



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Spokane District
1103 N. Fancher Road
Spokane, Washington 99212

IN REPLY REFER TO:

2850 (ORW020)
WAOR 65753

October 21, 2016

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your review is the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for Pacific Power's proposed Vantage to Pomona Heights 230 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line Project (Project). On January 4, 2013, the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on the proposed Project for public review and comment. As a result of the comments received at public meetings and submitted in writing during the DEIS comment period, the BLM, Pacific Power and the U.S. Department of the Army Joint Base Lewis-McChord Yakima Training Center (JBLM YTC) met and identified an additional alternative route for analysis. This additional alternative route, the New Northern Route (NNR) Alternative, is located largely on JBLM YTC land. With development of the NNR Alternative, the BLM determined that a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) was required. On January 2, 2015, BLM released the SDEIS for public review and comment. The DEIS, SDEIS, and this FEIS collectively describe the proposed Project's Action Alternatives and identify direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the Action Alternatives as well as mitigation measures that could offset the potential impacts.

Pursuant to 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 1508.16, the BLM's Oregon/Washington Spokane District is the lead federal agency and, along with the Cooperating Agencies, is responsible for analyzing the effects of granting, granting with conditions, or denying Pacific Power's right-of-way (ROW) applications submitted to the federal agencies to construct, operate, and maintain the new 230 kV transmission line, associated access roads, and other ancillary facilities. The FEIS has been prepared in consultation with twelve (12) Cooperating Agencies and in compliance with the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1500). The JBLM YTC, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), Bonneville Power Administration, Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and Grant, Kittitas, and Yakima counties are the Cooperating Agencies that collaborated in the federal environmental review process and in the preparation of this FEIS.

This FEIS is not a decision document. The FEIS addresses public comments received on both the DEIS and SDEIS and considers the No Action Alternative and all nine of the Action Alternatives analyzed in the DEIS and SDEIS. The nine Action Alternatives considered in this FEIS range from 40.5 to 66.8 miles in length. The Action Alternatives cross federal land managed by BLM, JBLM YTC, Reclamation, and state land managed by WSDOT and DNR. Yakima, Kittitas, Benton, and Grant counties are crossed by the Action Alternatives considered in this FEIS. The information presented in the DEIS and the SDEIS have been combined in the FEIS for clarity and resource data and analyses have been updated as necessary for full disclosure of anticipated impacts for all of the proposed Project Action Alternatives. In order to provide maximum flexibility to the federal, state, and local decision makers and to incorporate all public review and input from the Cooperating Agencies, tribes, and interested parties, all alternatives are available for consideration up to the issuance of decision documents by the BLM, JBLM YTC,

Reclamation, and the other Cooperating Agencies with authorizations to grant and decisions to make regarding the proposed Project. Each Cooperating Agency will utilize their respective decision making processes where they have jurisdiction regarding the proposed Project.

Agency Preferred Alternative

Pursuant to 40 CFR § 1502.14(e), BLM, as the lead federal agency, has identified an Agency Preferred Alternative for this FEIS. The Agency Preferred Alternative presented in the DEIS and the SDEIS (Alternative D) has been changed to the NNR Alternative – Overhead Design Option in this FEIS. The NNR Alternative – Overhead Design Option has been selected as the Agency Preferred Alternative based on the analysis contained in the DEIS and SDEIS, in consideration of all of the Action Alternatives and their relative impacts on resources, preferences of the Cooperating Agencies and Tribal Representatives, and input received from the public via comments. The NNR Alternative – Overhead Design Option has also been identified as the Environmentally Preferred Alternative.

BLM's Decision on Pacific Power's Right-of-Way Application for BLM-administered Lands

The BLM will consider information contained in this FEIS when deciding whether to grant, grant with modifications, or deny Pacific Power's ROW application for use of BLM-administered lands. The BLM's decision will be documented in its record of decision.

FEIS Availability

The publication of the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency begins BLM's 30-day FEIS public availability period. The FEIS is available for review online at <http://1.usa.gov/1S4ssrO> and also in hardcopy at the following locations during regular business hours:

- Mattawa Community Library, 101 Manson Lane, Mattawa, Washington, (509) 932-5507.
- Terrace Heights Library, 4011 Commonwealth Rd, Yakima, Washington, (509) 457-5319.
- WSDOT South Central Region Office, 2809 Rudkin Road, Union Gap, Washington, (509) 577-1600.
- BLM, Wenatchee Field Office, 915 Walla Walla Ave, Wenatchee, Washington, (509) 665-2100.
- BLM, Spokane District Office, 1103 N. Fancher Rd., Spokane Valley, Washington, (509) 536-1200.

BLM along with all the Cooperating Agencies appreciate your continued participation in the state and federal environmental review processes for Pacific Power's proposed Vantage to Pomona Heights 230 kV Transmission Line Project.

For further information, please contact the BLM's Vantage to Pomona Heights FEIS Project Manager Robin Estes: telephone (541) 416-6728 or email: blm_or_vantage_pomona@blm.gov.

Sincerely,

Linda Clark
District Manager
BLM Coeur d'Alene and Spokane Districts

Enclosure