



## Department of Energy

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

TRANSMISSION SERVICES

August 20, 2012

In reply refer to: KEC-4

### **To: Parties Interested in the Keeler to Tillamook Transmission Line Rebuild Project**

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to rebuild two transmission lines in your area. This letter explains our proposal, outlines our environmental review process and schedule, invites comments on the proposal, and invites you to attend one or both of our public meetings in September.

**Project Description** – BPA proposes to rebuild the Keeler to Tillamook 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines between the cities of Hillsboro and Tillamook in Washington and Tillamook counties, Oregon. No major rebuild work has been done on the Keeler to Tillamook transmission lines since they were built in the late 1950s. Most of the wood pole structures are at the end of their service life and are physically worn and structurally unsound in places. Based on the current condition of these lines, we need to replace the wood pole structures and associated structure components to maintain reliable electrical service and to avoid safety risks to the public and transmission line workers. The 58-mile long rebuild would include replacement of wood pole structures over 10 years in age, and would replace cross arms, cross braces, guy wires, anchors, insulator assemblies, switches, and overhead conductor. Some access roads would be improved and some new access would be acquired or constructed where access is not available.

The transmission line is made up of two sections: the Keeler-Forest Grove No. 1 transmission line (10.5 miles) and the Forest Grove-Tillamook No. 1 transmission line (47.4 miles). Most of these lines are built on H-frame wood poles, with less than two miles of double-circuit lattice steel tower structures. The steel towers do not need to be rebuilt, but the hardware on them would need to be replaced. Most construction activities would take place within the existing right-of-way (ROW), including upgrading existing roads, developing new roads, and removing and replacing existing wood pole structures. Structures would generally be replaced within 10 feet of their existing location, although they may be shifted within the existing ROW to avoid or decrease impacts to sensitive environmental resources such as wetlands, or to address safety hazards such as erosion and flood potential. BPA may need to acquire and develop new access roads to structures that are difficult to access by vehicle.

Tillamook Public Utility District (PUD) has just over 10 miles of local distribution transmission line along the Forest Grove-Tillamook section of the project. As part of this project, BPA would coordinate with Tillamook PUD to ensure existing wires are replaced or transferred to new structures.

**Public Meetings** – In fall 2012 we will start to assess the potential environmental impacts of the proposed alternatives and 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 will be seeking public input and comments. We have scheduled two open house scoping meetings:

#### **September 5, 2012**

5 to 7 p.m.

Forest Grove Community Auditorium  
1915 Main Street  
Forest Grove, Oregon 97116

#### **September 12, 2012**

5 to 7 p.m.

Oregon Dept. of Forestry Conference Room  
5005 Third Street  
Tillamook, Oregon 97171

We do not plan to give a formal presentation, so you may come at any time during the scheduled 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 cannot attend the meeting, you can still comment. You may submit comments to BPA online at: [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment), return the enclosed comment form or other written correspondence in the postage-paid envelope provided, or 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 **September 24, 2012** and reference “Keeler to Tillamook Transmission Line Rebuild Project” with your comments. We will post all comments we receive on our website at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment).

**Environmental Review and Schedule** – To understand the potential environmental impacts of this proposal, BPA will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA). As a federal agency, we follow procedures of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Two alternatives will be studied: rebuild the line; or do not rebuild the line and continue with current operation and maintenance practices. The EA will describe anticipated impacts to natural and human resources and include mitigation measures that would enable BPA to avoid or minimize impacts. During this process, BPA will be working with federal, state and local agencies, landowners, interest groups, and tribes.

Starting this summer 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 plans to produce a Preliminary EA that will be available for review and comment in spring 2013. If you would like to receive a copy of the Preliminary EA, please indicate on the enclosed postcard whether you would like to receive it by regular or electronic mail. 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 Preliminary EA is available.

BPA plans to produce a Final EA in the winter of 2013. Based on the analysis in the Final EA, BPA will either prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact and decide whether to proceed with the project, or will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement if there is the potential for significant environmental impacts.

If you have other questions or would like more project information, please call me toll free at (800) 622-4519, or directly at (360) 619-6398. You may also email me at [rhheredia@bpa.gov](mailto:rhheredia@bpa.gov). Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Richard Heredia*

Richard Heredia  
Project Manager

Enclosures:  
Project Map  
Comment Form  
Postage-paid Envelope  
Reply Card