questions, listen to your ideas and accept your comments. The open houses will be held in the following communities

Wednesday, February 3, 2010
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Selah Civic Center
216 S 1st Street
Selah, WA 98942

Thursday, February 4, 2010
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Mattawa Elementary School Cafeteria
400 N. Boundary
Mattawa, WA 99349

Others Ways to Comment: If you cannot come to one of the meetings, you can still comment. Please submit comments by **March 8, 2010**. Comments can be submitted by email to: OR_Wenatchee_Mail@blm.gov (please specify Vantage to Pomona Heights EIS in the subject line). You may submit written comments to: BLM Wenatchee Field Office, Attn: Vantage to Pomona Heights EIS, 915 Walla Walla Avenue, Wenatchee, WA 98801-1521 or by fax to (509/665-2121).

For More Information: Information on the Vantage-Pomona Heights 230kV Transmission Project is available at: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/spokane/plans/vph230.php>.

If you have questions about this project you may also contact the BLM representative, Bill Schurger, at (509) 655-2100.

Freedom of Information Act Considerations: Your input is important and will be considered in the environmental analysis process. Based on the issues identified, the agencies will decide the appropriate level of environmental analysis and documentation. All comment submittals must include the commenter's name and address. *Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment- including your personal information-may be made publically available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.*

Any person wanting to be added to a mailing list of interested parties can call or write to the BLM as described in this notice. If you would like to be removed from the mailing list for this project, please contact us by one of the methods specified above. We hope you will join us at one of the scoping meetings.

Sincerely

Karen Kelleher
Wenatchee Field Office Manager
Bureau of Land Management

Sincerely

Steven M. Kruger
Director of Public Works
Yakima Training Center