

# Scoping Report

## Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project

December 2013

DOE/EIS-0484



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# Table of Contents

	Page
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Scoping .....	1
2.1 Scoping Period.....	2
2.2 Scoping Meetings.....	2
3. Comments .....	3
3.1 General Comments.....	4
3.2 Substation Sites and Route Segments .....	4
3.3 Land Use .....	5
3.4 Recreation .....	5
3.5 Visual Resources.....	5
3.6 Noise .....	5
3.7 Public Health and Safety.....	6
3.8 Socioeconomics .....	6
3.9 Public Services and Utilities .....	7
3.10 Transportation .....	7
3.11 Historic and Cultural Resources .....	7
3.12 Geology and Soils.....	8
3.13 Watersheds and Water Quality .....	8
3.14 Vegetation .....	8
3.15 Fish and Wildlife.....	9
3.16 Climate Change.....	10
3.17 Energy and Natural Resources.....	10
3.18 Cumulative Impacts .....	11
4. Future Public Involvement.....	11
APPENDIX A.....	13

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## 1. Introduction

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to understand the potential environmental impacts of the Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project (Project). As currently proposed, the Project would consist of a combination of reinforcements at five existing BPA substations, placement of new conductor on sections of an existing BPA transmission line, and the addition of a new series compensation substation along an existing BPA transmission line corridor. BPA is preparing an EIS for the Project because it has determined that construction and operation of the system upgrades have the potential to result in significant impacts to the natural or human environment.

Substation reinforcements would occur at the Garrison and Hot Springs substations in Montana, the Dworshak and Hatwai substations in Idaho, and the Bell Substation in Washington. The substation reinforcements would involve the installation of new series capacitors at each substation site to handle increased transmission capacity by maintaining required voltage levels. The proposed line reconductoring would occur on four sections, totaling 12 miles, of the Dworshak-Taft No. 1 500-kilovolt (kV) line in Montana and Idaho. Conductor replacement along these sections is needed to handle the increased transmission capacity by maintaining required line clearance. The proposed series compensation substation would be added along the Garrison-Taft 500-kV line corridor in Montana. The series compensation substation would function to increase transmission capacity along the existing transmission lines. At present, eight potential locations for the new series compensation substation are being considered.

These proposed upgrades are needed to respond to requests for long-term firm transmission service that BPA has received for the West of Garrison and West of Hatwai transmission paths. The proposed upgrades would increase the firm east-to-west transfer capability from BPA's Garrison Substation in Western Montana to load centers located west of the Cascades and market hubs serving the entire Northwest power market.

The EIS will consider two alternatives which will be studied in detail: 1) full build-out of the proposed system upgrades described above; and 2) a "no action" alternative in which BPA would not upgrade its system and not be able to provide the requested transmission service. The EIS will describe the anticipated environmental impacts resulting from construction and operation of the proposed facilities and upgrades and will include mitigation measures to avoid or minimize impacts. During the EIS process BPA will work closely with federal, state and local agencies, tribes, landowners, and interest groups to ensure all environmental concerns are adequately addressed.

## 2. Scoping

Under NEPA, all federal agencies are mandated to consider environmental impacts for all federal government agency decision making. NEPA requires federal agencies to cooperate with other federal agencies and with state and local governments, and to involve public stakeholders or citizens. An early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying significant and non-significant issues related to the Proposed Action is required, known as "scoping." All persons and organizations with a potential interest in the Proposed Action, including federal, state, and local agencies; appropriate federally-recognized Indian tribes; interested stakeholders; and minority, low-income, or disadvantaged populations are solicited to participate in the NEPA environmental analysis process. Scoping helps ensure that the full range of issues related to a proposal are addressed and also assists in identifying significant or potentially significant impacts that may result from the proposed project.

## 2.1 Scoping Period

The scoping comment period for the Project began with publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on Thursday, May 3, 2012 (Federal Register /Vol. 77, No. 86/Notices). The NOI established a 45-day scoping comment period that was end on June 18, 2012. Subsequently, BPA extended the scoping comment period to July 2, 2012. Following the receipt and review of scoping comments received during the scoping period, BPA identified an additional series compensation substation option. The scoping period was reopened and extended to October 31, 2013 to allow comments on the new substation location option that was not previously identified. Throughout the scoping process, the public has been informed of project progress through the Federal Register and letters sent to the public, landowners, and other interested parties (Appendix A). Project updates and other project related information was made available on Project's website at: [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W). Additionally, contact information for the Environmental Project Manager and Project Manager was provided in the public letters and on the Project website.

## 2.2 Scoping Meetings

BPA held four separate scoping meetings in the project vicinity to give the public the opportunity to provide comments regarding the scope of the EIS. The dates and locations of the meetings are listed below:

May 22, 2012  
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Lewiston Community Center  
1424 Main Street  
Lewiston, Idaho 83501

May 23, 2012  
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Linwood Elementary School  
906 West Weile Avenue  
Spokane, Washington 99208

June 12, 2012  
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Missoula Fire Department (Station 4)  
3011 Latimor Street  
Missoula, Montana 59808

June 13, 2012  
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
St. Regis School  
6 Tiger Street  
St. Regis, Montana 59866

No formal presentations were given at the meetings. BPA staff members were available to provide information, answer questions, and accept oral and written comments. Comment cards and postage paid envelopes were also provided during the meetings.

### 3. Comments

Comments could be submitted in any of the following ways:

- Speaking at the scoping meetings
- By comment card provided during the scoping meetings
- By telephone: 1-800-622-4519
- By fax: 503-230-4019
- On line: [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment)
- By letter: Bonneville Power Administration – KEC - 4, PO Box 3621, Portland, OR 97208-3621

BPA received 92 letters, comment forms, emails, and on-line submissions covering a wide range of issues and concerns. Approximately 442 individual comments were identified from these various sources, including 63 verbal comments received at the public scoping meetings. Comment letters were received from federal, state, and local agencies and officials representing:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 10
- Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office
- Montana Department of Commerce, Energy Promotion and Development Division
- Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)
- Montana Department of Transportation
- City of Missoula Department of Public Works
- City of Missoula Department of Parks and Recreation
- Missoula County Board of County Commissioners
- Missoula City Council
- Clearwater County Board of County Commissioners

Letters were also received from the following environmental interest groups and non-governmental organizations:

- Idaho Conservation League
- Trout Unlimited
- Five Valleys Land Trust
- The Wilderness Society
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Citizens for Clean Energy
- Montana Environmental Information Center
- Montana Audubon
- Western Environmental Law Center
- Sonoran Institute
- Renewable Northwest Project

The Nez Perce Tribe and three electric power providers (Flathead Electric Co-op, Lincoln Electric Co-op, and NorthWestern Energy) also submitted comments. The remaining comments were submitted by other interest groups and the public.

The comments have been categorized by technical resource area so they can be addressed by the appropriate technical expert as the EIS is developed. It should be noted that the comments below have

been summarized or rephrased from the original to represent common themes and concerns. The scoping comments have been posted in their entirety on the Montana to Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project comments page at:

<http://www.bpa.gov/applications/publiccomments/CommentList.aspx?ID=203> and  
<http://www.bpa.gov/applications/publiccomments/CommentList.aspx?ID=158>.

### **3.1 General Comments**

- Our organization supports the use of existing transmission corridors and renewable energy development.
- The Montana DEQ Energy Office supports BPA's proposed system upgrades for its Montana to Washington Upgrade Project.
- Upgrading existing infrastructure and co-locating new infrastructure with existing infrastructure are preferable to new development in undisturbed areas.
- This is a very cost-effective infrastructure investment that will have great benefit to Montana as well as the rest of the Northwest.
- We support BPA's commitment to upgrade the Montana-to-Washington transmission system to help export Montana's abundant clean energy, especially windpower.
- Increasing available transmission capacity from BPA's Garrison Substation in Western Montana to power markets west of the Cascades that serve the Northwest is a win-win situation for all concerned.
- The Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project is perhaps the most desirable, least controversial transmission project in the entire Western Interconnection.
- NEPA review should focus on the areas actually affected by the proposed substation expansions and the new substation and avoid looking at the impacts of the existing BPA transmission line.
- It is imperative to review the current proposal from the perspective of understanding if the impacts from development of the original transmission line were successfully mitigated.
- It would be beneficial to discuss monitoring results for the existing BPA transmission lines in the area, noting adverse and positive impacts and discussing implications for the proposed project.
- The EIS should document adaptive management changes made during existing system monitoring and proposed strategies to adjust management of new transmission facilities to meet environmental objectives throughout the proposed project lifespan.

### **3.2 Substation Sites and Route Segments**

- When you expand a substation will you be adding new lines?
- Can the existing towers carry the load?
- How much will the existing 500 kV line sag with more power being transmitted through them?
- Will additional transmission towers be required in the line segments that are being reconducted?
- Will any new buildings be constructed on the ground?
- What were the criteria for choosing series compensation substation site locations?
- We are concerned about the land requirements for the new series compensation substation; 10 to 12 acres would be acceptable but a 40 to 80 acre site would be unacceptable.
- Will this project require any additional right-of-way?
- How will the buffer zone outside the fences of the substations be determined?



### 3.3 Land Use

- Significant agricultural resources are within or next to the [Alberton] substation site.
- Public and private lands in the vicinity of the [Alberton] substation site hold private grazing leases. Choose a site for the series compensation substation that would have the least impact on agricultural/farm land.
- Please have your studies look at the impacts to adjoining landowners.
- Please find suitable federal land for the project and not private property.
- Building the new series compensation substation next new or proposed subdivisions would affect the livability of that new subdivision/community.
- The land use you are proposing seems very contrary to the residential pattern that was established for the area.
- Where transmission infrastructure would be sited on federal lands, disclose potential effects on inventoried roadless areas, recommended wilderness areas, wilderness study areas, eligible and suitable wild and scenic river segments, or other existing or proposed federal land designations.
- The EIS should document all land cover and uses within the analysis area, impacts by the project to the land cover and uses, and mitigation measures that would be implemented to reduce the impacts.
- The EIS should describe the impacts to forest and open space land use types. Indicate if the impacts would be permanent or temporary and state measures that would be taken to compensate landowners for the loss of their resources because of the project.

### 3.4 Recreation

- Consider impact on recreational users, such as fishers, campers, bike use on Route to Hiawatha.
- We do not want construction work to impact the bike paths that are heavily used for recreation in Shoshone County.
- There is a 5-acre park already approved by the City of Missoula very close to the proposed substation site.

### 3.5 Visual Resources

- Transmission infrastructure can cause severe impacts to the visual quality of the environment.
- Describe changes to the visual appearance of the environment that will result from the project and any connected actions.
- Create a 3D depiction of each substation alternative so that the Missoula County Commissioners would get a better understanding of the size and impact of the substation development.
- Will the expanded transmission capacity result in new energy projects that might also impair the visual appearance of the environment?
- Visual impacts associated with the new substation near either St. Regis or Missoula can be mitigated with screening.

### 3.6 Noise

- We are concerned that noise from the substation will affect recreational activities.
- How much noise does the substation give off, especially on rainy, humid, or snowy days?
- Discuss where blasting would be needed, blasting methods that will be used, and how blasting effects will be controlled and mitigated.

- Residents living on Christian Drive north of Miller Creek substation site have existing power lines running through their backyard and are concerned about additional noise impacts.

### **3.7 Public Health and Safety**

- Provide more information about how high voltage substations impact health.
- I am concerned about the health effects of a new substation on me and my children.
- I'd like more information about the long-term effects of living near a substation and high-voltage transmission lines.
- Please take into consideration that no one knows the possible long-term effects that this kind of substation may have on young people.
- Will the environmental review require soil sampling for remediation of contaminated soils?
- Is BPA required to do soil testing to determine if a site has been contaminated by past mining activity?

### **3.8 Socioeconomics**

- Please study the economic benefit of the proposed project to cities, towns and the local tax base.
- We do not want our property values to drop because people don't want to live near a substation.
- I am concerned about my property value dropping due to the potential installation of a substation.
- Include an analysis of the economic benefits of the renewable energy projects from the transmission upgrade.
- An additional substation may help attract new economic partners to the Missoula, Blackfoot and Bitterroot Valleys.
- It is important to our rate paying members that the transmission line upgrades and new substation are paid for by the users of the increased capacity on the line.
- It is important that this project not cause cost [rate] increasing environmental impacts to existing system operations within BPA's Balancing Authority area.
- This project does not provide economic benefits to the people who will have to live with the impacts.
- Why would BPA commit federal monies to buy private land in order to complete the project when there is ample federal land that could easily be re-purposed for this project with minimal impact to the federal treasury?
- The project is not a benefit to Missoula residents because power is being sent to market hubs in the NW.
- The M2W Project will transform Montana's economy by creating thousands of family-wage construction jobs, hundreds of permanent local jobs and generating millions of dollars in tax revenue and lease payments.
- Montana needs the temporary construction jobs that can employ students from our alternative energy college programs, the permanent jobs that will be created in rural areas, the local property tax increases, and the lease payments to landowners.
- Wind farms facilitated by this project will bring economic development to several Montana counties. They will create much needed jobs, including temporary construction jobs and permanent operating and maintenance jobs.
- The tax revenue from the wind farms will also be an important boost to our rural roads, schools and towns. Furthermore, easement payments to land owners can provide a significant second income without disrupting existing land use (farming, ranching, etc.).

- The value of homes and other structures built after the line was constructed will not be adversely affected; the original values of these properties reflected the line's presence.
- Our concern is that the proximity of the proposed substation may threaten or devalue the land development business we have established including approved subdivisions.
- Please outline the benefits to Missoula County especially in terms of potential payments in lieu of taxes should the substation be built in our county.
- Include an evaluation of environmental justice populations within the geographic scope of the project.

### **3.9 Public Services and Utilities**

- Would nearby landowners be allowed to access the power lines that serve the substation?
- We would appreciate it if improvements to the Dworshak substation were structured so that a separate co-generation plant could utilize the facilities if the opportunity presents itself to our county in the future.
- Please have your studies look at power in the 7 mile drainage - does this plan include power within that corridor?
- Will your project enable local people to obtain electric service from BPA as opposed to Northwestern which is the current provider?
- Landowners along the 500 kV line at the St. Regis site do not use public power and are not interested in it; most rely on propane/solar, etc.
- Missoula and Ravalli counties are growing and will need more energy.
- Northwestern Energy owns the land where a new substation could be built.
- BPA should consider whether a more flexible scheduling scheme (i.e., offering transmission customers schedules in 15-minute increments per FERC Order No. 764) could accommodate the requested transmission service rather than building additional transmission capacity.

### **3.10 Transportation**

- This facility crosses I-15 and will require permits from MDT for work in the right-of-way.
- Please have your studies look at ongoing traffic demands.
- The increased traffic during construction would have a detrimental effect on the roads.
- I am concerned about damage from increased traffic on Tamarack Creek Road during construction of a substation.
- Will new roads and access points be necessary to maintain the transmission infrastructure associated with this project?
- Include data about existing road networks and evaluate the change in road miles and density that will occur because of the project and predicted impacts to water quality from roads.

### **3.11 Historic and Cultural Resources**

- Please remember that in compliance with the NHPA 1966, as amended, BPA will need to have each of the proposed series compensation substation sites inventoried for the presence or absence of historic properties.
- Please coordinate modernization of existing substation equipment with BPA's Cultural Resources staff to assure all necessary documentation and communication has been completed.
- Significant cultural resources are within or next to the [Alberton] substation site.

- The historic Mullan Trail is in the area [of the Alberton site]. There may be sites of significant archeological value present.
- We are concerned about impacts to the historic railroad from Highway 135 west up 7 Mile Creek.
- Discuss whether the proposed project might affect historical or traditional cultural places of importance to the area's Native American communities.
- Identify historic resources and assure that Native American treaty rights and privileges are addressed appropriately.
- Prepare the EIS in consultation with all affected tribal governments, consistent with Executive Order 13175 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments).

### **3.12 Geology and Soils**

- Please investigate and report on the threat of tectonic activity (i.e., earthquakes).
- Soils of Farmland Importance have been identified within the immediate [Alberton site] area.
- When siting the series compensation substation, take into consideration the characteristics of Lake Missoula silts and landslide issues near the St. Regis.

### **3.13 Watersheds and Water Quality**

- Please have your studies look at watersheds.
- Significant water resources are within or next to the [Alberton] substation site.
- A designated floodplain (Zone AE) borders the [Alberton] site.
- Disclose which waters may be impacted by the proposed project, the nature of potential impacts, and specific pollutants likely to impact those waters.
- Identify the water bodies potentially affected by the project that are on the most current EPA approved 303(d) list.
- Describe existing restoration and enhancement efforts for any affected 303(d) list waters, how the proposed project will coordinate with on-going protection efforts, and any mitigation measures to implement to avoid further degradation of impaired waters.
- Describe all waters of the U.S., including wetlands, that could be affected by the proposed project, and include maps and data on acreages and channel lengths, habitat types, values, and functions of these waters.
- If the proposed project would result in impacts to aquatic resources, BPA should work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine if the project would need a CWA §404 permit.
- Any permitted discharge into waters of the U.S. must be the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative available to achieve the project purpose. Include an evaluation of the project alternatives in this context in order to demonstrate the project's compliance with the 404(b)(1) Guidelines.
- Include information explaining anticipated activities in floodplains, alternatives considered, and steps taken to reduce impacts to floodplains.
- The DEQ Water Protection Bureau (WPB) notes that this project may require a storm water construction permit if the permitting threshold is reached.

### **3.14 Vegetation**

- Please have your studies look at vegetation (forests and plants).
- Increased vehicle and equipment traffic would increase the spread of noxious weeds.
- We recommend that replacement trees be planted to offset any unavoidable tree loss.

- Identify the locations of native and rare plants and the actions to be taken to reduce impacts on these plants.
- Develop an invasive plant management plan to monitor and control noxious weeds and to utilize native plants for restoration of areas disturbed by the project.

### **3.15 Fish and Wildlife**

- Please have your studies look at wildlife corridors and animal habitat.
- Ensure project facilities do not prevent wildlife from accessing water and food sources.
- Upgrading existing transmission lines will have minimal impacts on wildlife compared to building new transmission lines.
- The Clark Fork River borders the [Alberton site] area. The river is occupied by bull trout and is classified as critical habitat for bull trout. Streams with west-slope cutthroat trout are also near the proposed project.
- A wildlife crossing is located close to the [Alberton] substation site along I-90 in the Huson and Ninemile areas.
- Significant wildlife... resources are within or next to the Alberton site. White-tail deer and elk winter range habitat are present and utilized. Bighorn sheep habitat is adjacent to the area.
- We understand there are studies on the effects on livestock living under the power lines but we are not aware of any studies on impacts on the behavior of wildlife due to transmission lines.
- What are the impacts to wildlife from maintaining the vegetation along the transmission line in an early succession stage?
- Please study the effect of construction activity and increased traffic on Sevenmile and Tamarack Roads on wildlife, weeds, and creeks. We also have deer, elk, turkey, sage grouse, black bears, mountain lions, and a variety of wild birds and other wildlife in the area.
- Analyze the effects of new or increased traffic on existing roads and the effects of these activities on bull trout and its critical habitat.
- Our concerns are mainly associated with the section that crosses the St. Joe River and the potential effect on migratory birds. We recommend that the line use the latest APLIC methods/devices to prevent collisions and electrocution of birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.
- Analyze the potential effects on Canada lynx due to any additional disturbances associated with reconductoring the line.
- In St. Regis, analyze the wildlife, moose, elk, deer.
- We are concerned about impacts to horses near Option #2 and deer and elk near Miller Creek Road.
- Will changes in the transmission system increase the potential collisions of bats, birds, or other avian species with transmission infrastructure?
- Does BPA anticipate additional wind energy projects to be constructed due to the transmission system upgrade project that might affect bats, birds, and other avian species?
- Analyze the impacts to all U.S. Forest Service or BLM sensitive, candidate, threatened and endangered species potentially affected by the proposed project.
- Describe the current quality and capacity of habitat in the proposed project area and its use by wildlife, especially avian populations and fish.
- Power transmission projects have the potential to disrupt important wildlife species habitat, resulting in mortality of migratory species such as birds and bats due to electrocution on power lines and collisions with towers, power lines, or with other related structures.
- Describe the critical habitat for species; identify any impacts on species and their critical habitats; and how the project will meet all requirements under the Endangered Species Act.

### **3.16 Climate Change**

- Consider the potential for greenhouse gas emission reductions from the new, renewable energy capacity made possible by the upgrade.
- Consider how resources affected by climate change could potentially influence the project and vice versa, especially within sensitive areas.
- Detail the potential contributions of expanded transmission to global warming. For example, by expanding the capacity of the Montana-to-Washington transmission system, how much additional energy will be consumed and how much more carbon dioxide (or other greenhouse gases) will be released into the atmosphere as a result?
- Quantify and disclose greenhouse gas emissions, if any, from the project activities and discuss mitigation measures to reduce emissions.
- Address any GHG emissions that would result from the upgrade, i.e., the GHG emissions of fossil fuel generators using the line.
- We are particularly concerned about GHG emissions from any additional fossil fuel generation that might be needed to firm intermittent renewable sources.

### **3.17 Energy and Natural Resources**

- We understand the Project would facilitate the generation and transmission of significant Montana wind resources and that it is unlikely that the upgraded facility would serve additional fossil-fueled electricity generation.
- Montana has tremendous renewable energy resources. These resources can help the Northwestern United States reduce global warming emissions and meet clean energy goals. Without a way to transport renewable energy, utilities in Washington and Oregon will continue to rely on dirty coal power from Colstrip rather than Montana's clean solar energy.
- It is critical to the future that we provide a pathway to support green energy as quickly as possible.
- We need to be able to tap the economic growth possible by turning to wind and solar now and we need to be able to transport this clean energy in vastly larger volumes.
- There is great potential for balancing Columbia Gorge wind with Montana's wind resources. Montana's wind peaks primarily in the evening and Columbia Gorge wind peaks primarily during the day. Increasing the capacity of the line will allow for better balancing of the Northwest's diverse and abundant resources.
- The Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade represents a project that could deliver considerable renewable energy with minimal environmental and community impacts.
- The increased transmission capacity will allow the further development of renewable energy resources without the need to physically build an additional transmission line.
- The project carries the greatest assurance possible under an Open Access Transmission Tariff regime that the project will be used to access renewable energy resources.
- Describe the potential for using the hydropower for firming new renewable resources energy production as opposed to fossil fuel sources.
- Consider energy efficiency, demand-response, smart grid investments, expanding the balancing area authority, intra-hourly scheduling, and other options as alternatives to serving loads with additional generation resources.
- Please disclose all power purchase agreements or requests for transmission associated with the proposed upgrade.

### 3.18 Cumulative Impacts

- Include a robust discussion of the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions associated with this project. Expanded transmission will enable new energy projects to move forward, creating additional environmental effects beyond the transmission project itself.
- Assess impacts over the entire area of impact and consider the effects of the proposed project when added to other past, present (including existing project) and reasonably foreseeable future projects in and outside the analysis area, including those by entities not affiliated with the BPA.
- Include a detailed discussion of the cumulative effects from this and other projects on the hydrologic conditions within the analysis area resulting from soil compaction and changes in hydrology, runoff characteristics, and ecological function, including effects on flows and delivery of pollutants to water bodies.
- Clearly depict reasonably foreseeable direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to groundwater and surface water resources.

## 4. Future Public Involvement

Additional opportunities for public involvement and comment will be provided during development of the EIS. Agencies and the public will be notified when the Draft EIS is available for review and comment. Public comments can be submitted within 45 days of release of the Draft EIS. These comments will be considered when creating the Final EIS, and will be responded to and added as an appendix to the Final EIS. Public comments also can be submitted within 30 days of release of the Final EA and will be considered prior to making the final decision: a Record of Decision. For more information on the project through its development, go to: [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W).

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# **Scoping Report**

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Federal Register Notice and Public Letters**

there will be presentations by three Nuclear Energy Advisory Committee subcommittees and a presentation on Accident Tolerant Fuels. Finally, a presentation will be given on the status of NE's University Program. The agenda may change to accommodate committee business. For updates, one is directed to the NEAC Web site: <http://www.ne.doe.gov/neac/neNeacMeetings.html>.

**Public Participation:** Individuals and representatives of organizations who would like to offer comments and suggestions may do so on the day of the meeting, Tuesday June 12, 2012. Approximately thirty minutes will be reserved for public comments. Time allotted per speaker will depend on the number who wish to speak but is not expected to exceed 5 minutes. Anyone who is not able to make the meeting or has had insufficient time to address the committee is invited to send a written statement to Kenneth Chuck Wade at the address or email listed above.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting will be available by contacting Mr. Wade at the address above or on the Department of Energy, Office of Nuclear Energy Web site at: <http://www.ne.doe.gov/neac/neNeacMeetings.html>.

Issued at Washington, DC on April 27, 2012.

**LaTanya R. Butler,**

*Acting Deputy Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2012-10724 Filed 5-2-12; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6450-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Environmental Management Advisory Board Meeting

**AGENCY:** Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Notice of open meeting.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces a meeting of the Environmental Management Advisory Board (EMAB). The Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, 86 Stat. 770) requires that public notice of this meeting be announced in the **Federal Register**.

**DATES:** Thursday, May 31, 2012; 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** Hotel on The Falls, 475 River Parkway, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83402.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kristen G. Ellis, Designated Federal Officer, EMAB (EM-42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20585. Phone (202)

586-5810; fax (202) 586-0293 or email: [kristen.ellis@em.doe.gov](mailto:kristen.ellis@em.doe.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** *Purpose of the Board:* The purpose of EMAB is to provide the Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management (EM) with advice and recommendations on corporate issues confronting the EM program. EMAB contributes to the effective operation of the program by providing individual citizens and representatives of interested groups an opportunity to present their views on issues facing EM and by helping to secure consensus recommendations on those issues.

### Tentative Agenda Topics

- EM Update
- Updates on EMAB Fiscal Year 2012 Work Plan Assignments
- Tank Waste Strategy Update
- Citizens' Advisory Board Update
- Subcommittee Updates

**Public Participation:** EMAB welcomes the attendance of the public at its advisory committee meetings and will make every effort to accommodate persons with physical disabilities or special needs. If you require special accommodations due to a disability, please contact Kristen G. Ellis at least seven days in advance of the meeting at the phone number or email address listed above. Written statements may be filed with the Board either before or after the meeting. Individuals who wish to make oral statements pertaining to the agenda should contact Kristen G. Ellis at the address or telephone number listed above. Requests must be received five days prior to the meeting and reasonable provision will be made to include the presentation in the agenda. The Designated Federal Officer is empowered to conduct the meeting in a fashion that will facilitate the orderly conduct of business. Individuals wishing to make public comments will be provided a maximum of five minutes to present their comments.

**Minutes:** Minutes will be available by writing or calling Kristen G. Ellis at the address or phone number listed above. Minutes will also be available at the following Web site <http://www.em.doe.gov/stakepages/emabmeetings.aspx>.

Issued at Washington, DC on April 27, 2012.

**LaTanya R. Butler,**

*Acting Deputy Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2012-10681 Filed 5-2-12; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6450-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Bonneville Power Administration; Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project EIS

**AGENCY:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Department of Energy (DOE).

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and notice of floodplain and wetlands involvement.

**SUMMARY:** BPA intends to prepare an EIS in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) on several proposed upgrades to its existing transmission system. The proposed upgrades would consist of a combination of reinforcements of five existing BPA substations, placement of new conductor on sections of an existing BPA transmission line, and the addition of a new series compensation substation along an existing BPA transmission line corridor. The substation reinforcements would occur at Garrison and Hot Springs substations in Montana, Dworshak and Hatwai substations in Idaho, and Bell Substation in Washington. The line reconductoring would occur on four sections, totaling 12 miles, of the Dworshak-Taft No. 1 500-kilovolt (kV) line in Montana and Idaho. The series compensation substation would be added along the Garrison-Taft 500-kV line corridor in Montana.

The proposed upgrades are needed to respond to requests for long-term firm transmission service that BPA has received for the West of Garrison and West of Hatwai transmission paths. These upgrades would increase the firm east-to-west transfer capability from BPA's Garrison Substation in Western Montana to load centers west of the Cascades and to market hubs serving the entire Northwest power market.

With this Notice of Intent, BPA is initiating the public scoping process for the EIS. BPA is requesting comments about potential environmental impacts that it should consider as it prepares the EIS for the proposed project.

In accordance with DOE regulations for compliance with floodplain and wetlands environmental review requirements, BPA will prepare a floodplain and wetlands assessment to avoid or minimize potential harm to or within any affected floodplains and wetlands. The assessment will be included in the EIS.

**DATES:** Written scoping comments are due no later than June 18, 2012, and can be submitted at the addresses below. Verbal and written comments may also

be made at the EIS scoping meetings that will be held at the locations listed below.

**ADDRESSES:** Send letters with comments and suggestions on the proposed scope of the Draft EIS, and requests to be placed on the project mailing list, to Bonneville Power Administration, Public Affairs Office—DKE-7, P.O. Box 14428, Portland, OR 97293-4428, or by fax to (503) 230-4019. You also may call BPA's toll free comment line at (800) 622-4519 and leave a message (please include the name of this project); or submit comments online at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment). BPA will also post all comment letters received in their entirety on BPA's Web site at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment).

On May 22, 2012, a scoping meeting will be held from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Lewiston Community Center, 1424 Main Street, Lewiston, Idaho 83501. On May 23, 2012, a scoping meeting will be held from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Linwood Elementary School, 906 West Weile Avenue, Spokane, Washington 99208. On June 12, 2012, a scoping meeting will be held from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Missoula Fire Department (Station 4), 3011 Latimor Street, Missoula, Montana 59808. And lastly, on June 13, 2012, a scoping meeting will be held from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the St. Regis School, 6 Tiger Street, St. Regis, Montana 59866.

At these informal open-house style meetings, BPA will provide maps and other information about the project and have members of the project team available to answer questions and accept oral and written comments. You may stop by anytime during the open house.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Andrew M. Montano, Environmental Protection Specialist, Bonneville Power Administration—KEC-4, P.O. Box 3621, Portland, Oregon 97208-3621; toll-free telephone 1-800-282-3713; direct telephone 503-230-4145; or email [ammontano@bpa.gov](mailto:ammontano@bpa.gov). You may also contact Amit Sinha, Project Manager, Bonneville Power Administration—TEP-3, P.O. Box 3621, Portland, Oregon 97208-3621; toll-free telephone 1-800-282-3713; direct telephone 360-619-6178; or email [axsinha@bpa.gov](mailto:axsinha@bpa.gov). Additional information can be found at BPA's project Web site at [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In 2010, BPA conducted a Network Open Season (NOS) process to help manage its list of requests for long-term transmission service. During the NOS process, utilities and power generators (including wind generators and power

marketers) requested the use of BPA's transmission system to transmit their power. To determine if BPA could offer the service requested, BPA studied the transmission system and identified where existing capacity was available and where the system needed upgrades. The studies found that there was not enough available transmission capacity to accommodate all requests for long-term service from the west side of its Garrison Substation in Western Montana to load centers west of the Cascades. Wind generation facilities built and proposed in the region have greatly increased the amount of power being produced in Montana seeking load and markets in the Northwest. Further studies revealed that reinforcing the BPA Network at strategic locations on the Garrison-Taft, Taft-Dworshak and Taft-Bell, Hatwai-Lower Granite, and Grand Coulee-Bell sections would allow BPA to accommodate the requests for transmission service in this area.

BPA must respond to these requests for transmission service under its Open Access Transmission Tariff. This tariff, which is generally consistent with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's *pro forma* open access tariff, has procedures that provide access to BPA's transmission system for all eligible customers, consistent with all BPA requirements (including the availability or development of sufficient transmission capacity) and subject to an environmental review under NEPA. The proposed Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project, formerly known as the Colstrip Upgrade Project or "CUP West," would respond to these requests for transmission service.

BPA will prepare an EIS under NEPA to assist the agency as it decides whether to perform these proposed transmission system upgrades. The EIS will study two alternatives: The proposed system upgrades and a No Action Alternative in which BPA would not upgrade its system and not be able to provide the requested transmission service. BPA will be the lead agency for preparation of the EIS. Cooperating agencies for the EIS may be identified as the proposed project proceeds through the NEPA process.

*Public Participation and Identification of Environmental Issues.* The potential environmental issues identified for most transmission line projects include land use, socioeconomic, cultural resources, visual resources, electric and magnetic fields, sensitive plants and animals, soil erosion, wetlands, floodplains, and fish and water resources. BPA has established a 45-day scoping period

during which tribes, affected landowners, concerned citizens, special interest groups, local and federal governments, and any other interested parties are invited to comment on the scope of the proposed EIS, including the environmental impacts to be evaluated. Scoping will help BPA ensure that a full range of issues related to this proposal is addressed in the EIS, and also will identify significant or potentially significant impacts that may result from the proposed project. When completed, the Draft EIS will be circulated for review and comment, and BPA will hold public meetings to hear comments. The Draft EIS is expected to be published in the fall of 2013. BPA will consider and respond to comments received on the Draft EIS in the Final EIS. The Final EIS is expected to be published in fall of 2014. BPA's decision will be documented in a Record of Decision that will follow the Final EIS.

Issued in Portland, Oregon, on April 23, 2012.

**Stephen J. Wright,**

*Administrator and Chief Executive Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2012-10673 Filed 5-2-12; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6450-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

#### Biomass Research and Development Technical Advisory Committee

**AGENCY:** Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Notice of open meeting.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces an open meeting of the Biomass Research and Development Technical Advisory Committee. The Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, 86 Stat. 770) requires that public notice of this meeting be announced in the **Federal Register**.

**DATES:** Tuesday, May 22, 2012; 8:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. and Wednesday, May 23, 2012; 8:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Biological Sciences Facility & Computational Sciences Facility, 3300 Stevens Drive, Richland, Washington 99354.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Elliott Levine, Designated Federal Officer, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue



## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 61409  
Vancouver, WA 98666-1409

TRANSMISSION SERVICES

April 27, 2012

In reply refer to: TEP-TPP-1

### **To: Parties Interested in the Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project**

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to upgrade parts of its existing transmission system in Montana, Idaho, and Washington as a result of recent requests for transmission service (*please see the enclosed project map*). This letter briefly explains what is being proposed, outlines our environmental review process and schedule, and invites you to meetings where you can learn more about and comment on the proposal. Please note that this proposed project was formerly known as the Colstrip Upgrade Project or "CUP West."

**Proposal.** BPA is proposing several upgrades on its existing transmission system in order to increase available transmission capacity from BPA's Garrison Substation in Western Montana to load centers west of the Cascades and to market hubs serving the entire Northwest power market. These upgrades would help BPA accommodate requests for long-term firm transmission service that BPA has received for the West of Garrison and West of Hatwai transmission paths. More specifically, these upgrades would increase the firm east-to-west transfer capability of these transmission paths primarily by increasing the series compensation in existing 500- kilovolt (kV) lines in the area.

The proposed upgrades consist of a combination of proposed reinforcements of several existing BPA substations, proposed reconductoring of sections of an existing BPA transmission line, and the proposed addition of a new series compensation substation along other existing BPA transmission lines. The substation reinforcements would occur at Garrison and Hot Springs Substations in Montana, Dworshak and Hatwai Substations in Idaho, and Bell Substation in Washington. The line reconductoring would occur on 4 sections totaling 12 miles on the Dworshak-Taft No. 1 500-kV line in Montana and Idaho. The new series compensation substation would be built along the Garrison-Taft No. 1 & 2 500-kV lines in Montana.

To understand the potential environmental impacts of this proposal, BPA will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. We are presently considering two alternatives to be studied in detail in the EIS: the proposed system upgrades listed above and a "no action" alternative in which BPA would not upgrade its system and not be able to provide the requested transmission service. The EIS will describe anticipated impacts to natural and human resources and include mitigation measures to avoid or minimize impacts. During this process, BPA will be working with federal, state and local agencies, tribes, landowners, and interest groups.

**Public Meetings.** BPA will soon start to assess the potential environmental impacts of the proposed alternatives, and we would like to hear from you. What questions do you have? What resources should we analyze? Do you have information or concerns about specific areas? BPA is seeking public input and comments through June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012. We have scheduled four open house scoping meetings to hear your input and accept comments related to the scope of the EIS that will be prepared:

**May 22, 2012**  
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Lewiston Community Center  
1424 Main Street  
Lewiston, ID 83501

**May 23, 2012**  
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Linwood Elementary School  
906 West Weile Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99208

**June 12, 2012**

5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
 Missoula Fire Department, Station 4  
 3011 Latimor Street  
 Missoula, MT 59808

**June 13, 2012**

5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
 St. Regis School  
 6 Tiger Street  
 St. Regis, MT 59866

We do not plan to give a formal presentation, so you may come any time during any of the meetings. Several members of the project team will be available to answer your questions and listen to your ideas.

**Other Ways to Comment.** If you are unable to attend any of the meetings, you can still comment. Comments may be submitted online at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment), or you may return the enclosed comment form or other written correspondence in the postage-paid envelope provided, or you may fax your comments to (503) 230-4019. You also may call us with your comments toll free at (800) 622-4519. Please submit comments to us by **June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012** and reference the “Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project” with your comments. We will post all comments we receive on our website at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment).

**Process and Schedule.** Starting as early as summer 2012, you may see BPA staff or contractors in the area as they conduct engineering and environmental surveys. If we need to enter property where we do not have existing access rights, we will contact property owners for permission through a separate mailing.

BPA is planning to produce a Draft EIS for review and comment in the fall of 2013. If you would like to receive a copy of the Draft EIS, please indicate on the enclosed comment form as to how you would like to receive it once it is available. If you would like to be taken off the project mailing list, please mark the box on the form. If you do not return the form, you will still receive notice when the Draft EIS is available.

BPA expects to issue a Final EIS for the proposal in the fall of 2014. BPA’s decision concerning the proposed transmission system upgrades will be documented in a Record of Decision that will follow the Final EIS.

**For More Information.** To find out more about the project, please go to BPA’s project website at [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W).

If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact the environmental project lead, Andrew M. Montano, toll-free at (800) 282-3713, directly at (503) 230-4145 or by e-mail at [ammontano@bpa.gov](mailto:ammontano@bpa.gov). If you have other questions or would like more project information, please contact me at the toll-free number listed above, directly at (360) 619-6178 or e-mail at [axsinha@bpa.gov](mailto:axsinha@bpa.gov).

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Amit Sinha*

Amit Sinha  
 Project Manager

Enclosures:  
 Project Map  
 Comment Form  
 Return Envelope



# Montana to Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project



4/17/2012

## Legend

- Project Related BPA Substation
- BPA Transmission Line
- Proposed Compensation Station Zone
- Dworshak-Taft Line Upgrade Locations
- USFS Forest Boundary
- Indian Reservation
- National Park



0 20 40 Miles

## Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project

*Your comments will inform the NEPA review process*

Please have your studies look at:

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I need more information about:

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I have these other comments:

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Please tell us your preference for receiving the Draft EIS by selecting from the following:

- Compact disc (CD) of the EIS
- Printed copy of the EIS, approximately 200-300 pages by mail
- I'll just check your website at [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W) for project updates and to view the EIS there.
- By e-mail only; please provide your e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_
- Please remove my name from the mailing list for this EIS

You may also post your comments at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment);  
You may also call BPA at 1-800-622-4519, or FAX your comments to 503-230-4019.  
Please mention "*Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project*" in your  
correspondence.

**The comment period ends June 18, 2012.**





## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

May 18, 2012

In reply refer to: KEC-4

**To: Parties Interested in the Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project\*  
Project Update for Washington**

You recently received a letter from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) which informed you that BPA is proposing to upgrade parts of its existing transmission system in Montana, Idaho, and Washington as a result of recent requests for transmission service. This letter briefly explains what activities BPA would perform within the State of Washington if this Project were approved. *(These proposed activities are explained below and correspond to the Bell Substation figure that is enclosed)*. This letter also outlines our upcoming public meetings in your area; and, the announcement of an extended comment period regarding this proposed Project. Also enclosed is a Project Fact Sheet that outlines the entire Project proposal and includes an overall Project map.

**BPA Activities within the State of Washington.** Within the State of Washington, the BPA facilities that would require a change in their existing footprint only include the Bell Substation in Spokane County, Washington. At Bell Substation, as seen in the enclosed figure, BPA would expand the existing substation yard by 4-5 acres in order to install new series and shunt capacitors. These new capacitors would assist this and other BPA facilities to handle the increased transmission capacity by maintaining required voltage levels.

**Public Meetings.** BPA will soon start to assess the potential environmental impacts of the proposed alternatives, and we would like to hear from you. What questions do you have? What resources should we analyze? Do you have information or concerns about specific areas? BPA is seeking public input and we have extended our comment period through July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012. We have also scheduled the following open-house scoping meeting in your area to hear your input and accept comments related to the scope of the EIS that will be prepared:

**May 23, 2012**

5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Linwood Elementary School

906 West Weile Avenue

Spokane, WA 99208

We do not plan to give a formal presentation, so you may come any time during any of the meetings. Several members of the project team will be available to answer your questions and listen to your ideas.

*\* Please note that this proposed Project was formerly known as the Colstrip Upgrade Project or "CUP West."*



**How to Comment.** If you are unable to attend the upcoming meeting, you can still comment. Comments may be submitted online at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment), or you may call us with your comments toll free at (800) 622-4519, or you may also fax your comments to (503) 230-4019. Please submit comments to us by **July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012**, and reference the “Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project” with your comments. We will post all comments we receive on our website at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment).

**For More Information.** To find out more about the proposed Project, other public meetings, or general information, please go to BPA’s project website at [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W).

If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact me directly toll-free at (800) 282-3713, directly at (503) 230-4145, or by e-mail at [ammontano@bpa.gov](mailto:ammontano@bpa.gov). If you have other questions or would like more Project-specific information, please contact Amit Sinha at the toll-free number listed above, directly at (360) 619-6178, or e-mail at [axsinha@bpa.gov](mailto:axsinha@bpa.gov).

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Andrew M. Montañó*





Andrew M. Montañó  
Environmental Project Manager

Enclosures:  
Figure of Bell Substation  
Project Fact Sheet



May 16, 2012

### Bell Substation

-  Proposed Area of Expansion
-  Bell Substation
-  BPA Property Boundary
-  BPA Transmission Line





# Fact Sheet

May 2012

## Proposed Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project

### Moving energy from east to west

The Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to upgrade parts of its existing transmission system in Montana, Idaho and Washington. The purpose is to increase available transmission capacity from BPA's Garrison Substation in Western Montana to power markets west of the Cascades that serve the entire Northwest.

The proposed upgrades consist of reinforcements to several existing BPA substations; the construction of a new substation along existing transmission lines between St. Regis and Missoula, Mont.; and the reconductor of 12 miles of the Dworshak-Taft No. 1 500-kV line in Montana and Idaho. Reinforcements would occur at the Garrison and Hot Springs substations in Montana, the Dworshak and Hatwai substations in Idaho, and Bell Substation in Washington.

### Why is a new project necessary?

In 2010, BPA conducted a Network Open Season process to identify new requests for long-term transmission service. We found that there was not enough available transmission capacity to accommodate all requests for long-term service. BPA is required by its Open Access Transmission Tariff to provide transmission access to eligible customers. As a result of new transmission service requests, BPA is proposing this project.

### Environmental review schedule

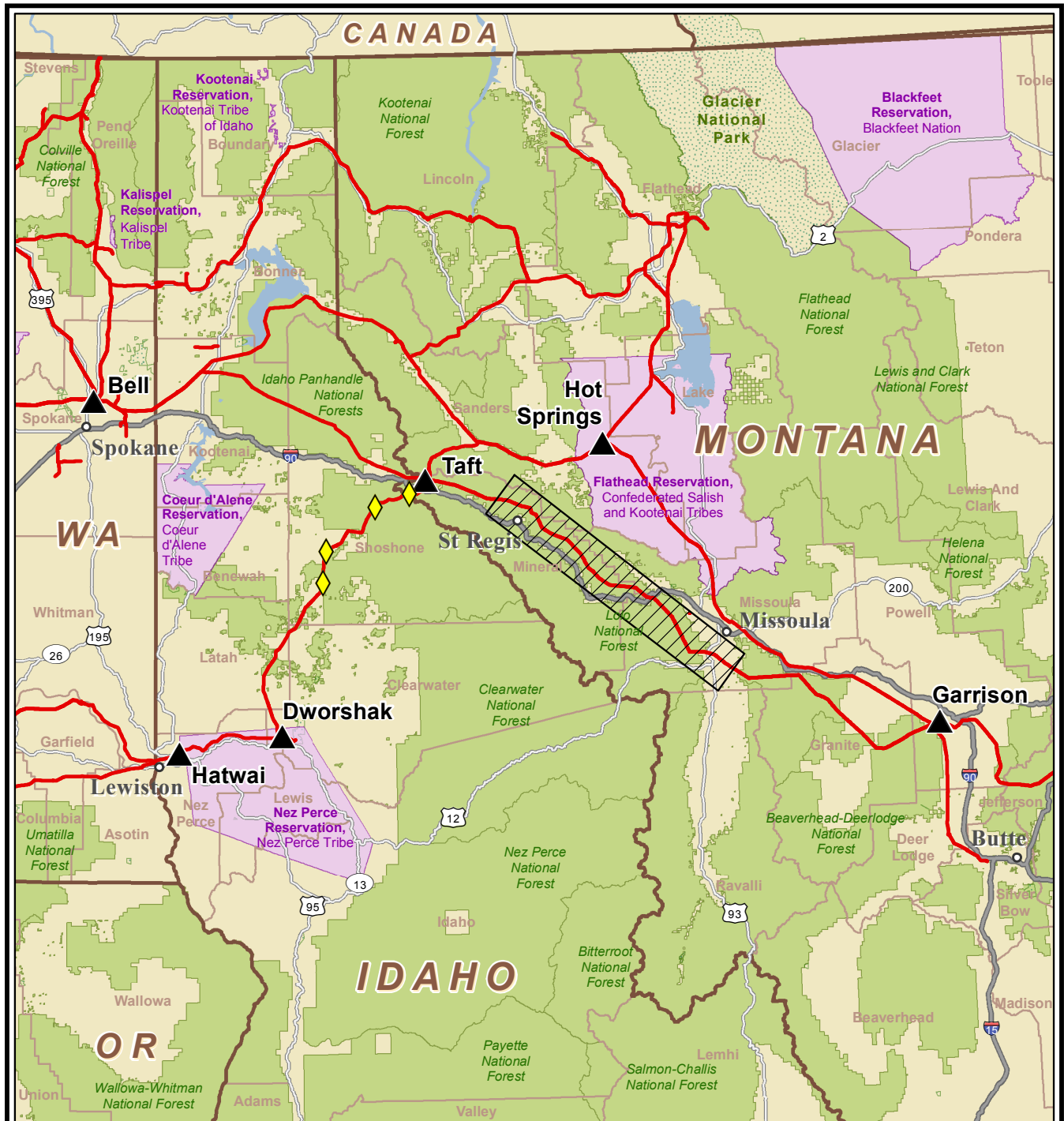
BPA initiated the environmental review for the project in May 2012 and will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project. Environmental work is expected to be complete in fall 2014, with a final decision about the proposed transmission system upgrades and new substation documented in a Record of Decision that will follow the final EIS.

BPA involves the public in decision making because we believe this results in better decisions and fulfills our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act. For more information on the project visit: [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W) or call toll free 800-622-4519.

### Who is BPA?

Bonneville Power Administration is a nonprofit federal agency that provides about a third of the electric power and 75 percent of the high-voltage electric transmission in the Pacific Northwest. We provide the Pacific Northwest low cost, reliable, environmentally responsible electricity. We are accountable to the people of the Northwest and work collaboratively with residents, utilities, elected officials and other stakeholders to meet the region's electricity needs.



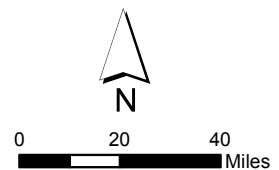


## Montana to Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project



### Legend

- Project Related BPA Substation
- BPA Transmission Line
- Proposed Compensation Station Zone
- Dworshak-Taft Line Upgrade Locations
- USFS Forest Boundary
- Indian Reservation
- National Park



# WELCOME

## Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project

**Scoping Meeting**

**Open House  
5 – 7 p.m.**

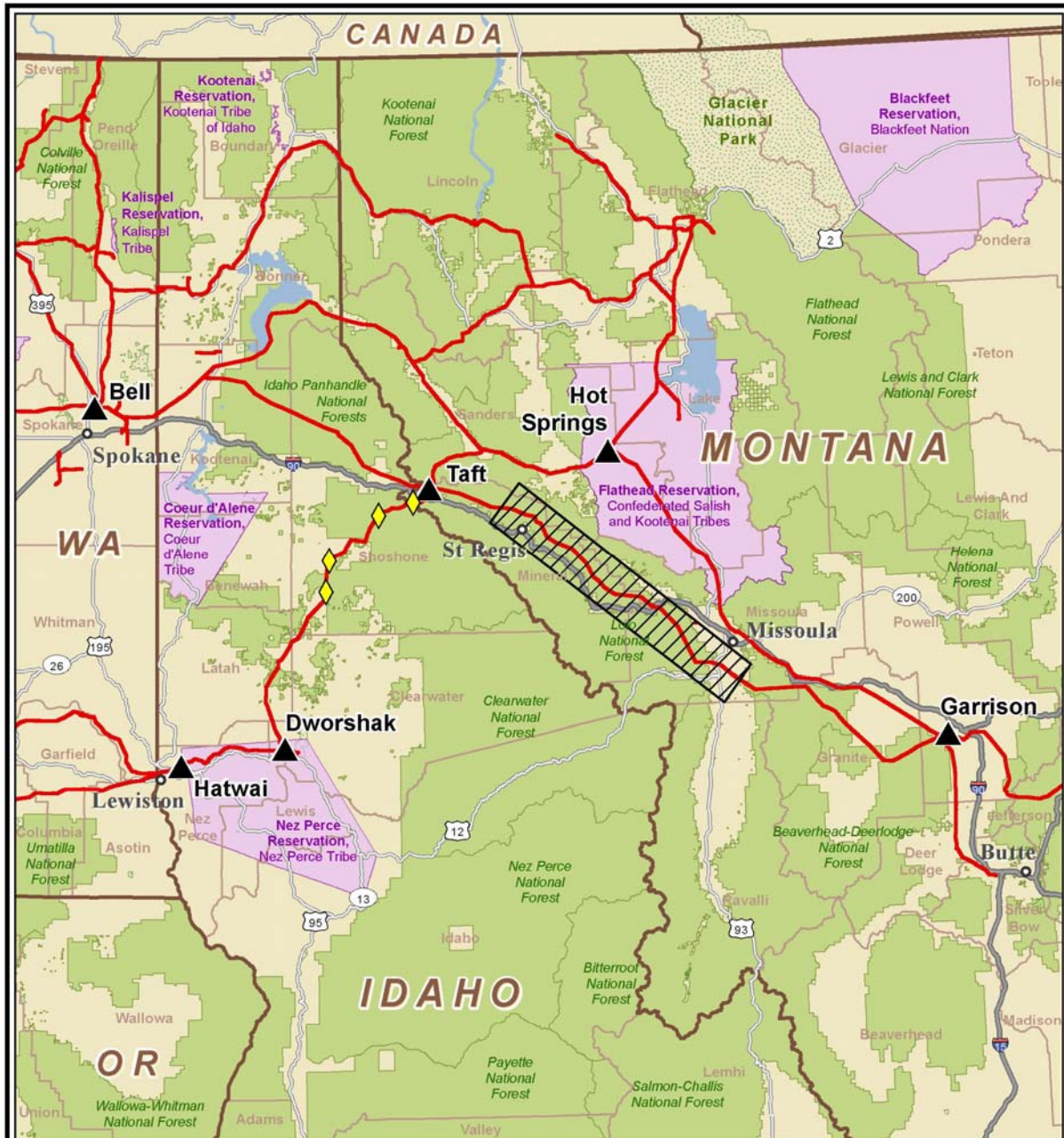
# Project Need

Recent requests for transmission service from parties within the State of Montana have led BPA to analyze its existing transmission system to see how best to increase transmission capacity from western Montana to power markets across the Northwest.

Increased capacity would:

- Allow new renewable resources to access power markets
- Maintain existing level of reliability with increased transmission capacity

# Project Map










## Montana to Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project



4/17/2012

### Legend

-  Project Related BPA Substation
-  BPA Transmission Line
-  Proposed Compensation Station Zone
-  Dworshak-Taft Line Upgrade Locations
-  USFS Forest Boundary
-  Indian Reservation
-  National Park



0 20 40 Miles

# Project Description

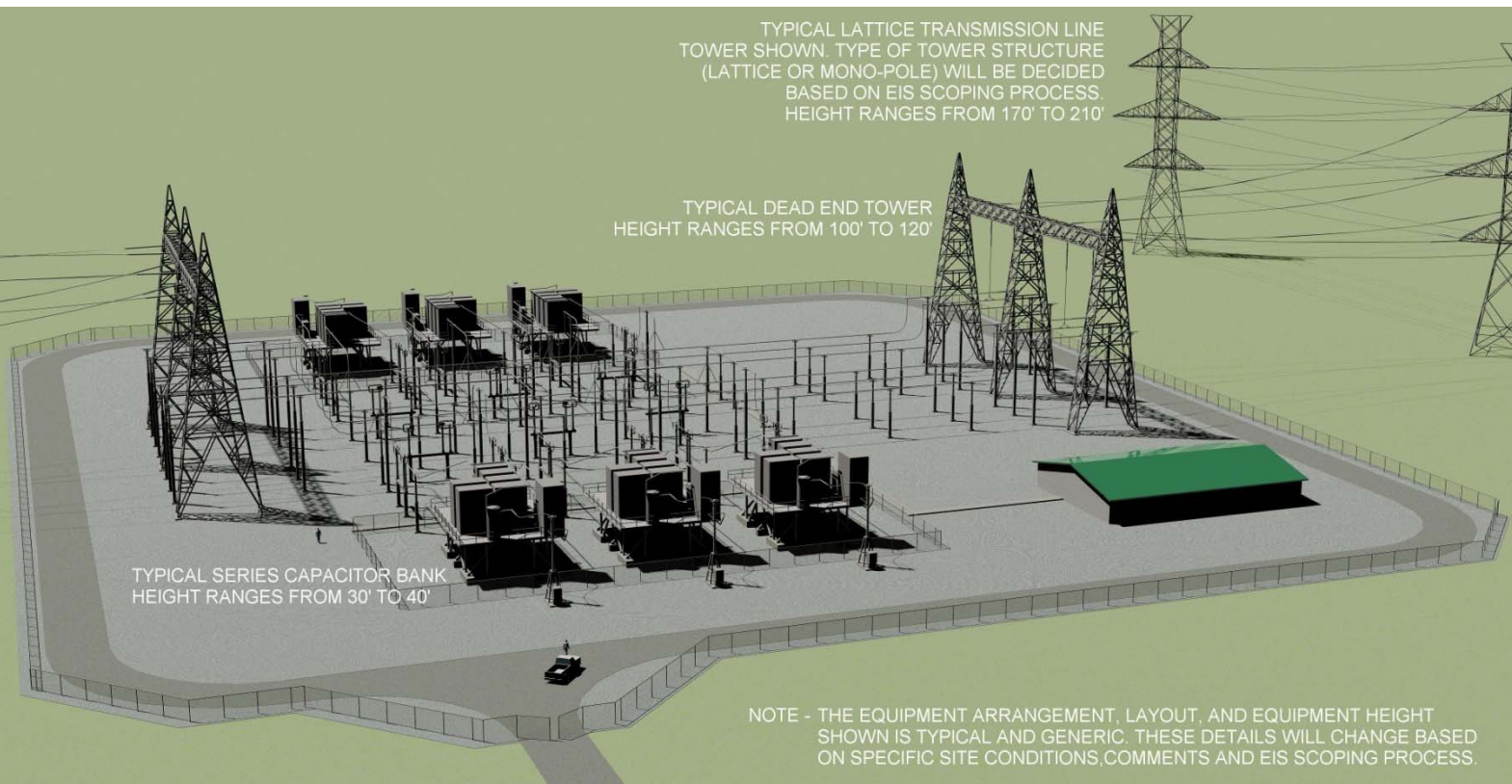
## Project upgrades would include:

### In Montana:

- Construct a new series compensation substation near St. Regis or Missoula
- Install new circuit breakers and a new shunt capacitor at Hot Springs Substation
- Install new circuit breakers and upgrade existing series capacitor at Garrison Substation



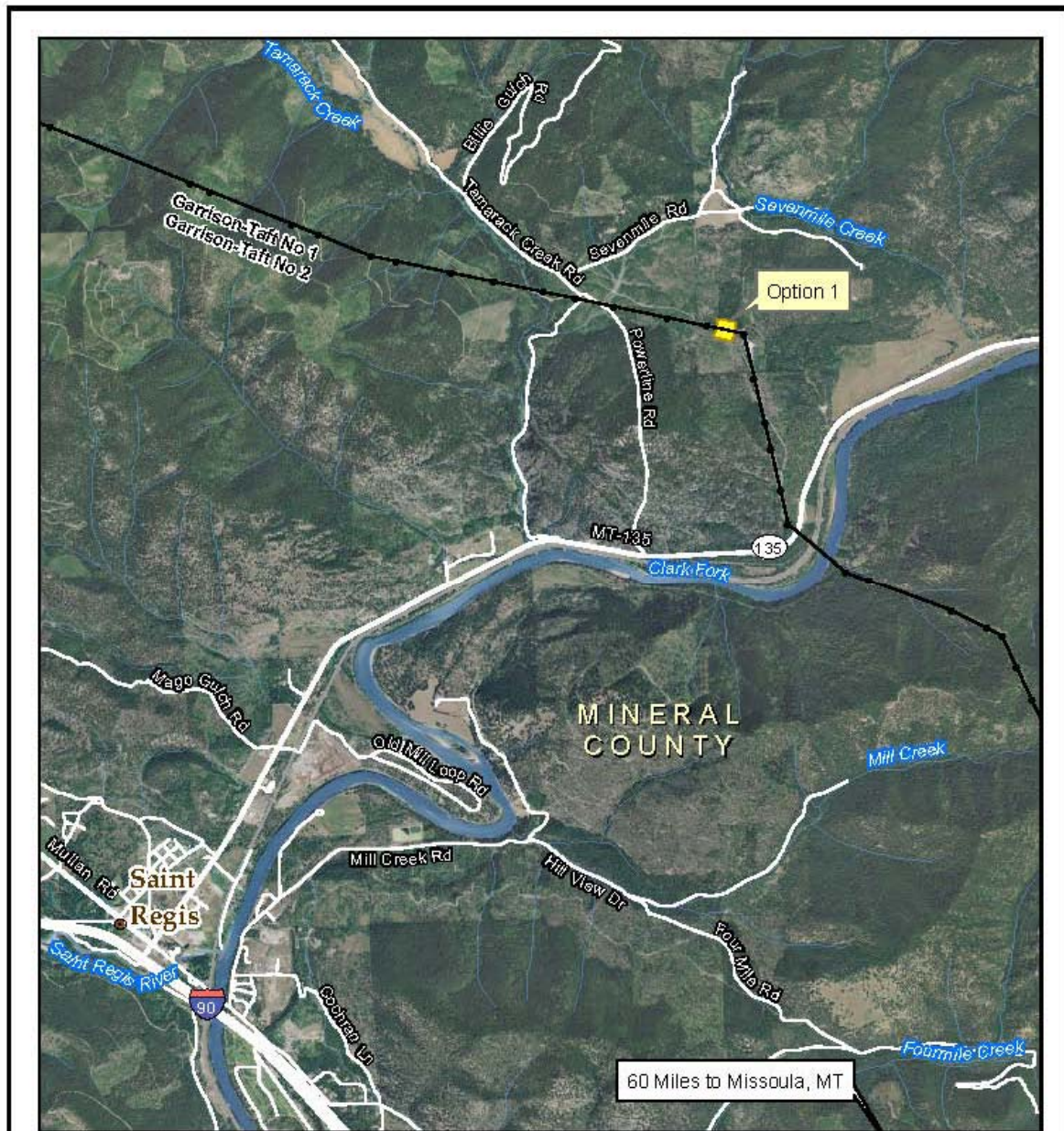
# Project Components



## New Series Compensation Substation

A new series compensation substation would allow BPA to increase the power transmission capacity along the Taft-Garrison No. 1 and No. 2 500-kV transmission lines.

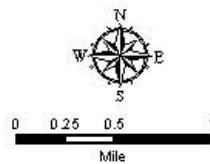
# Project Map



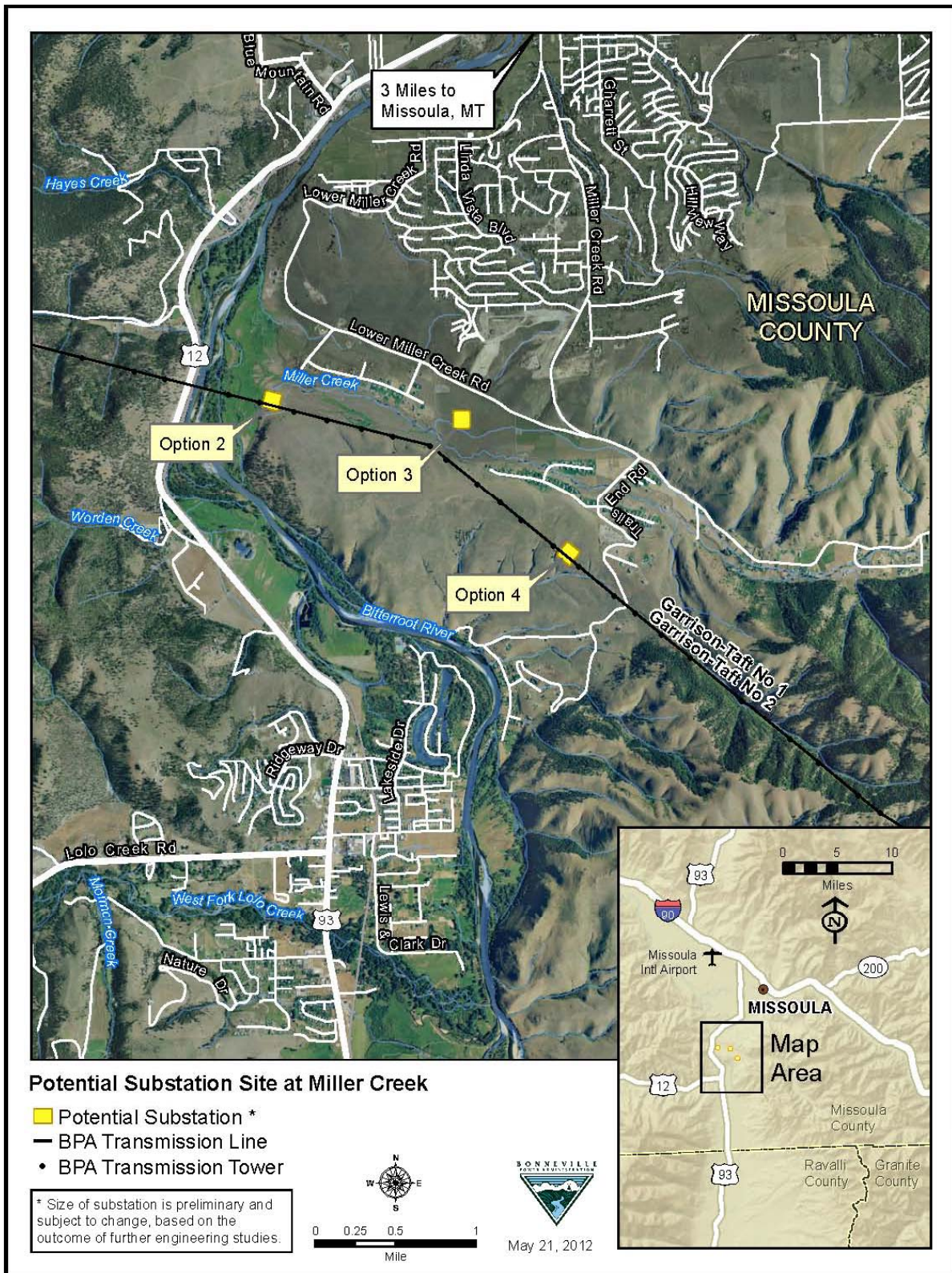
### Potential Substation Site at St. Regis

- Potential Substation \*
- BPA Transmission Line
- BPA Transmission Tower

\* Size of substation is preliminary and subject to change, based on the outcome of further engineering studies.



# Project Map



# Project Description

## Project upgrades would include:

### In Idaho:

- Upgrade existing series capacitor at Dworshak Substation
- Expand Hatwai Substation to install new series and shunt capacitors
- Replace roughly 12 miles of conductor on the Taft-Dworshak No. 1 500-kV line

### In Washington:

- Expand Bell Substation to install new series and shunt capacitors
- Upgrade existing series capacitor at Bell Substation

# Project Components



## Reconductoring

Replacing the conductor (wire) allows BPA to improve transmission system reliability.

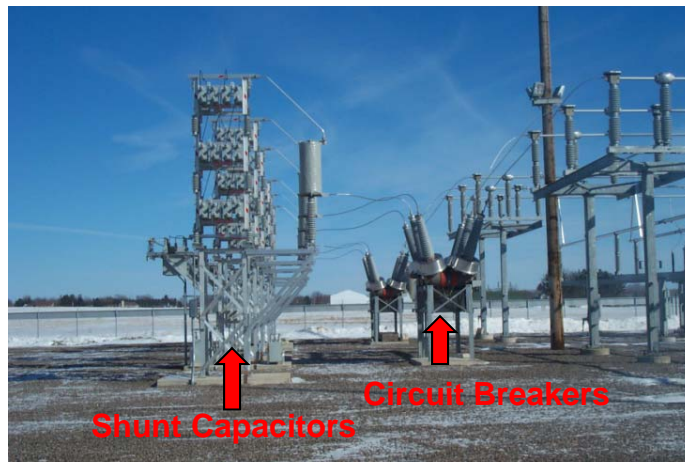
The proposed project would replace existing single wire with twin wire at four segments on the Taft-Dworshak No. 1 500-kV line in order to match the capacity to the rest of the line.

# Project Components



## Series Capacitors

Series Capacitors enable more power to flow through transmission lines without installing new wires.



## Shunt Capacitors & Circuit Breakers

Shunt Capacitors support required voltage levels. Circuit breakers help limit the extent of a power outage.

# Real Property Services

## What is the role of BPA's Realty Group?

- **Respond to landowner questions.**
- **Address all issues regarding potential impacts to property.**
- **Request permission to enter property.**
- **Negotiate and acquire rights for BPA.**

This may include acquiring an easement right across a parcel, or acquiring a portion of land from the property owner.

# Environmental Review

## What is an EIS?

Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) are prepared for federal actions when the significance of the environmental impacts of a proposed action are not clear. During the Scoping process, BPA wants your help by having you tell us:

- What issues should we evaluate?
- What potential environmental impacts should we analyze?
- What alternatives should we consider?

**Your comments will greatly assist us during our environmental review.**



# Environmental Review Schedule

Scoping comment period ends	July 2, 2012
Consider scoping comments	August 2012
Field studies, preliminary design, environmental analysis, and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)	Summer/Fall 2012
Release Draft EIS for comment	Fall 2013
Address comments	Winter 2013
Release Final EIS and issue decision	Fall 2014

# How to Comment

Call: 800-622-4519

Fax: 503-230-4019

Write: Bonneville Power Administration  
Public Affairs Office - DKE-7  
P.O. Box 14428  
Portland, OR 97293-4428

Online: [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W)

Reference “*Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project*” with all communications.

**Scoping Comment Period Ends: July 2, 2012**

Project contacts:

**Amit Sinha**, Project Manager, [axsinha@bpa.gov](mailto:axsinha@bpa.gov), 360-619-6178

**Andrew Montaño**, Environmental Lead, [ammontano@bpa.gov](mailto:ammontano@bpa.gov), 503-230-4145



## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

May 18, 2012

In reply refer to: KEC-4

**To: Parties Interested in the Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project\*  
Project Update for Idaho**

You recently received a letter from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) which informed you that BPA is proposing to upgrade parts of its existing transmission system in Montana, Idaho, and Washington as a result of recent requests for transmission service. This letter briefly explains what activities BPA would perform within the State of Idaho if this Project were approved. *(These proposed activities are explained below and correspond to the Hatwai Substation figure that is enclosed).* This letter also outlines our upcoming public meetings in your area; and, the announcement of an extended comment period regarding this proposed Project. Also enclosed is a Project Fact Sheet that outlines the entire Project proposal and includes an overall Project map.

**BPA Activities within the State of Idaho.** Within the State of Idaho, the BPA facilities that would require a change in their existing footprint include the Hatwai Substation in Nez Perce, Idaho. At the Hatwai Substation, as seen in the enclosed figure, BPA would expand the existing substation yard by 4-5 acres in order to install new series capacitors. These new capacitors would assist this and other BPA facilities to handle the increased transmission capacity by maintaining required voltage levels. Additionally, BPA is also proposing to replace the conductor on four sections (roughly 12 miles) of the Dworshak-Taft No. 1 500-kV transmission line within Shoshone County, Idaho. The replacement of this portion of transmission line is needed to handle the increased transmission capacity by maintaining required line clearance.

**Public Meetings.** BPA will soon start to assess the potential environmental impacts of the proposed alternatives, and we would like to hear from you. What questions do you have? What resources should we analyze? Do you have information or concerns about specific areas? BPA is seeking public input and we have extended our comment period through July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012. We have also scheduled the following open house scoping meetings in your area to hear your input and accept comments related to the scope of the EIS that will be prepared:

**May 22, 2012**  
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Lewiston Community Center  
1424 Main Street  
Lewiston, ID 83501

**June 14, 2012**  
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Wallace Inn  
100 Front Street  
Wallace, ID 83873

We do not plan to give a formal presentation, so you may come any time during any of the meetings. Several members of the project team will be available to answer your questions and listen to your ideas.

\* Please note that this proposed Project was formerly known as the Colstrip Upgrade Project or "CUP West."

**How to Comment.** If you are unable to attend the upcoming meeting, you can still comment. Comments may be submitted online at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment), or you may call us with your comments toll free at (800) 622-4519, or you may also fax your comments to (503) 230-4019. Please submit comments to us by **July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012**, and reference the “Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project” with your comments. We will post all comments we receive on our website at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment).

**For More Information.** To find out more about the proposed Project, other public meetings planned for the proposed Project, or for general information, please go to BPA’s project website at [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W).

If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact me directly toll-free at (800) 282-3713, directly at (503) 230-4145 or by e-mail at [ammontano@bpa.gov](mailto:ammontano@bpa.gov). If you have other questions or would like more Project-specific information, please contact Amit Sinha at the toll-free number listed above, directly at (360) 619-6178 or e-mail at [axsinha@bpa.gov](mailto:axsinha@bpa.gov).

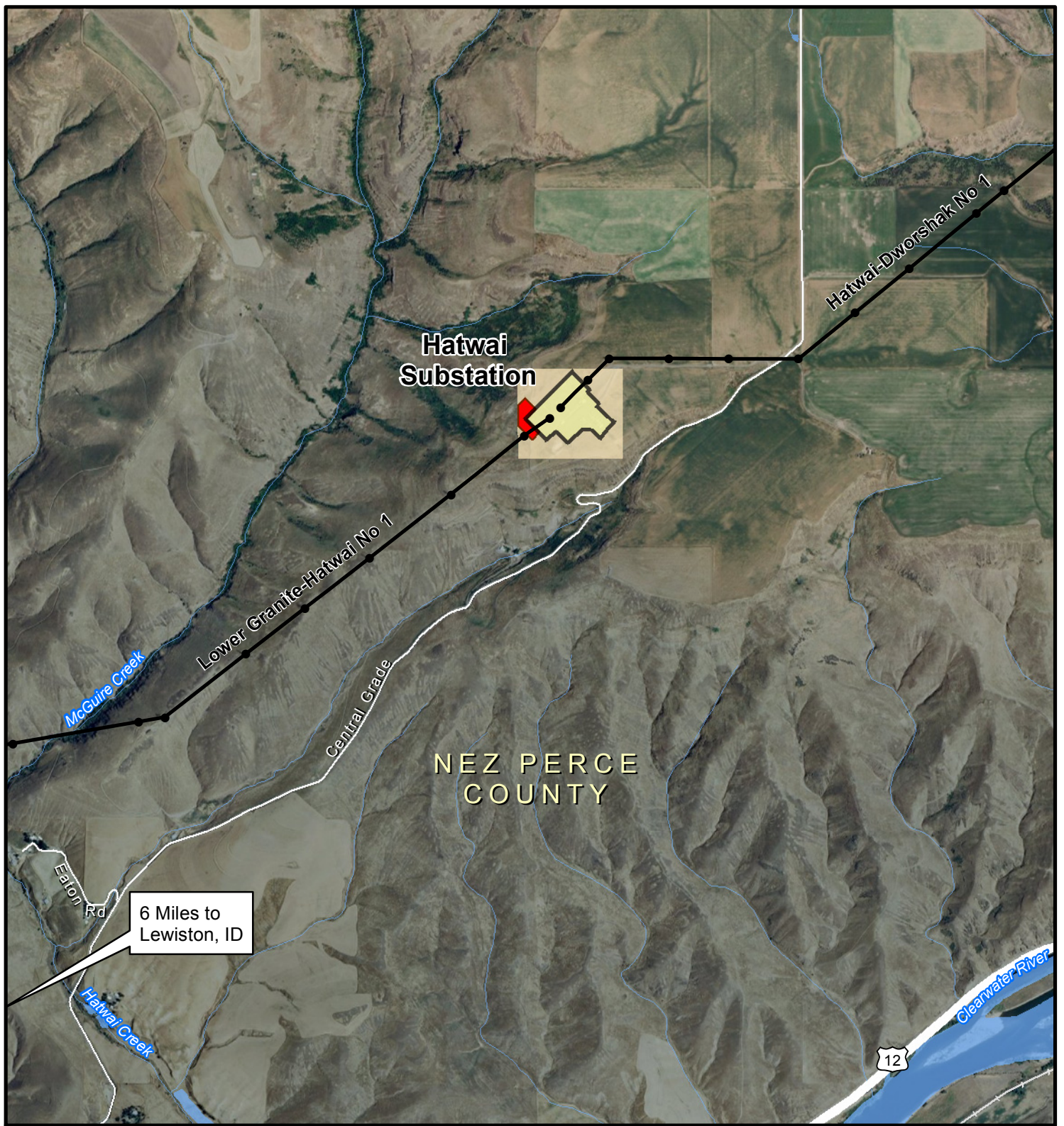
Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,






*/s/ Andrew M. Montañó*

Andrew M. Montañó  
Environmental Project Manager

Enclosures:  
Figure of Hatwai Substation  
Project Fact Sheet

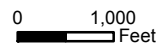
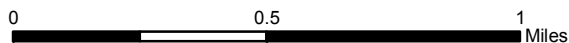


### Hatwai Substation

-  Proposed Area of Expansion
-  Hatwai Substation
-  BPA Property Boundary
-  BPA Transmission Line
-  BPA Transmission Tower



May 16, 2012





# Fact Sheet

May 2012

## Proposed Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project

### Moving energy from east to west

The Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to upgrade parts of its existing transmission system in Montana, Idaho and Washington. The purpose is to increase available transmission capacity from BPA's Garrison Substation in Western Montana to power markets west of the Cascades that serve the entire Northwest.

The proposed upgrades consist of reinforcements to several existing BPA substations; the construction of a new substation along existing transmission lines between St. Regis and Missoula, Mont.; and the reconductor of 12 miles of the Dworshak-Taft No. 1 500-kV line in Montana and Idaho. Reinforcements would occur at the Garrison and Hot Springs substations in Montana, the Dworshak and Hatwai substations in Idaho, and Bell Substation in Washington.

### Why is a new project necessary?

In 2010, BPA conducted a Network Open Season process to identify new requests for long-term transmission service. We found that there was not enough available transmission capacity to accommodate all requests for long-term service. BPA is required by its Open Access Transmission Tariff to provide transmission access to eligible customers. As a result of new transmission service requests, BPA is proposing this project.

### Environmental review schedule

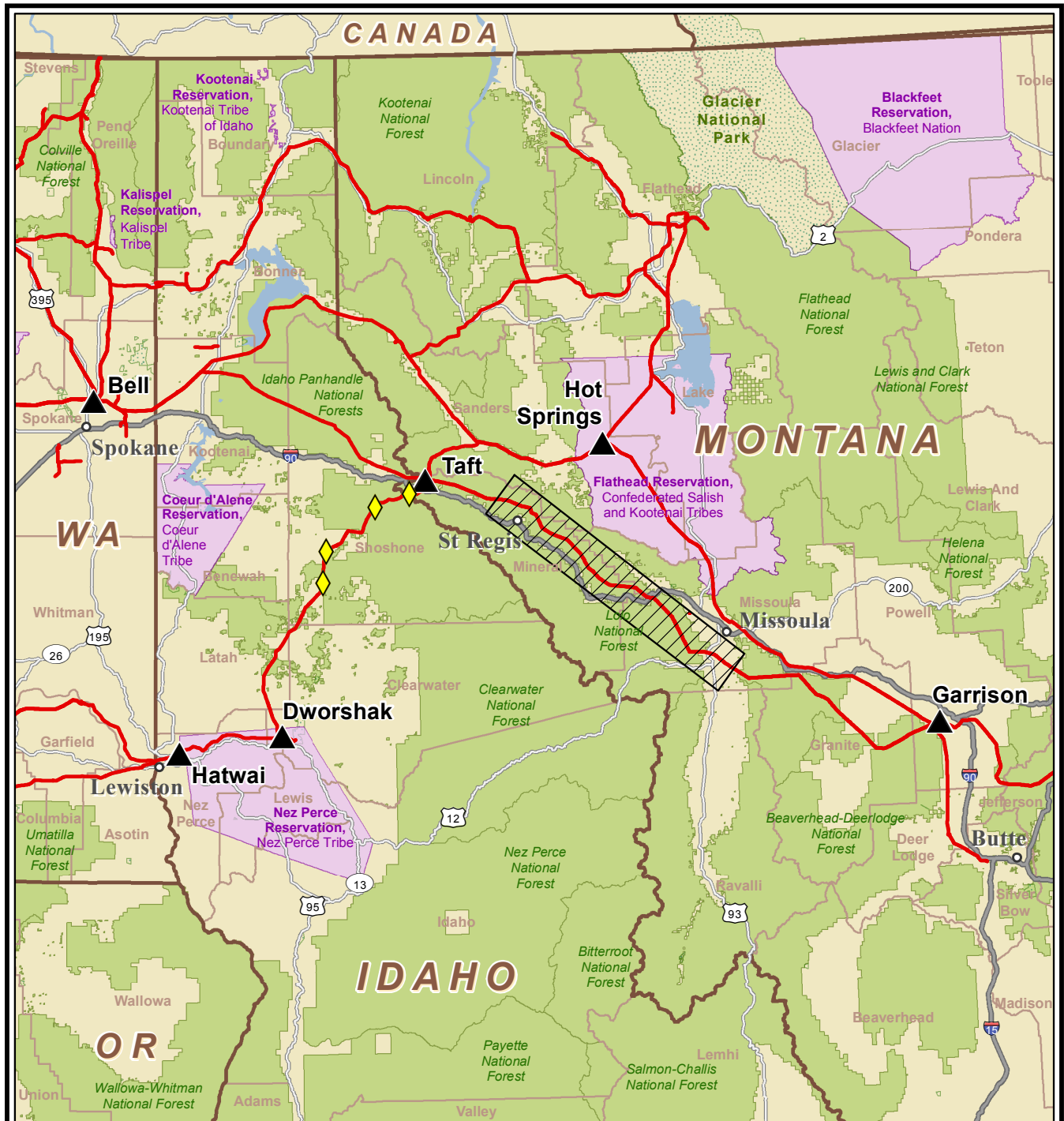
BPA initiated the environmental review for the project in May 2012 and will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project. Environmental work is expected to be complete in fall 2014, with a final decision about the proposed transmission system upgrades and new substation documented in a Record of Decision that will follow the final EIS.

BPA involves the public in decision making because we believe this results in better decisions and fulfills our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act. For more information on the project visit: [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W) or call toll free 800-622-4519.

### Who is BPA?

Bonneville Power Administration is a nonprofit federal agency that provides about a third of the electric power and 75 percent of the high-voltage electric transmission in the Pacific Northwest. We provide the Pacific Northwest low cost, reliable, environmentally responsible electricity. We are accountable to the people of the Northwest and work collaboratively with residents, utilities, elected officials and other stakeholders to meet the region's electricity needs.



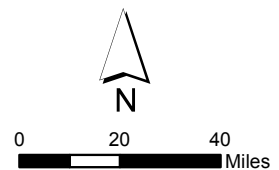


## Montana to Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project



### Legend

- Project Related BPA Substation
- BPA Transmission Line
- Proposed Compensation Station Zone
- Dworshak-Taft Line Upgrade Locations
- USFS Forest Boundary
- Indian Reservation
- National Park





## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

May 25, 2012

In reply refer to: KEC-4

**To: Parties Interested in the Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project\*  
Project Update for Montana**

You recently received a letter from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) which informed you that BPA is proposing to upgrade parts of its existing transmission system in Montana, Idaho, and Washington as a result of recent requests for transmission service. This letter briefly explains what activities BPA would perform within the state of Montana if this Project were approved. (*These proposed activities are explained below and correspond to the St. Regis and Miller Creek figures that are enclosed.*) This letter also outlines our upcoming public meetings in your area and the announcement of an extended comment period regarding this proposed Project. Also enclosed is a Project Fact Sheet that outlines the entire Project proposal and includes an overall Project map.

**BPA activities within the state of Montana.** Within the state of Montana, BPA is planning on constructing a new series compensation substation along existing BPA transmission lines in either Mineral or Missoula County, Montana. BPA is analyzing four potential location options for this proposed new series compensation substation. This new series compensation substation would increase the transmission capacity along the existing transmission lines.

**Public Meetings.** BPA will soon start to assess the potential environmental impacts of the proposed alternatives, and we would like to hear from you. What questions do you have? What resources should we analyze? Do you have information or concerns about specific areas? BPA is seeking public input, and we have extended our comment period through July 2, 2012. We have scheduled the following open-house scoping meetings in your area to hear your input and accept comments related to the scope of the environmental impact statement that will be prepared:

**June 12, 2012**

5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Missoula Fire Department, Station 4  
3011 Latimor Street  
Missoula, MT 59808

**June 13, 2012**

5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
St. Regis School  
6 Tiger Street  
St. Regis, MT 59866

We do not plan to give a formal presentation, so you may come any time during any of the meetings. Several members of the project team will be available to answer your questions and listen to your ideas.

\* Please note that this proposed Project was formerly known as the Colstrip Upgrade Project or "CUP West."



**How to Comment.** If you are unable to attend the upcoming meetings, you can still comment. Comments may be submitted online at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment), or you may call us with your comments toll free at (800) 622-4519, or you may also fax your comments to (503) 230-4019. Please submit comments to us by **July 2, 2012**, and reference the “Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project” with your comments. We will post all comments we receive on our website at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment).

**For More Information.** To find out more about the proposed Project, other public meetings, or general information, please go to BPA’s project website at [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W).

If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact me directly toll-free at (800) 282-3713, directly at (503) 230-4145 or by e-mail at [ammontano@bpa.gov](mailto:ammontano@bpa.gov). If you have other questions or would like more Project-specific information, please contact Amit Sinha at the toll-free number listed above, directly at (360) 619-6178 or e-mail at [axsinha@bpa.gov](mailto:axsinha@bpa.gov).

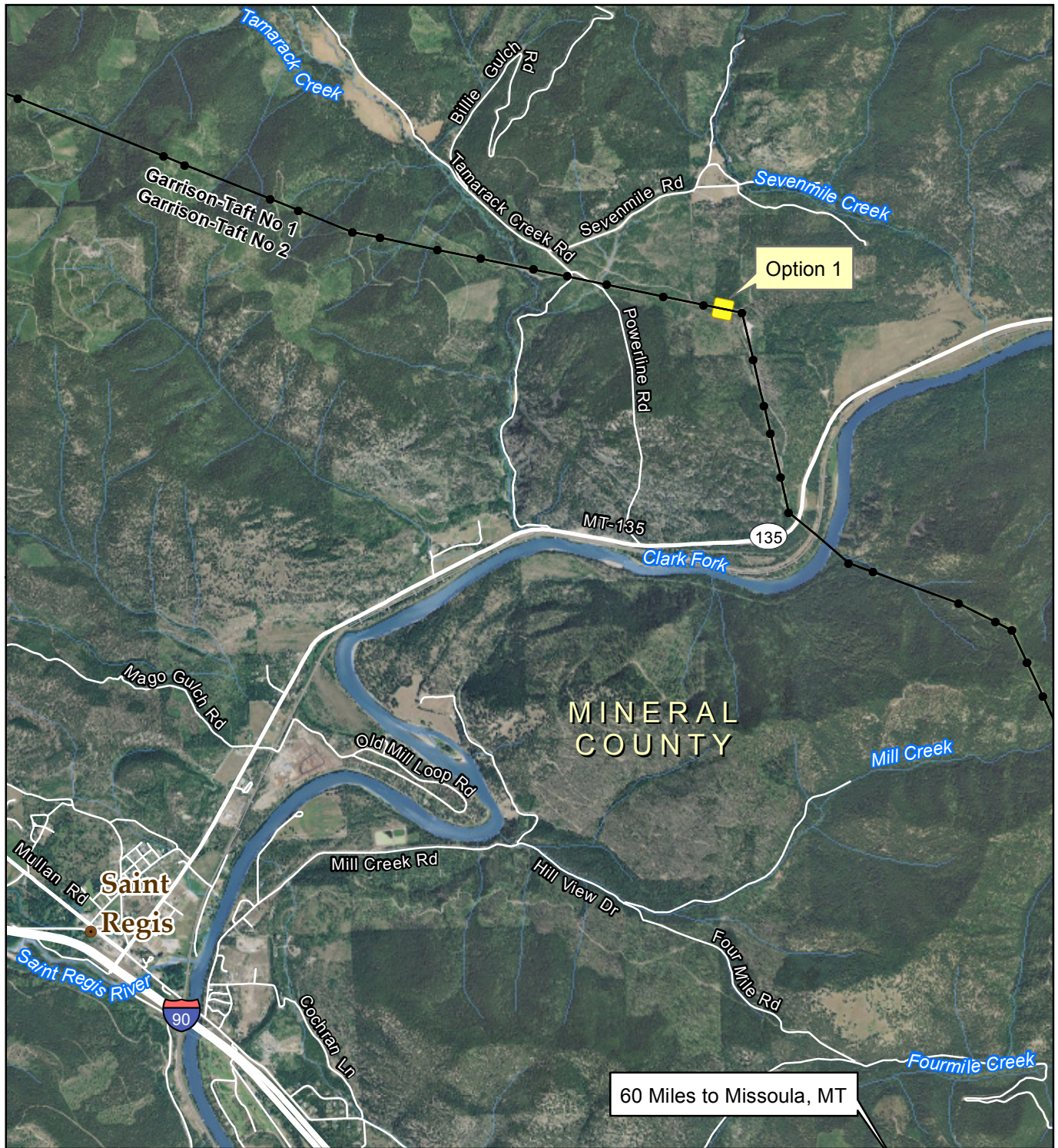
Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Andrew M. Montañó*

Andrew M. Montañó  
Environmental Project Manager

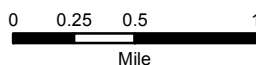
Enclosures:  
Figure of St. Regis Area  
Figure of Miller Creek Area  
Project Fact Sheet



### Potential Substation Site at St. Regis

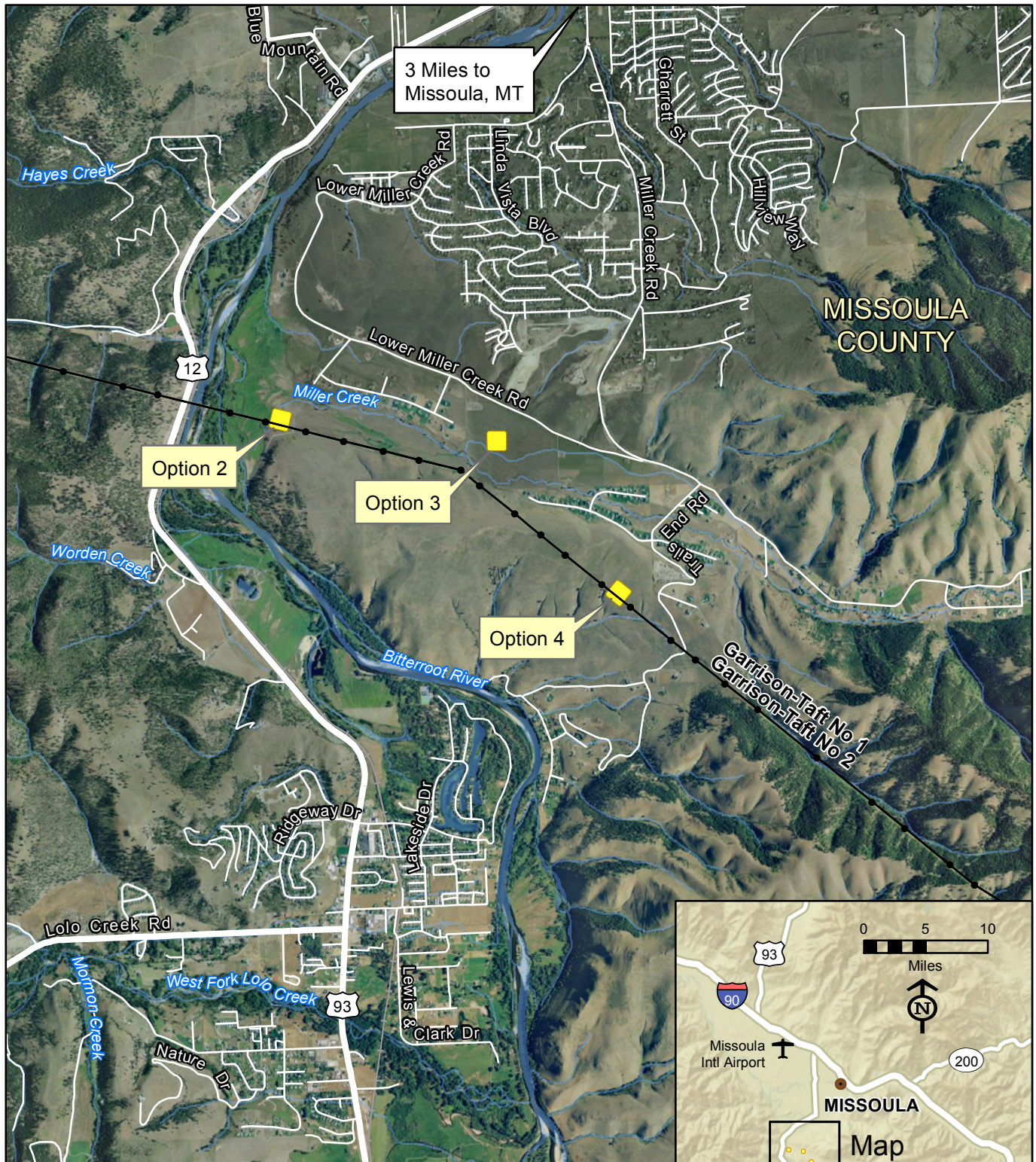
- Potential Substation \*
- BPA Transmission Line
- BPA Transmission Tower

\* Size of substation is preliminary and subject to change, based on the outcome of further engineering studies.



May 21, 2012





MISSOULA COUNTY

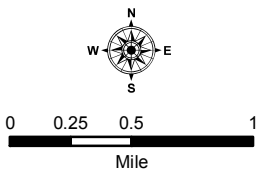
Garrison-Taft No 1  
Garrison-Taft No 2



**Potential Substation Site at Miller Creek**

- Potential Substation \*
- BPA Transmission Line
- BPA Transmission Tower

\* Size of substation is preliminary and subject to change, based on the outcome of further engineering studies.



May 21, 2012



# Fact Sheet

May 2012

## Proposed Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project

### Moving energy from east to west

The Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to upgrade parts of its existing transmission system in Montana, Idaho and Washington. The purpose is to increase available transmission capacity from BPA's Garrison Substation in Western Montana to power markets west of the Cascades that serve the entire Northwest.

The proposed upgrades consist of reinforcements to several existing BPA substations; the construction of a new substation along existing transmission lines between St. Regis and Missoula, Mont.; and the reconductor of 12 miles of the Dworshak-Taft No. 1 500-kV line in Montana and Idaho. Reinforcements would occur at the Garrison and Hot Springs substations in Montana, the Dworshak and Hatwai substations in Idaho, and Bell Substation in Washington.

### Why is a new project necessary?

In 2010, BPA conducted a Network Open Season process to identify new requests for long-term transmission service. We found that there was not enough available transmission capacity to accommodate all requests for long-term service. BPA is required by its Open Access Transmission Tariff to provide transmission access to eligible customers. As a result of new transmission service requests, BPA is proposing this project.

### Environmental review schedule

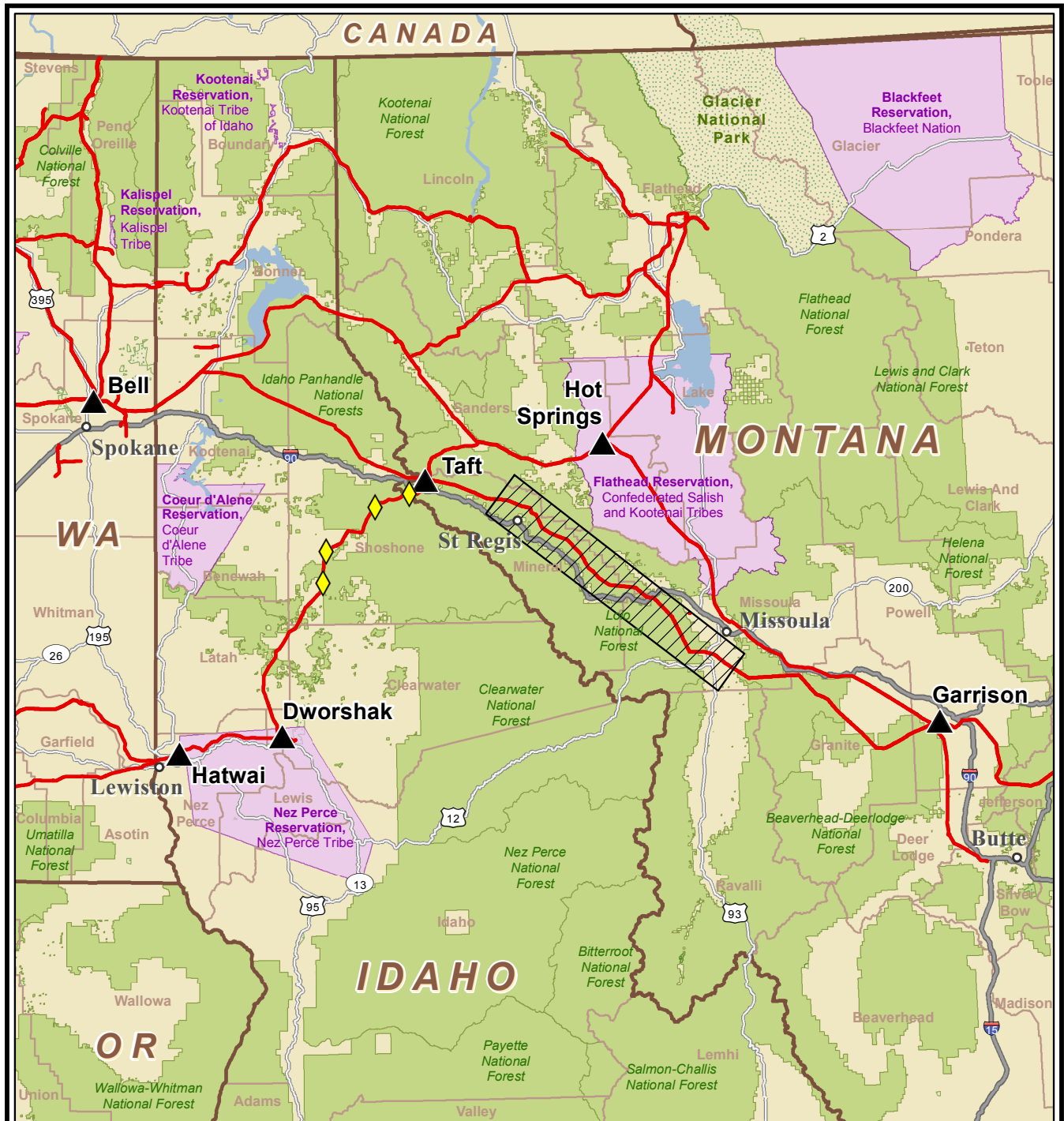
BPA initiated the environmental review for the project in May 2012 and will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project. Environmental work is expected to be complete in fall 2014, with a final decision about the proposed transmission system upgrades and new substation documented in a Record of Decision that will follow the final EIS.

BPA involves the public in decision making because we believe this results in better decisions and fulfills our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act. For more information on the project visit: [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W) or call toll free 800-622-4519.

### Who is BPA?

Bonneville Power Administration is a nonprofit federal agency that provides about a third of the electric power and 75 percent of the high-voltage electric transmission in the Pacific Northwest. We provide the Pacific Northwest low cost, reliable, environmentally responsible electricity. We are accountable to the people of the Northwest and work collaboratively with residents, utilities, elected officials and other stakeholders to meet the region's electricity needs.



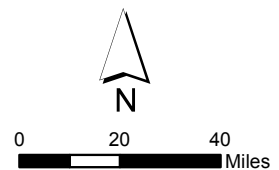


## Montana to Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project



### Legend

- Project Related BPA Substation
- BPA Transmission Line
- Proposed Compensation Station Zone
- Dworshak-Taft Line Upgrade Locations
- USFS Forest Boundary
- Indian Reservation
- National Park





## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

August 1, 2013

In reply refer to: KEC-4

### **To: Parties Interested in the Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project**

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to upgrade parts of its existing high voltage transmission system in Montana, Idaho, and Washington as a result of recent customer requests for transmission service. This letter briefly explains what is being proposed, outlines our environmental review process and schedule, and informs you on how to comment on the proposal. Please note that this proposed project was formerly known as the Colstrip Upgrade Project or "CUP West."

**Proposal.** BPA is proposing several upgrades on its existing transmission system in order to increase available transmission capacity from BPA's Garrison Substation in Western Montana to load centers west of the Cascades and to market hubs serving the entire Northwest power market. These upgrades would help BPA accommodate requests for long-term firm transmission service that BPA has received for the West of Garrison and West of Hatwai transmission paths. More specifically, these upgrades would increase the firm east-to-west transfer capability of these transmission paths primarily by increasing the series compensation in *existing* 500- kilovolt (kV) lines in the area and would not require any *new* high voltage transmission lines.

To understand the potential environmental impacts of this proposal, BPA will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. We are presently considering two alternatives to be studied in detail in the EIS: the proposed system upgrades listed above and a "no action" alternative in which BPA would not upgrade its system and not be able to provide the requested transmission service. The EIS will describe anticipated impacts to the natural and built environment and include mitigation measures to avoid or minimize impacts. During this process, BPA will work with federal, state and local agencies, tribes, landowners, and interest groups.

**BPA activities within the state of Montana.** If BPA decides to build the proposed project, we would construct a new series compensation substation along existing BPA transmission lines in either Mineral or Missoula County, Montana (*please see the enclosed project maps*). The new series compensation substation would increase transmission capacity along the *existing* transmission lines. BPA is considering eight potential location options for the proposed series compensation substation and is analyzing the potential environmental impacts of each option. BPA is also proposing to upgrade transmission equipment within the *existing* Garrison and Hot Springs substations that would enable more power to flow through the existing transmission lines and that would support required voltage levels within these facilities.

### **Public Meetings Held and Ways to Still Comment.**

BPA held a series of public meetings to solicit comments on the scope of this proposed project in May through June, 2012. The scoping comment period closed on July 2, 2012; and, the comments that were received can be seen in their entirety at [www.bpa.gov/goto/M2WScopingComments2012](http://www.bpa.gov/goto/M2WScopingComments2012). In response to the comments received during scoping, BPA is considering a new substation site option not previously identified. Because this is a new addition to the original project proposal, we would like to hear from you about this new project development.

Choose the way you would like to comment:

**Mail:** **Bonneville Power Administration**  
Public Affairs – DKE-7  
P.O. Box 14428  
Portland, OR 97293-4428

**Online:** [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment)  
**E-mail:** [comment@bpa.gov](mailto:comment@bpa.gov)  
**FAX:** 503-230-4019  
**Toll-free:** 800-622-4519

You may return the enclosed comment form or other written correspondence in the postage-paid envelope provided. Please submit comments to us by **October 31, 2013** and reference the “*Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project*.” We will post all comments we receive on our website at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment).

**Process and Schedule.** Starting as early as fall 2013, you may see BPA staff or contractors in the area as they conduct engineering and environmental surveys. If we need to enter property where we do not have existing access rights, we will contact property owners for permission through a separate mailing.

BPA is planning to produce a draft EIS for review and comment in the fall of 2014. If you would like to receive a copy of the draft EIS, please indicate on the enclosed comment form as to how you would like to receive it once it is available. If you would like to be taken off the project mailing list, please mark the box on the form. If you do not return the form, you will still receive notice when the draft EIS is available.

BPA expects to issue a final EIS for the proposal in the fall of 2015. BPA’s decision concerning the proposed transmission system upgrades will be documented in a record of decision that will follow the final EIS.

**For More Information.** To find out more about the project, please go to BPA’s project website at [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W).

If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact me toll-free at (800) 282-3713, directly at (503) 230-4145 or by e-mail at [ammontano@bpa.gov](mailto:ammontano@bpa.gov). If you have other questions or would like more project-specific information, please contact Amit Sinha, Project Manager, at the toll-free number listed above, directly at (360) 619-6178 or e-mail at [axsinha@bpa.gov](mailto:axsinha@bpa.gov).

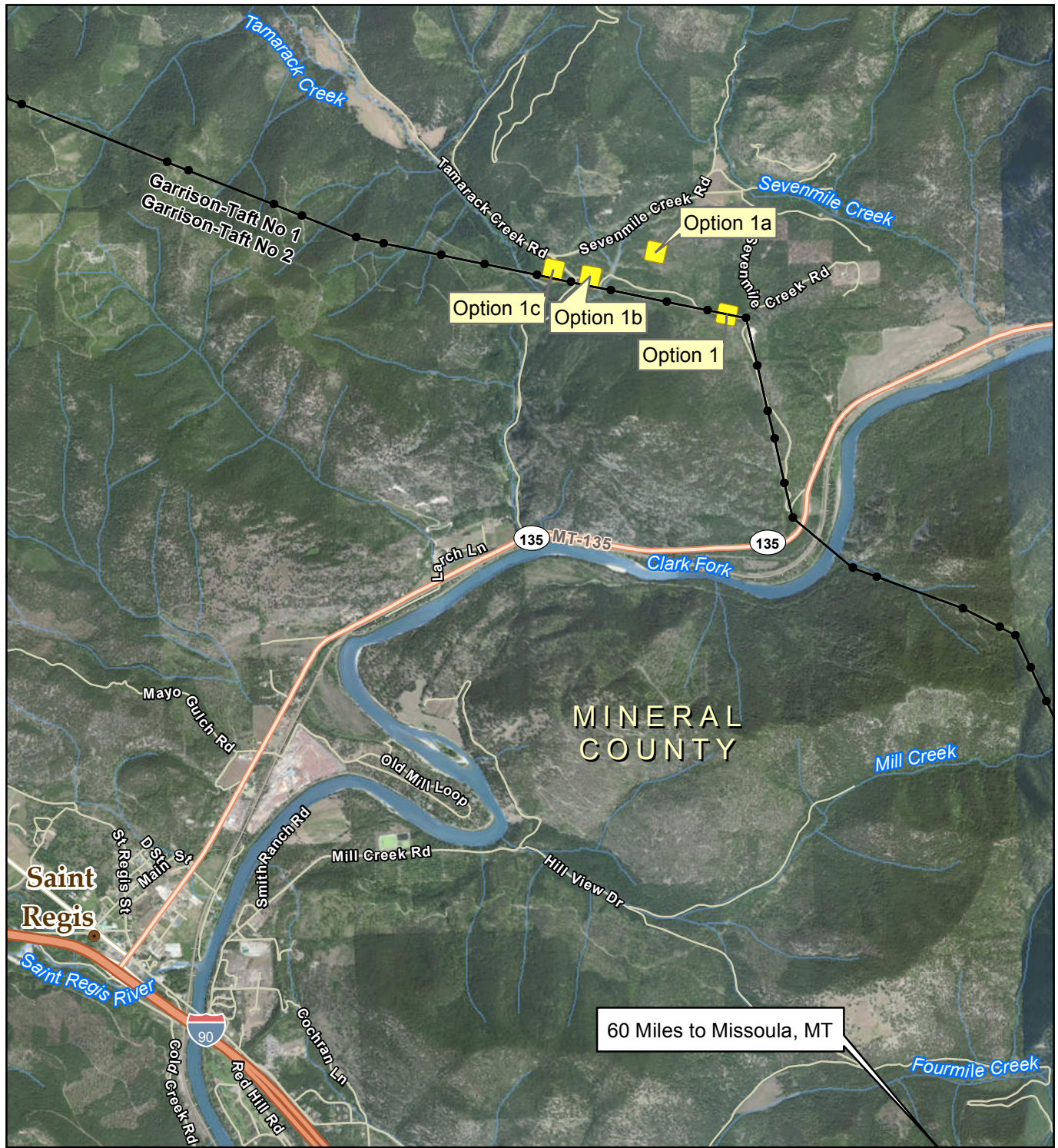
Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Andrew M. Montaña*

Andrew M. Montaña, PMP  
Environmental Project Manager

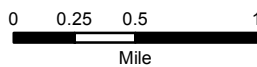
Enclosures:  
Project Maps  
Comment Form  
Return Envelope



### Potential Substation Sites at St. Regis

- Potential Substation \*
- BPA Transmission Line
- BPA Transmission Tower

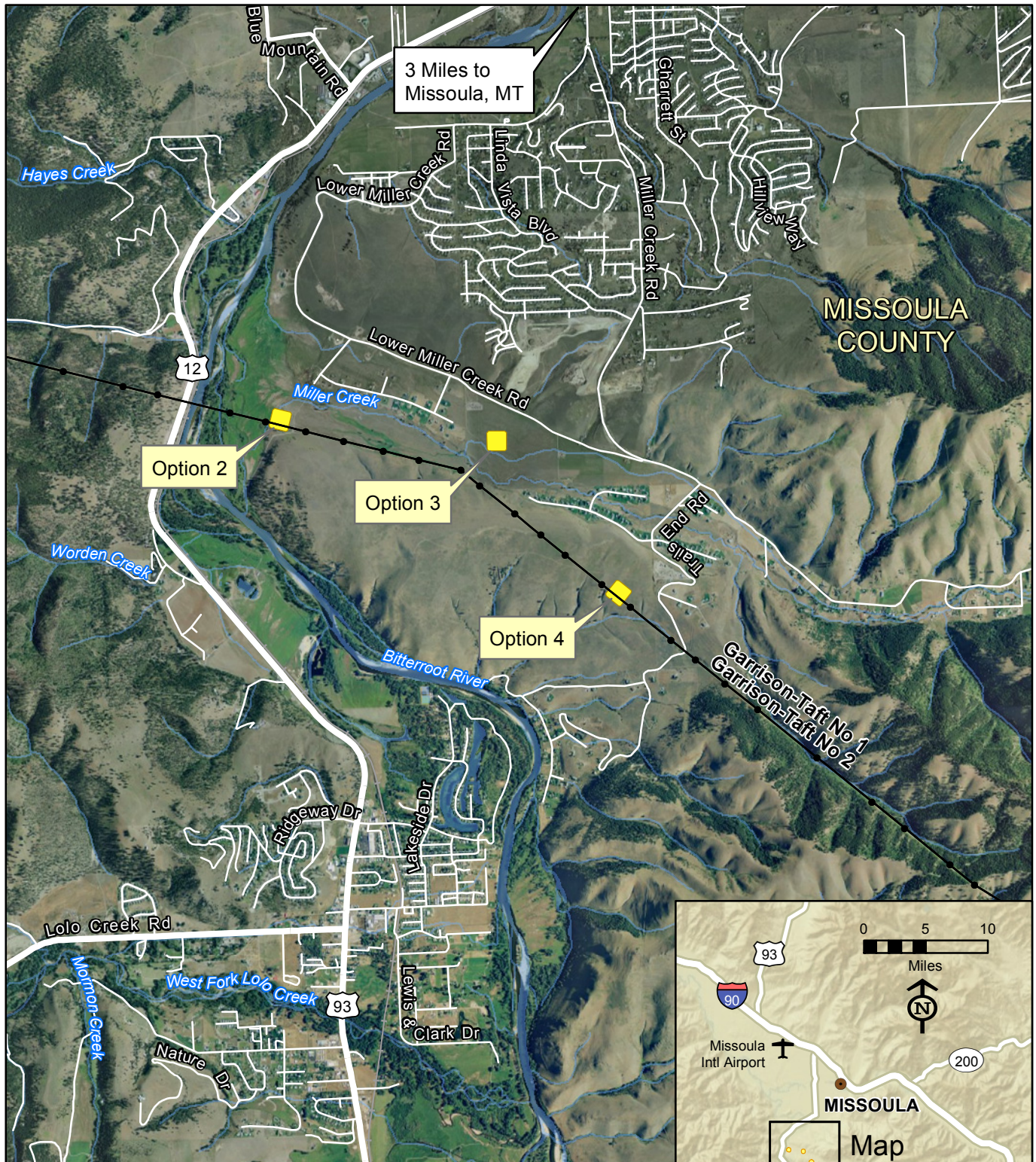
\* Size of substation is preliminary and subject to change, based on the outcome of further engineering studies.



June 4, 2013







MISSOULA COUNTY

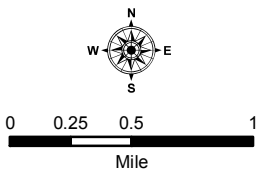
Garrison-Taft No 1  
Garrison-Taft No 2



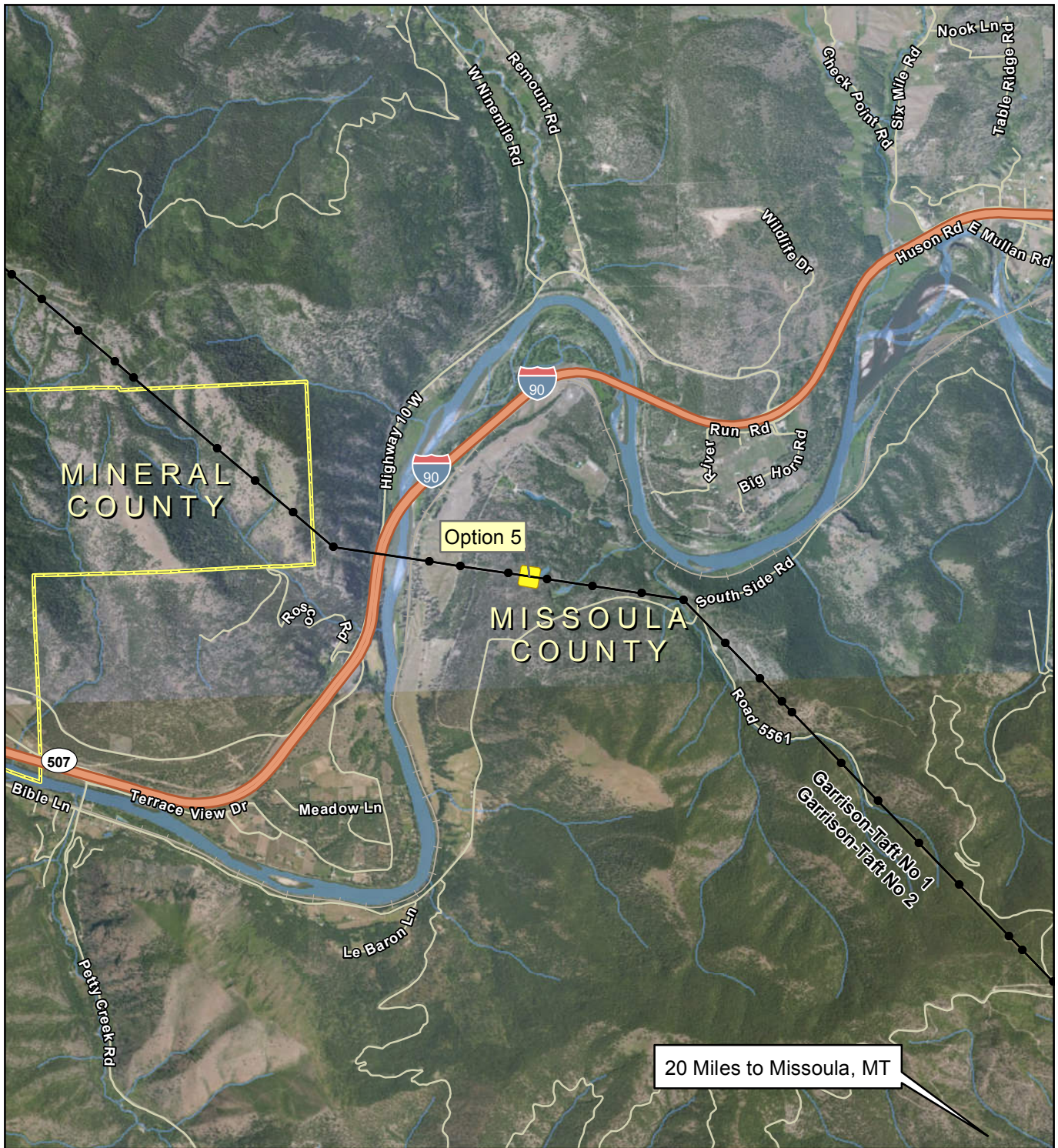
**Potential Substation Site at Miller Creek**

- Potential Substation \*
- BPA Transmission Line
- BPA Transmission Tower

\* Size of substation is preliminary and subject to change, based on the outcome of further engineering studies.



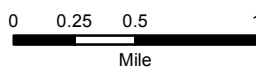
May 21, 2012



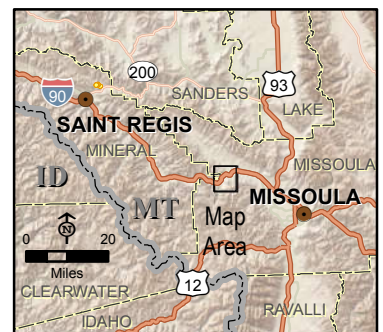
**Potential Substation Site at Alberton**

- Potential Substation \*
- BPA Transmission Line
- BPA Transmission Tower

\* Size of substation is preliminary and subject to change, based on the outcome of further engineering studies.



June 4, 2013



# Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project

*Your comments will inform the NEPA review process*

Please have your studies look at:

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I need more information about:

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I have these other comments:

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Please let us know if you'd like to receive a copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) once it becomes available (check one):

YES  NO

If YES, please indicate how you'd like to receive a copy of the DEIS (check one):

Mail me a hardcopy (200-400 pages)  Mail me a CD-ROM  I'll just check the Project Website

Name/Address: \_\_\_\_\_

You may also post your comments at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment);  
You may also call BPA at 1-800-622-4519, or FAX your comments to 503-230-4019.  
Please mention "Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project" in your correspondence.

**The comment period ends October 31, 2013.**





## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

August 2013

In reply refer to: KEC-4

### **To: Parties Interested in the Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project**

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to upgrade parts of its existing high voltage transmission system in Montana, Idaho, and Washington as a result of recent customer requests for transmission service. This letter briefly explains what is being proposed, outlines our environmental review process and schedule, and informs you on how to comment on the proposal. Please note that this proposed project was formerly known as the Colstrip Upgrade Project or "CUP West."

**Proposal.** BPA is proposing several upgrades on its existing transmission system in order to increase available transmission capacity from BPA's Garrison Substation in Western Montana to load centers west of the Cascades and to market hubs serving the entire Northwest power market. These upgrades would help BPA accommodate requests for long-term firm transmission service that BPA has received for the West of Garrison and West of Hatwai transmission paths. More specifically, these upgrades would increase the firm east-to-west transfer capability of these transmission paths primarily by increasing the series compensation in *existing* 500-kilovolt (kV) lines in the area and would not require any *new* high voltage transmission lines.

To understand the potential environmental impacts of this proposal, BPA will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. We are presently considering two alternatives to be studied in detail in the EIS: the proposed system upgrades listed below and a "no action" alternative in which BPA would not upgrade its system and not be able to provide the requested transmission service. The EIS will describe anticipated impacts to the natural and built environment and include mitigation measures to avoid or minimize impacts. During this process, BPA will work with federal, state and local agencies, tribes, landowners, and interest groups.

**Project Proposal and Updates since 2012.** If BPA decides to build the proposed project, we would construct a new series compensation substation along *existing* BPA transmission lines in either Mineral or Missoula County, Montana (*please see the enclosed project maps*). The new series compensation substation would increase transmission capacity along the *existing* transmission lines. BPA is now considering three additional sites at St. Regis and one additional site located near Alberton, Montana for the proposed series compensation substation. Therefore, BPA will now be considering eight potential location options and is analyzing the potential environmental impacts of each option. BPA is also proposing to upgrade transmission equipment within several *existing* substations that would enable more power to flow through the existing transmission lines and that would support required voltage levels within these facilities. Lastly, reconductoring is being proposed on four sections totaling 12 miles on an *existing* transmission line in Idaho.

**Public Meetings Held and Ways to Still Comment.** BPA held a series of public meetings to solicit comments on the scope of this proposed project in May through June, 2012. The scoping comment period closed on July 2, 2012; and, the comments that were received can be seen in their entirety at [www.bpa.gov/goto/M2WScopingComments2012](http://www.bpa.gov/goto/M2WScopingComments2012).

In response to the comments received during scoping, BPA is considering several new substation site options not previously identified. Because this is a new addition to the original project proposal, we would like to hear from you about this new project development. You may choose the way you would like to comment on the proposed project:

<b>Mail:</b>	<b>Bonneville Power Administration</b>	<b>Online:</b>	<a href="http://www.bpa.gov/comment">www.bpa.gov/comment</a>
	Public Affairs – DKE-7	<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:comment@bpa.gov">comment@bpa.gov</a>
	P.O. Box 14428	<b>FAX:</b>	503-230-4019
	Portland, OR 97293-4428	<b>Toll-free:</b>	800-622-4519

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**Process and Schedule.** Starting as early as fall 2013, you may see BPA staff or contractors in the area as they conduct engineering and environmental surveys. If we need to enter property where we do not have existing access rights, we will contact property owners for permission through a separate mailing.

BPA is planning to produce a draft EIS for review and comment in the fall of 2014. If you would like to receive a copy of the draft EIS, please indicate on the enclosed comment form as to how you would like to receive it once it is available. If you would like to be taken off the project mailing list, please mark the box on the form. If you do not return the form, you will still receive notice when the draft EIS is available.

BPA expects to issue a final EIS for the proposal in the fall of 2015. BPA’s decision concerning the proposed transmission system upgrades will be documented in a record of decision that will follow the final EIS.

**For More Information.** To be kept abreast of project updates, please go to BPA’s project website at [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W).

If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact me toll-free at (800) 282-3713, directly at (503) 230-4145 or by e-mail at [ammontano@bpa.gov](mailto:ammontano@bpa.gov). If you have other questions or would like more project-specific information, please contact Amit Sinha, Project Manager, at the toll-free number listed above, directly at (360) 619-6178 or e-mail at [axsinha@bpa.gov](mailto:axsinha@bpa.gov).

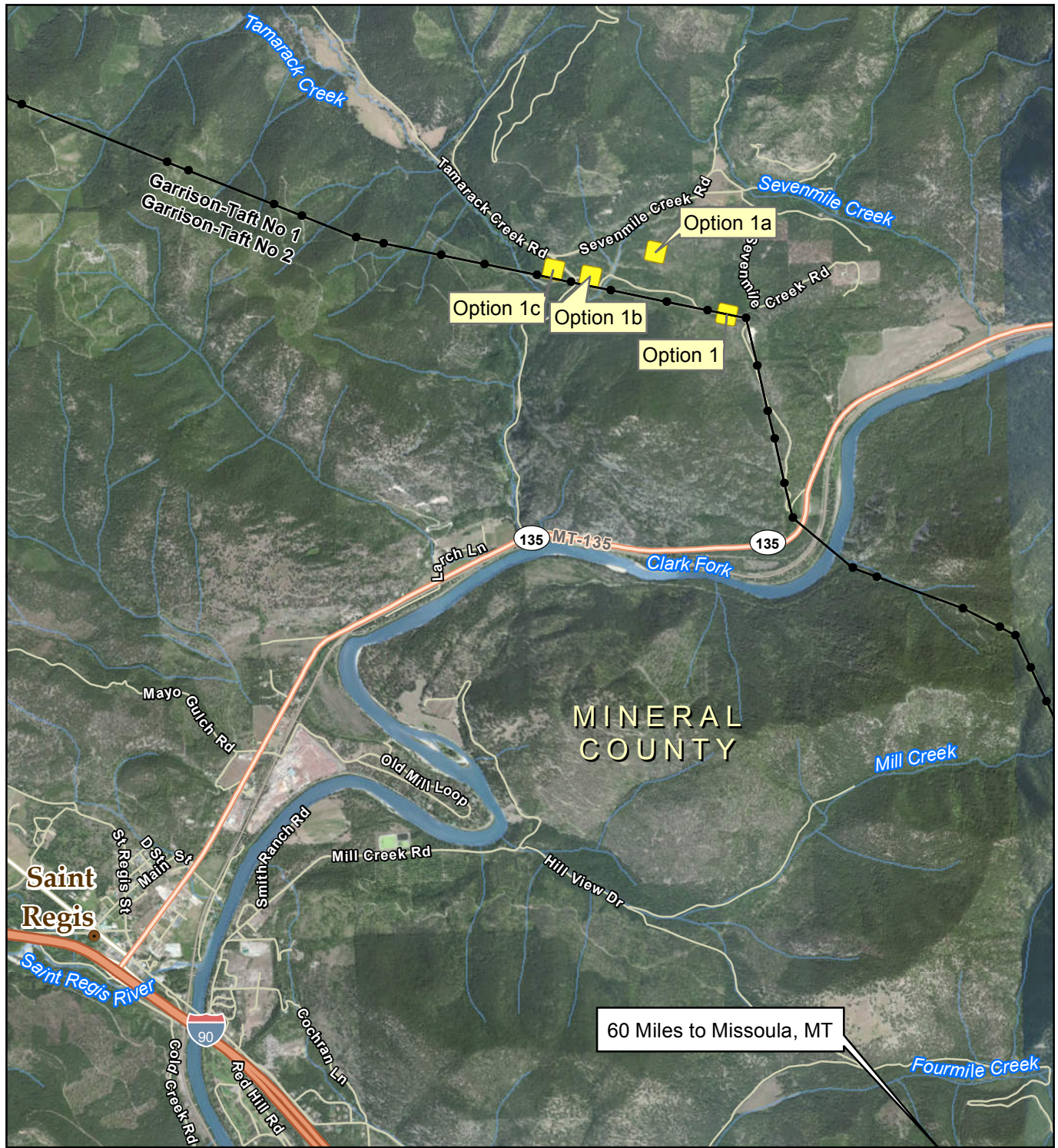
Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

/s/ Andrew M. Montaña

Andrew M. Montaña, PMP  
Environmental Project Manager

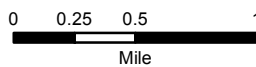
Enclosures:  
Project Maps  
Comment Form  
Return Envelope



### Potential Substation Sites at St. Regis

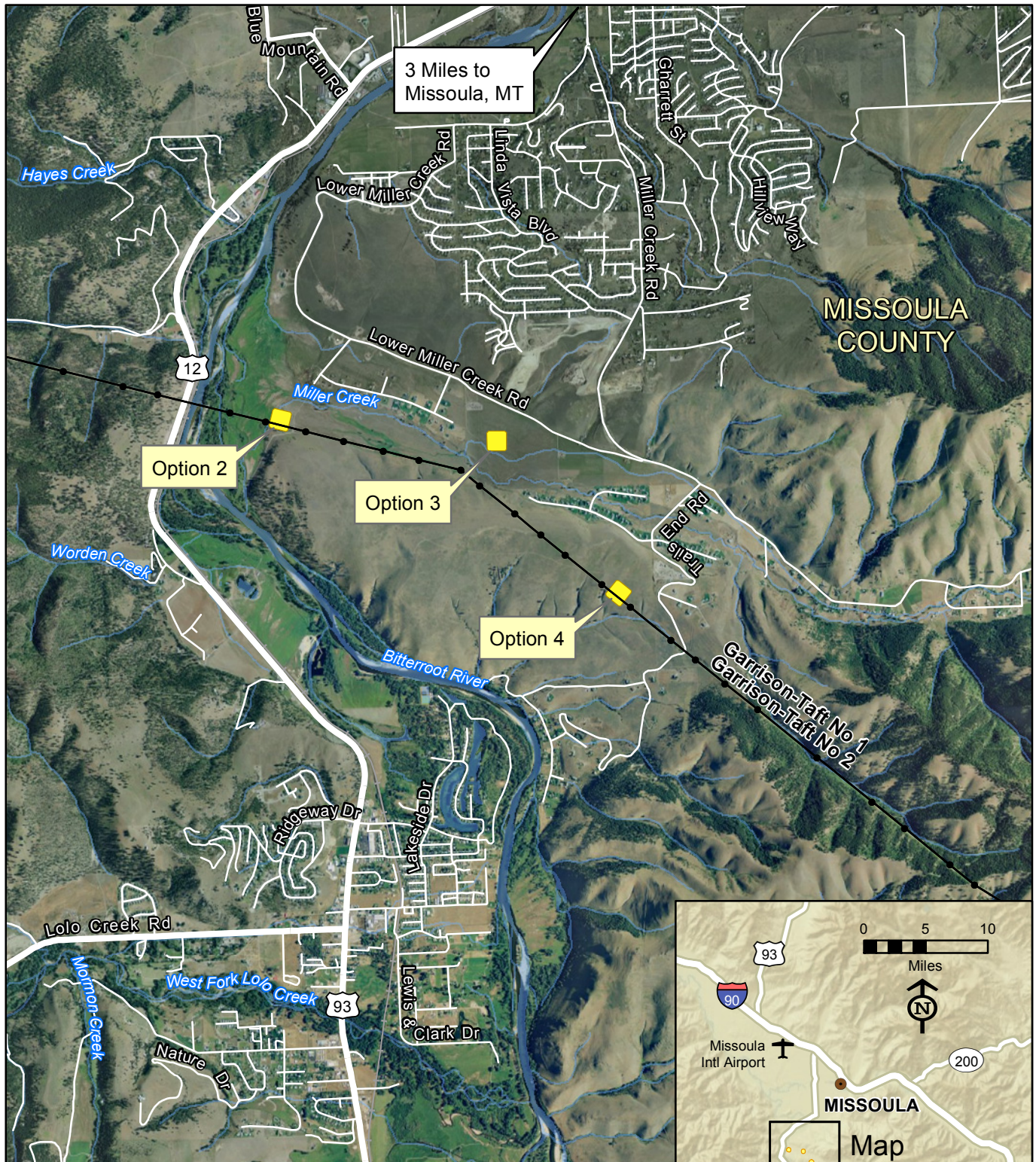
- Potential Substation \*
- BPA Transmission Line
- BPA Transmission Tower

\* Size of substation is preliminary and subject to change, based on the outcome of further engineering studies.



June 4, 2013

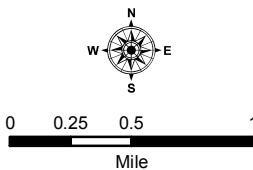




**Potential Substation Site at Miller Creek**

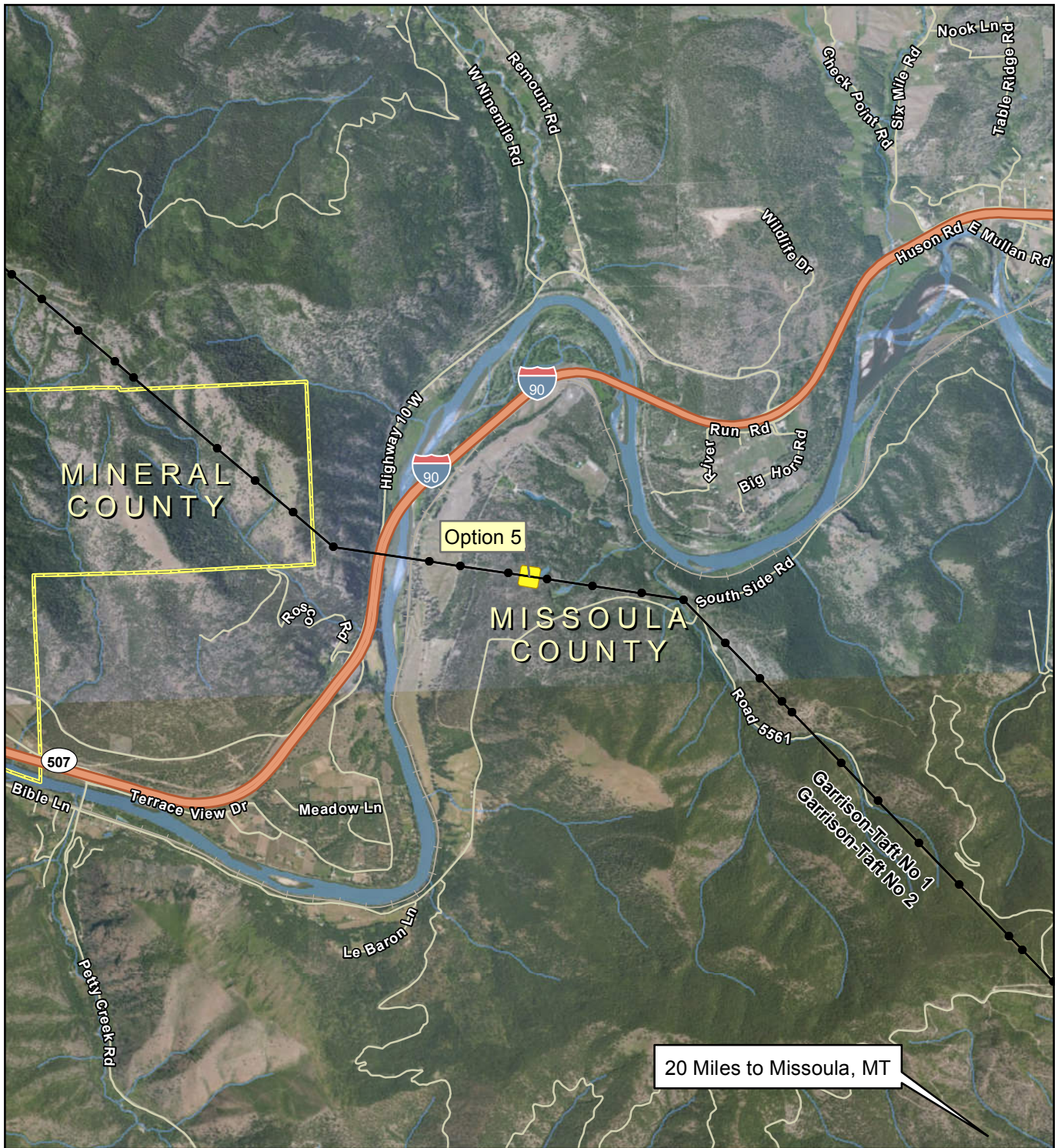
- Potential Substation \*
- BPA Transmission Line
- BPA Transmission Tower

\* Size of substation is preliminary and subject to change, based on the outcome of further engineering studies.



May 21, 2012

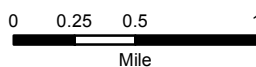




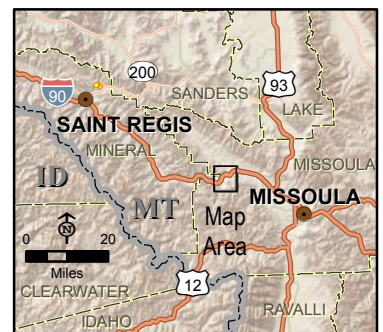
### Potential Substation Site at Alberton

- Potential Substation \*
- BPA Transmission Line
- BPA Transmission Tower

\* Size of substation is preliminary and subject to change, based on the outcome of further engineering studies.



June 4, 2013





# Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project

*Your comments will inform the NEPA review process*

Please have your studies look at:

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I need more information about:

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I have these other comments:

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Please let us know if you'd like to receive a copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) once it becomes available (check one):

YES

NO

If YES, please indicate how you'd like to receive a copy of the DEIS (check one):

Mail me a hardcopy (200-400 pages)  Mail me a CD-ROM  I'll just check the Project Website

Name/Address: \_\_\_\_\_

You may also post your comments at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment);  
You may also call BPA at 1-800-622-4519, or FAX your comments to 503-230-4019.  
Please mention "Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project" in your correspondence.

**The comment period ends October 31, 2013.**





# Fact Sheet

August 2013

## Proposed Montana-to-Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project

### Moving energy from east to west

The Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to upgrade parts of its existing transmission system in Montana, Idaho and Washington. The purpose is to increase available transmission capacity from BPA's Garrison Substation in Western Montana to power markets west of the Cascades that serve the entire Northwest.

The proposed upgrades consist of reinforcements to several existing BPA substations; the construction of a new substation along existing transmission lines between St. Regis and Missoula, Mont.; and the reconductor of 12 miles of the Dworshak-Taft No. 1 500-kV line in Montana and Idaho. Reinforcements would occur at the Garrison and Hot Springs substations in Montana, the Dworshak and Hatwai substations in Idaho, and Bell Substation in Washington.

### Why is a new project necessary?

In 2010, BPA conducted a Network Open Season process to identify new requests for long-term transmission service. We found that there was not enough available transmission capacity to accommodate all requests for long-term service. BPA is required by its Open Access Transmission Tariff to provide transmission access to eligible customers. As a result of new transmission service requests, BPA is proposing this project.

### Environmental review schedule

BPA initiated the environmental review for the project in May 2012 and will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project. Environmental work is expected to be complete in fall 2015, with a final decision about the proposed transmission system upgrades and new substation documented in a Record of Decision that will follow the final EIS.

BPA involves the public in decision making because we believe this results in better decisions and fulfills our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act. For more information on the project visit: [www.bpa.gov/go/M2W](http://www.bpa.gov/go/M2W) or call toll free 800-622-4519.

### Who is BPA?

Bonneville Power Administration is a nonprofit federal agency that provides about a third of the electric power and 75 percent of the high-voltage electric transmission in the Pacific Northwest. We provide the Pacific Northwest low cost, reliable, environmentally responsible electricity. We are accountable to the people of the Northwest and work collaboratively with residents, utilities, elected officials and other stakeholders to meet the region's electricity needs.





## Montana to Washington Transmission System Upgrade Project



### Legend

- Project Related BPA Substation
- BPA Transmission Line
- Proposed Compensation Station Zone
- Dworshak-Taft Line Upgrade Locations
- USFS Forest Boundary
- Indian Reservation
- National Park

