

GRAND COULEE– BELL 500-kV TRANSMISSION LINE
PROJECT

APPENDIX A:
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



Department of Energy

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

January 14, 2002

In reply refer to: TNP-TPP-3

To: People Interested in the Grand Coulee-Bell 500-kV Transmission Line Project (Eastern Washington Reinforcement)

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to replace approximately 84 miles of an existing 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line with a 500-kV transmission line between Grand Coulee and Spokane, Washington. This letter briefly explains what is being proposed, outlines our process and schedule, and invites you to meetings where you can comment and learn more. Please pass this letter on to anyone occupying your property such as renters or lessees. You can also call us with the names and addresses so we can mail a copy of the letter and add these people to our mailing list. If you cannot attend these meetings, other ways to be involved and provide input are described below.

Proposal

The proposed 500-kV transmission line would connect from BPA's existing Bell Substation in Spokane to the Bureau of Reclamation's existing Grand Coulee Switchyard at Grand Coulee Dam. The new line would be located primarily on BPA's existing right-of way. The project also would involve expanding Bell Substation and developing Grand Coulee Switchyard within the fenced area.

The project is needed to improve reliability and to support current and future demand for electricity in Washington State and the Pacific Northwest. The transmission line corridor between the Grand Coulee and Bell substations currently contains two 115-kV wood pole and three 230-kV steel lattice transmission lines. Two of the 230-kV lines are double circuited on one set of steel towers. Together, these transmission lines can no longer efficiently move power from generation sources east of Spokane to areas west of Spokane. Replacing one of the 115-kV lines with a 500-kV line will relieve congestion, provide for future growth, and enhance service reliability to the community.

As part of the project, BPA will consult with affected Tribes, conduct environmental studies, and collect public comments. Community input is an integral part of the process, and BPA will seek comments throughout the project.

Public Open House Meetings

We will soon start to assess the project's environmental impacts. But before we do, we would like to hear from you. What questions do you have? What resources should we analyze? We have scheduled three open house public meetings to hear your ideas and questions.

Tuesday, January 29, 2002

4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Old Center School Building
(Big Bend Community College)
317 Spokane Way
Grand Coulee, Washington

Wednesday, January 30, 2002

4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Davenport Elementary School

1101 7th Street
Davenport, Washington

Wednesday, February 6, 2002

4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Inland Northwest Wildlife
Council Auditorium
6116 N. Market Street
Spokane, Washington

We do not plan to give a formal presentation at the meetings, so please stop by anytime between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Several members of the project team will be available to describe the project, answer questions, and take your comments.

Other Ways to Comment

If you cannot come to one of the meetings, you can still comment. If you comment by **February 15, 2002**, we will be able to incorporate your ideas into our environmental studies. **Please reference the Grand Coulee-Bell project in all communications.** To comment,

- Call BPA's toll-free comment line at 1-800-622-4519, and leave a message;
- Send an e-mail to: comment@bpa.gov; or
- Mail comments to Bonneville Power Administration, Public Affairs Office - KC-7, P.O. Box 12999, Portland, Oregon 97212. You can use the enclosed form to submit comments if you like.

Process and Schedule

The planning process will occur over the next several months and will consist of environmental studies and community involvement. The information we gather in our environmental analysis will be published in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement that will be available for review and comment in the spring. If you would like to receive a copy, please return the enclosed postcard and note whether you would like to receive it by regular or electronic mail. If you do not return the postcard, you will still receive notice when the study is available.

Once we have completed the environmental review, BPA will decide whether and how to proceed with the project. If BPA decides to proceed, construction would likely begin in 2003. Based on this schedule, the new 500-kV transmission line would be operating in Fall 2004.

For More Information

If you have any questions about this proposal, please call me toll-free at 1-800-282-3713, at my direct number 1-360-619-6326, or send an e-mail to makorsness@bpa.gov.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

/s/ Mark Korsness 1/11/02

Mark Korsness
Project Manager

3 Enclosures:
Map
Post Card
Comment Form



Department of Energy

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

TRANSMISSION BUSINESS LINE

March 22, 2002

In reply refer to: Grand Coulee-Bell (TNP-TPP-3)

**To: People Interested in the Grand Coulee-Bell 500-kV Transmission Line Project
(Eastern Washington Reinforcement)**

In January 2002, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) wrote to tell you about a proposed transmission line that could affect you. We asked for your comments on the project and held three public meetings in eastern Washington. Response was good; we had over 200 comments. Thank you for taking the time to tell us your ideas.

After reviewing your comments, we have added an alternative to consider in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. At this point, the alternatives we are considering for the project involve alternative structure designs. We will continue to study the originally proposed 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line, which would use single-circuit structures from Grand Coulee for most of the 75 miles east and then would use double-circuit structures for the remaining nine miles to Bell Substation in Spokane. In addition to this alternative, we have added an alternative to consider using single-circuit structures for most of the last nine miles to Bell substation also. For the single-circuit alternative, the new 500-kV single-circuit structures would be approximately the same height as the existing 230-kV double-circuit structures. We also will consider the alternative of not building a line.

This letter briefly summarizes the public comments, outlines our next steps, and tells where to call if you have questions.

Proposal

BPA still proposes to construct a new 500-kV transmission line in eastern Washington. The project is needed to improve reliability and to support current and future demand for electricity in Washington State and the Pacific Northwest.

The proposed 500-kV transmission line would connect from BPA's existing Bell Substation in Spokane to the Bureau of Reclamation's existing Grand Coulee Switchyard at Grand Coulee Dam. The new line would be located primarily on BPA's existing right-of way. The project also would involve expanding Bell Substation on BPA property and developing Grand Coulee Switchyard within the fenced area.

The transmission line corridor between the Grand Coulee and Bell substations currently contains two 115-kV wood poles and three 230-kV steel lattice transmission lines. Two of the 230-kV lines are double circuited on one set of steel towers. Together, these transmission lines can no longer efficiently move power from generation sources east of Spokane to areas west of Spokane. Replacing one of the 115-kV lines with a 500-kV line will relieve congestion, provide for future growth, and enhance service reliability to the community.

Public Comments

In January and February, BPA received public comments on the proposed transmission line. Many of these comments were from public meetings. Public scoping meetings were held in Grand Coulee, Davenport, and Spokane. We also received comments in briefings with key stakeholders, by telephone, mail, and e-mail.

The comments focused on:

- Potential impacts to farming practices (erosion, noxious weeds, distance between structures, crop damage, and construction schedule)
- Double-circuit vs. single-circuit structures (removing both 115-kV wood pole structures and replacing them with one steel structure; using single-circuit for the entire transmission line route)
- Land use (crossing Riverside State Park, Whitworth College, and residential areas)

Other impact comments were on noise, public health and safety, and visual. We also received questions on why we need to build the line and about Avista's plans to expand its transmission system.

This is just a summary of the comments that we received. All of the comments will be posted on our web site at www.efw.bpa.gov. Please look for the Grand Coulee-Bell project under environmental planning/analysis, Active Projects.

Next Steps

You will see crews working along the line through the following months. These people are conducting on-the-ground environmental surveys and staking possible tower locations. In addition, to address noxious weed concerns, we will conduct a weed survey along the right-of-way and will follow weed control measures when working in the field. If we need to access property along the proposed route but off of our existing right-of-way, we will contact property owners for permission.

We are analyzing the possible environmental impacts of the project. Your comments are helping us know where to focus our efforts. The information that we gather will be published in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement that will be available for review and comment this summer.

Once we have completed the environmental review, BPA will decide whether and how to proceed with the project. If BPA decides to proceed, construction would likely begin in 2003.

For More Information

If you have any questions about this proposal, please call me toll-free at 1-800-282-3713, at my direct number 1-360-619-6326, or send an e-mail to makorsness@bpa.gov.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

/s/ Inez Graetzer for 3-22-2002

Mark Korsness
Project Manager