



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest Service

February 2015



# **Hooper Springs Transmission Project and Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment**

**Caribou-Targhee National Forest  
Soda Springs Ranger District**

## **Record of Decision**

---

*The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)*

*To File an Employment Complaint:*

*If you wish to file an employment complaint, you must contact your agency's EEO Counselor (PDF) within 45 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory act, event, or in the case of a personnel action. Additional information can be found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_file.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_file.html).*

*To File a Program Complaint:*

*If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (PDF), found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).*

*Persons with Disabilities:*

*Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities and who wish to file either an EEO or program complaint, please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).*

*Persons with disabilities who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).*

**Caribou-Targhee National Forest  
Hooper Springs Transmission Project  
and Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment**

***RECORD OF DECISION***

United States Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service—Intermountain Region

February 2015

Table of Contents

Introduction..... 1
Background..... 1
Forest Service Purpose and Need ..... 3
Segment of Project Preferred Routes Subject to this Decision ..... 4
Decision to be Made ..... 4
Decision ..... 4
Constraint to Implementing the Decision ..... 5
Rationale for the Decision ..... 5
Project Designed to Reduce or Avoid Environmental Impacts ..... 6
Meeting the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and Objectives of the Applicants' Proposed Project ..... 7
Consideration of Environmental Issues ..... 7
Soils ..... 8
Aquatic Influence Zones ..... 8
Forest Service Sensitive Species ..... 9
Forest Service Management Indicator Species ..... 11
Public Involvement ..... 11
Scoping Process ..... 12
Draft EIS Review Process ..... 13
Supplemental Draft EIS Review Process ..... 14
Final EIS Review Process ..... 14
Alternatives Considered in Detail ..... 15
No Action Alternative ..... 15
Action Alternatives ..... 15
Route Alternatives Considered but Eliminated From Detailed Study ..... 16
Alternatives to a Transmission Line ..... 17
Environmentally Preferable Alternative ..... 17
Findings Required with other Laws ..... 17
National Forest Management Act ..... 17
Consistency with the Forest Plan ..... 17
Significance of the Forest Plan Amendments ..... 18
Endangered Species Act ..... 21
Clean Air Act ..... 22
Safe Drinking Water Act ..... 22
Clean Water Act ..... 23
Executive Order 11988 (Floodplains) and Executive Order 11990 (Wetlands) ..... 23
National Historic Preservation Act ..... 24
Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Executive Order 13186 ..... 24
Executive Order 12898 – Environmental Justice ..... 24
Executive Order 13175 ..... 24
Administrative Review ..... 25
Implementation Date ..... 27

**Contact Person** .....27

**List of Appendices**

- Appendix A** Maps of the Project on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest
- Appendix B** Amendment to the Caribou-Targhee National Forest Revised Forest Plan
- Appendix C** Forest Plan Consistency Provided by the Amendment
- Appendix D** Response to Comments on the Final Environmental Impact Statement

# RECORD OF DECISION

## INTRODUCTION

The Supplemental Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) for the Hooper Springs Transmission Project were prepared pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508). The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is the lead agency for the EIS. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (Forest Service), as a cooperating agency, participated in all aspects of the environmental analysis.

As the deciding official for the Forest Service for the Caribou-Targhee National Forest, I am using the Final EIS and comments on the Final EIS submitted to the BPA as the basis for my decision regarding authorizing uses associated with the Hooper Springs Transmission Project (Project) on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest, what terms and conditions to include in the special use authorization, and whether or not to amend the Caribou National Forest Revised Forest Plan (Forest Plan) so that the authorization will be consistent with the Forest Plan as amended.

## BACKGROUND

BPA is a federal agency in the Pacific Northwest that owns and operates about three-fourths of the high-voltage transmission lines in its service territory. Among other things, BPA is responsible for marketing and transmitting electrical power to utility, industrial, and other customers in the Pacific Northwest. BPA has a statutory obligation to ensure it has sufficient capability to serve its customers through a safe and reliable transmission system.

BPA is proposing to build a new, 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line in Caribou County, Idaho. This proposed line would extend from a proposed new 138/115-kV BPA substation, referred to as the Hooper Springs Substation, near the city of Soda Springs, Idaho, to either an existing Lower Valley Energy (LVE) substation or a proposed BPA connection facility that would connect with LVE's existing transmission system in northeastern Caribou County (Final EIS Map 1-1).

BPA also would construct an approximately 0.2-mile-long, single-circuit 138-kV transmission line between the proposed Hooper Springs Substation and PacifiCorp's existing Threemile Knoll Substation to connect the new line to the regional transmission grid. The proposed project is needed to improve the stability and reliability of the transmission system in southeast Idaho and northwest Wyoming.

Two alternatives with route options were evaluated in the EIS to meet the purpose and need for the project. BPA has identified the South Alternative Route Option 3A as its preferred alternative (Final EIS Map 1-3).

### *South Alternative Route Option 3A:*

The South Alternative would include a new, approximately 22.5-mile-long, double-circuit 115-kV transmission line that would extend from BPA's proposed Hooper Springs Substation generally north to northeast for 6 to 8 miles before turning generally east to a proposed connection with LVE's existing transmission system in Caribou County, Idaho (Final EIS Map 1-3). The new connection facility with LVE's existing transmission system would be located about 2 miles southeast of the intersection of Blackfoot River Road and Diamond Creek Road. The South Alternative would include construction of the 138/115-kV Hooper Springs Substation and the 0.2-mile, single-circuit 138-kV transmission line to connect the line to PacifiCorp's existing 345/138-kV Threemile Knoll Substation.

Route Option 3A begins at the proposed Hooper Springs Substation and ends at the proposed connection facility with LVE. The proposed location of the 138-kV transmission line was consistent for all route options under this alternative. Route Option 3A would follow a route similar to the first part of the North Alternative west of Highway 34 before turning and rejoining the same general corridor as the South Alternative until line mile 17. Between line miles 17 and 20, the corridor would travel northeast and southeast to the Blackfoot River Narrows. From the Narrows, Route Option 3A would follow the same general corridor as the South Alternative for about 1 mile before heading northeast across the C-TNF and the Blackfoot River Wildlife Management Area (Blackfoot River WMA) to its point of connection with the existing LVE line. Route Option 3A would be about 24 miles long.

The main components of the South Alternative and its route options would be as follows:

- Transmission line ROW - The South Alternative, including its five route options, would require a 100-foot-wide ROW for the new double-circuit 115-kV transmission line, a 150-foot-wide ROW for the new 138-kV line, and a 50-foot-wide ROW for new and reconstructed access roads.
- Transmission structures - The South Alternative would require approximately 210 new 115-kV double-circuit steel structures over about 23 miles. Route options would require about the same amount of steel structures as the South Alternative: Option 1 would be about 0.6 mile longer; Option 2 about 0.1 mile shorter; Options 3 and 3A would be about 1.5 miles longer; and Option 4 would be about 0.7 mile longer. Similar to the North Alternative, the proposed 138-kV transmission line under the South Alternative would require two wood, H-frame structures over its approximately 0.2-mile length. The 138-kV wood structures would be the same as those described under the North Alternative. The steel poles for the South Alternative would be about 55 to 120 feet tall. Also similar to the North Alternative, all steel structures would be directly embedded into the ground using a drill rig to auger the holes.
- Conductors - Conductors would be same to those described for the North Alternative.
- Overhead ground wire and counterpoise - Two overhead ground wires would be attached to the top of the structures for the South Alternative and all route options.

## Record of Decision

- Fiber optic cable - A fiber optic cable would be installed along the 0.2 mile 138-kV transmission line similar to the North Alternative. No fiber optic cable is proposed for the 115-kV transmission line.
- Pulling/tensioning sites - About 11 temporary pulling and tensioning sites would be required for construction of the South Alternative along with two sites for the 138-kV line. Pulling sites would be within or next to the South Alternative ROW. Similar to the North Alternative, an area about 100 feet wide by 300 feet long, or about 0.7 acre, would be temporarily disturbed at each pulling and tensioning site.
- Staging areas and other work areas - Two temporary staging areas about 10 acres each would be needed along or near the South Alternative for construction. Similar to the North Alternative, one of the staging areas would be located near the Hooper Springs Substation and used for both the 115-kV and 138-kV lines. The second staging area would be located near the eastern end of the South Alternative corridor. It is anticipated that approximately 10 acres of land would be required for each staging area.
- Substations - The South Alternative and all route options would require construction of the proposed Hooper Springs Substation at the southwestern end of the North Alternative corridor. The connection of the 115-kV double-circuit line under the South Alternative to LVE's existing transmission system at the northeastern end of the South Alternative corridor would require construction of a new connection facility at this location. This connection facility would be constructed within BPA's new transmission line ROW and LVE's existing transmission line ROW along Diamond Creek Road, at a point about 2 miles southeast of the intersection of Blackfoot River Road and Diamond Creek Road. The new double-circuit line would connect into the existing LVE line through overhead line disconnect switches.
- Access roads - For the South Alternative, approximately 22.8 miles of new, permanent access road would be constructed, including 900 feet of new road to access Hooper Springs Substation. Approximately 2 miles of existing access road would be improved or reconstructed.
- Vegetation clearing - Vegetation clearing under the South Alternative would be the same as described for the North Alternative. The South Alternative corridor also would cross forested C-TNF lands where BPA would, at the request of the C-TNF, clear a 250-foot-wide area along the length of transmission line. Similar to the North Alternative, only the 100-foot ROW would be managed for low-growing species during operation of the transmission line.
- Maintenance - During the life of the project, BPA would perform routine, periodic maintenance and emergency repairs to the transmission line. BPA typically conducts routine helicopter inspection patrols twice a year. Vegetation also would be maintained along the line for safe operation and to allow access to the line.

## FOREST SERVICE PURPOSE AND NEED

The Applicants applied for authorization from the Forest Service to construct, operate, and maintain the Project across NFS lands. The purpose and need for my decision is to

respond to the Applicants' request for authorization to construct, operate, and maintain the Project across NFS lands administered by the Caribou-Targhee National Forest.

### **SEGMENT OF PROJECT PREFERRED ROUTES SUBJECT TO THIS DECISION**

My decision is applicable only to the portion of the Applicants' project that will be on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. The preferred alternative, Route Option 3A, would cross approximately 3 miles of the Soda Springs Ranger District of the C-TNF that are currently designated as Management Prescriptions 5.2(b), Forest Vegetation Management; 2.7.2, Elk and Deer Winter Range; 8.2.2, Phosphate Mine Areas; and 2.8.3, Aquatic Influence Zone. Appendix A of the Record of Decision displays a map showing Route Option 3A and the location(s) at which it crosses C-TNF lands.

To be consistent with Forest Plan direction, an amendment is needed to designate the project right-of-way (ROW) for the double-circuit 115-kV line as Prescription 8.1, Concentrated Development Areas. This amendment to the *Revised Forest Plan for the Caribou National Forest* (hereafter referred to as the Forest Plan or RFP) will allow for approval of a special use permit for the construction and operation of the proposed transmission line on the Soda Springs Ranger District of the C-TNF, Idaho.

### **DECISION TO BE MADE**

The decision to be made is whether to approve the proposed use, approve the proposed use with modification, or deny the proposed use. If the decision is to approve or approve with modification, the issuance of the special use authorization will be the means of implementing that decision.

### **DECISION**

Based on my review of the analysis as documented in the Final EIS<sup>1</sup> (FEIS) and the project record, including public comments received on the Supplemental Draft EIS (SDEIS), I have decided to authorize the Applicants to build approximately 3 miles of a new 115-kV transmission line in a new utility corridor on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest along the route identified in the preferred alternative (South Alternative Route Option 3A) (SDEIS Section 2.3).

This decision includes approval of the activities on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest associated with the approved route. Described in detail in Section 2 of the SDEIS, the associated activities include the following:

---

<sup>1</sup> BPA's FEIS consists of the Supplemental Draft EIS and the FEIS, which is summary of the comments received on the Supplemental Draft EIS, the responses to those comments, and documentation of all changes made to the Supplemental Draft EIS in response to public comment.

## Record of Decision

Building and maintaining a new double-circuit 115-kV transmission line;

Construction and reconstruction of temporary access roads; and

Construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of permanent access roads.

Implementation of my decision will be through issuance of a Special Use Permit for a period of 30 years with the option to renew in accordance with 36 CFR 251.64. My decision requires the terms and conditions of the special use authorization to be consistent with the plan of development and all mitigation measures (SDEIS Chapter 3), which outline construction techniques and measures specifically developed to reduce impacts on identified natural resources during construction, operation, and maintenance of the Project as a result of this decision.

As required by the standard terms of the special use authorization, initiation of construction is conditioned upon final Forest Service approval.

My decision also approves amendment of the Caribou National Forest Revised Forest Plan as described in Appendix B.

My decision is only for uses and activities on NFS lands administered by the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. My decision neither ensures nor restricts implementation of the Project outside of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest.

### **CONSTRAINT TO IMPLEMENTING THE DECISION**

As described below, the rationale for this decision is based not only on effects to the lands and resources of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest but also effects of the overall Project Preferred Routes and overall uses and activities; therefore, implementation of this decision will occur only if the BPA implements the preferred alternative (South Alternative Route Option 3A) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approves the segments of the project under their authority and implementation, as described by the SDEIS and FEIS preferred alternative.

### **RATIONALE FOR THE DECISION**

My decision affects the management of only NFS lands administered by the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. I have considered the effects of my decision, as well as the overall Project, as disclosed in the SDEIS and FEIS. In addition, my decision was informed by these key elements: 1) the design, mitigation and monitoring that will be required for the Project, 2) meeting the objectives of the Project, and 3) consideration of environmental issues. My consideration included potential effects of amending the Caribou Forest Plan to allow the Project.

### Project Designed to Reduce or Avoid Environmental Impacts

The approved activities for the overall Project analyzed in the SDEIS and FEIS, including those approved by this decision, were designed and include implementation measures to reduce or avoid environmental impacts.

*Project Location and Design.* The route across the Caribou-Targhee National Forest that I am approving by this decision is part of the SDEIS and FEIS preferred alternative and the route that I feel best attains the purpose and need for the Project while being sensitive to other resource concerns within the Project area and the missions and management objectives of the land management agencies responsible for the public lands that it crosses.

Line officers and resource specialists from many federal and state agencies in Idaho worked with the Applicants' managers, engineers, and environmental managers to refine implementation measures and construction techniques to reduce impacts, based on resource issues identified, at specific locations or areas. This collaboration resulted in modification of construction design and identification of route alignments which will reduce impacts to sensitive resource areas and habitat areas for special status species. Additionally, many mitigation measures were developed and incorporated into the Project design to reduce impacts on identified natural and cultural resources during construction, operation, and maintenance of the Project as a result of this decision.

*Mitigation Measures.* The Applicants identified mitigation measures to cover the following topics:

- Construction, operations, and maintenance;
- Visual resources;
- Cultural and paleontological resources;
- Plant and wildlife resources, including threatened, endangered, and sensitive species;
- Geologic hazards and soil resources;
- Recreation;
- Water resources;
- Socioeconomics;
- Land use;
- Transportation;
- Air quality;
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions;
- Public health and safety; and
- Noise.

The effects analysis, found in Chapter 3 of the SDEIS and FEIS, was based on the Project design including the mitigation measures.

*Protection, Monitoring, and Mitigation Plans.* A Plan of Development (POD) will be required prior to implementation and construction of the Project. The POD will include a series of protection and monitoring plans that will be implemented as part of the Project. Plans include the *Environmental Compliance Management Plan*, as well as issue-specific plans, such as the *Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan*, *Fire Prevention Plan*, and *Agricultural Protection Plan*. Environmental Protection Measures (EPMs) will be incorporated into these plans and the Forest Service will approve the final plans. The SDEIS and FEIS identify mitigation measures to reduce anticipated effects to historic properties, waters of the United States, and greater sage-grouse. The *Historic Properties Treatment Plan* will also provide monitoring and mitigation for unanticipated discoveries.

*Compliance Inspection.* As required by this decision to be included in the terms of the Special Use Permit and per the POD, the Applicants will provide for an environmental compliance inspection contractor (CIC), to be approved by the BPA, as lead federal agency, and the Forest Service, to represent the BPA and Forest Service during the construction and reclamation phases of the Project. The CIC will report directly to the BPA, in coordination with the Forest Service. The primary role and responsibility of the CIC is to ensure compliance with all terms, conditions, and stipulations of the Forest Service Special Use Permit, the POD, and other permits, approvals, and regulatory requirements, as described in the SDEIS and FEIS. The CIC shall follow the *Environmental Compliance Management Plan* as specified in the POD. The Applicants will also be responsible for monitoring the reclamation of the transmission line, temporary access roads, and ancillary facilities, as described in their *Reclamation Plan* and *Noxious Weed Plan*.

### **Meeting the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and Objectives of the Applicants' Proposed Project**

The Energy Policy Act of 2005, which recognized the need to improve domestic energy production, develop renewable energy resources, and enhance the infrastructure (e.g., transmission lines) for collection and distribution of energy resources across the Nation, encourages the use of public land for energy-related facilities. This decision meets the intent of the Energy Policy Act through authorizing activities that allow the Applicants to meet their purpose of providing their customers with safe, reliable, and adequate transmission capacity to meet short- and long-term projected load growth via connection to generation resources and through access to energy markets. The project enables the Applicants to meet these obligations by adding voltage stability and reliability to the transmission grid and increase the capacity required to serve forecasted loads in Idaho and Wyoming. The project also allows for access to renewable energy resources and other generation resources in the future.

### **Consideration of Environmental Issues**

I considered all of the issues and other aspects of the human environment analyzed in the SDEIS and FEIS; however, of particular influence on my decision were the following environmental issues relating to steep slopes and unstable soils and to Forest Service

Region 4 sensitive species on the Forest, identified in Section 3.4 through 3.8 of the SDEIS.

### **Soils**

As described in Section 3.5 of the SDEIS, Route Option 3A primarily travels through silt loam soils without hydric components. NRCS draft data indicates that approximately 113 acres of prime farmland are within the Route Option 3A ROW and associated access roads. Additionally, the ROW and associated access roads of Route Option 3A cross approximately 5 acres of hydric soils.

One key issue for the development of my decision was to avoid unnecessary impacts to geology and soils due to the proximity of the Project to existing and potential future phosphate mining areas. As discussed in the Section 3.5 of the SDEIS, impacts to geology and soils from Route Option 3A would be low. The transmission line ROW for Route Option 3A would traverse some prime farmland and the Project will construct approximately 59 structures on prime farmland soils; therefore, it is anticipated that permanent impacts to prime farmland soils from structures would be approximately 0.7 acre. Additionally, there would be approximately 8.1 acres of permanent impacts to prime farmland soils from construction of permanent access roads for Route Option 3A. Permanent impacts to prime farmland soil will be generally low (less than 10 percent of the overall acreage); therefore, impacts to prime farmland under Route Option 3A would be moderate.

There are no anticipated permanent impacts to hydric soils from Route Option 3A. Further, temporary impacts to prime farmland and hydric soils would be low because mitigation measures identified in the SDEIS will minimize loss during construction. When construction is complete, soils would be aerated to mitigate the effects of compaction.

### **Aquatic Influence Zones**

I considered the effects to the 6.9 acres of aquatic influence zones (AIZs) within the Project area. The ROW corridor would include approximately 6.9 acres of land located within Management Prescription 2.8.3; however, the transmission line would span these areas and the majority of these acres would not require clearing or manipulation of vegetation. As a result, Route Option 3A would avoid locating facilities and utility corridors in AIZs to the extent practical. Less than 0.3 acre of impacts to AIZs would occur as a result of access road crossings of intermittent streams.

Route Option 3A would require tree removal in a small number of wetland and intermittent waterbody AIZs for hazardous tree and safety and fire hazard related concerns. However, impacts to individual AIZs would be low and tree removal would only occur as necessary to ensure the safety of the line (SEIS Section 3.6.3). The mitigation measures found in Sections 3.6.4 and 3.5.4 of the SDEIS will be implemented to further protect AIZ resources. In addition, where possible, trees would be incorporated into mitigation, including snags, down woody debris, and large woody debris to help promote the attainment of desired AIZ characteristics.

Under the plan amendment, there will be almost no change to the applicability of the management direction for AIZs to the uses and activities I am authorizing with this

decision. There will be no change at all to the applicability of the management direction for AIZs on other uses and activities unrelated to the Project that occur within the ROW.

Prescription 2.8.3 of the Caribou Forest Plan clearly states that AIZ management direction overrides direction from other overlapping management areas (Caribou Forest Plan, page RFP 4-45); therefore, my approval of the plan amendment to reallocate the ROW corridor to Prescription 8.1(b) will not change the applicability of the management direction for Prescription 2.8.3 for any other management activity.

### **Forest Service Sensitive Species**

The detailed analysis for Forest Service sensitive species is in the *Biological Evaluation for Forest Service Region 4 Sensitive and Management Indicator Species (MIS)* (Biological Evaluation) and Section 3.7 and Appendix G of the SDEIS. The Forest Service Region 4 Sensitive Species list was reviewed, and every species identified for the Caribou-Targhee National Forest was considered.

No impact is expected for the following Region 4 sensitive species, because they have no known occurrence and/or no suitable habitat in the project area on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest: boreal owl, harlequin duck, pygmy rabbit, spotted bat, Townsends big-eared bat, western boreal toad, Columbia spotted frog, and wolverine.

For the following sensitive species, for which occurrence is known, expected, probable, or possible in the project area on the Forest, as determined by the amount, distribution, and quality of the suitable habitat occurring in the project area, low impacts are expected: bald eagle, great grey owl, flammulated owl, northern goshawk, three-toed woodpecker, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, peregrine falcon, trumpeter swan, gray wolf, Yellowstone cutthroat trout, and northern leaderside chub.

Gray wolf and bald eagle are Region 4 sensitive species with suitable habitat and known, expected, probable, or possible in the project area on the Forest but for which no impact is expected. For gray wolf, no significant habitat occurs in the project area, no wolf packs or dens have been documented in the Project area, and all construction activities would be conducted in accordance with agency required seasonal and spatial restriction within and near big game ranges (thereby minimizing impacts to big game populations), resulting in no appreciable impacts expected to occur to the gray wolves' prey base. This Project will also not impact bald eagles on the Forest. Even though some potential bald eagle habitat may be impacted through forest clearing, sufficient habitat would remain functional at both the local and range-wide scales to maintain the viability of the species. Therefore, project impacts on bald eagles would be low.

No Region 4 sensitive plant species are known to occur within the portion of the project area located on the Forest.

The Project may impact individuals or habitat, but will not likely contribute to a trend towards federal listing or cause a loss of viability to the population or species for the following: Townsend's big-eared bat, North American wolverine, northern goshawk, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, greater sage-grouse, great gray owl, flammulated owl, boreal owl, and three-toed woodpecker.

## Record of Decision

Of the impacts described in detail in the Biological Evaluation and disclosed in the Final EIS, of particular note are the effects on northern goshawk, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, and greater sage-grouse. These species are identified in Caribou Forest Plan as Management Indicator Species (MIS). Also of particular note is the analysis of effects to greater sage-grouse because of the interagency efforts, as described in Section 3.7 and Appendix G of the SDEIS, to conserve the species and the scheduled 2015 USFWS final determination for listing the species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). These impacts are summarized below:

Northern goshawk. Northern goshawks have been documented as nesting in many areas of C-TNF, but no nests were documented within or adjacent to the South Alternative. Mature aspen and conifer stands associated with the alternative corridors represent suitable nesting habitat for northern goshawk because the stands typically are structurally diverse, mature and late seral stands with large trees and snags.

Vocalization surveys of the South Alternative under taken in 2006 and 2007, and in the South Alternative and Route Option 3A corridors in 2013; however, surveys did not yield any conclusive goshawk responses.

Vegetation clearing within the South Alternative corridors and long-term impacts to forested vegetation associated with access roads would affect conifer-dominated forest and aspen-dominated forest. This disturbance would represent a direct impact to potentially suitable nesting habitat for northern goshawks and could also indirectly affect habitat suitability through fragmentation and the potential for increased human presence; however, because the ROW would be only 100 feet wide, goshawks are likely to continue to forage in the ROW following construction. Individual birds could also be temporarily displaced during construction due to temporarily elevated construction noise and increased human presence.

While some individual birds could be negatively affected, the Project would not likely result in any measurable impact to the species. Snags would be maintained at the levels prescribed in the C-TNF RFP, and tree removal within mature and late seral forest stands would be limited to the minimum extent necessary. Sufficient mature aspen and conifer forest habitat would remain functional at both the local and range-wide scales to maintain the viability of these species.

Impacts to northern goshawks associated with the construction and operation of the Project would be low.

Greater sage-grouse. Most of the sagebrush-dominated habitats within the project area provide potentially suitable habitat for sage-grouse lekking, nesting, brooding, and/or wintering. However, no sage-grouse ground surveys were conducted on C-TNF land because there are no known leks on NFS lands in the project area and suitable habitat does not exist.

Along the South Alternative, there is a lek site near the eastern boundary. On the west side of the South Alternative, a sage-grouse was flushed on C-TNF land in 2007, during great gray owl and northern goshawk surveys. Sage-grouse also use areas of South Alternative where it crosses BLM parcels. Grouse droppings were found during surveys in 2007.

## Record of Decision

There is a lek location adjacent to the South Alternative very near the easternmost BLM parcel.

Additional ground-based and aerial surveys were conducted along the South Alternative and Option 3A in 2013. The ground-based lek surveys did not document any greater sage-grouse or any sign of grouse activity such as feathers, tracks, or droppings that would indicate the presence of a lek or breeding displays. Aerial surveys within the project corridor also did not document any sign of greater sage-grouse activity. However, during this aerial survey one male and two female greater sage-grouse were observed on top of a steep ridge approximately 3,000 feet north of the South Alternative. A follow up ground visit of this site by USFS did not reveal any evidence of greater sage-grouse presence.

Construction of the South Alternative would result in short-term impacts on 80 acres of sagebrush habitat and approximately 33.2 acres of long-term impacts to sagebrush habitat. Construction of Route Option 3A would result in short-term impacts on 77.2 acres of sagebrush habitat and approximately 30.9 acres of long-term impacts to sagebrush habitat. Impacts from the South Alternative and Option 3A is not expected to result in any measureable impact on the species.

Columbia sharp-tailed grouse. Several Columbian sharp-tailed grouse leks (male breeding display areas) have been documented within the vicinity of the project area, but none have been documented within the preferred alternative corridor. Surveys were not conducted on USFS land because it does not provide suitable habitat.

Like the greater sage-grouse, discussed above, the sharp-tailed grouse uses sagebrush habitat which would be affected by the South Alternative. However, the sharp-tailed grouse is also known to occur in grasslands, mountain-shrub, aspen, and riparian dominated habitats. Although no sharp-tailed grouse were documented along the South Alternative Route Option 3A corridor, sagebrush-dominated habitats within the project corridors provide suitable nesting, brood-rearing, and winter habitat. Construction of Route Option 3A would result in impacts to habitat that could be used by the grouse.

### ***Forest Service Management Indicator Species***

I considered the effects of my decision on the viability of the three MIS identified in the Caribou Forest Plan that may be affected by the Project. My decision will not result in effects nor cause a loss of species or population viability for the northern goshawk, greater sage-grouse, or Columbia sharp-tailed grouse. The analysis is detailed in Section 3.7 of the SDEIS and Biological Evaluation.

Effects of the Project on northern goshawk, greater sage-grouse and Columbia sharp-tailed grouse are described above.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The public involvement process is described in detail in the Sections 1.5 of the SDEIS and 1.2 of the FEIS.

## Scoping Process

BPA initiated public involvement in May 2006, when it sent a letter concerning the Hooper Springs Transmission Project, as described in the 2009 Preliminary EA, to adjacent landowners; tribes; federal, state, regional, and local agencies; interest groups; and others. This letter provided notice of the Hooper Springs Transmission Project and BPA's intent at that time to prepare an EA, and invited public comment on the Project and issues to be addressed in the EA. BPA also held public scoping meetings for the EA in 2006 and 2007, and conducted other public outreach efforts during that time. The public involvement that was conducted as part of the EA process and the issues that were raised at that time are summarized in more detail in the 2009 Preliminary EA (BPA 2009).

After BPA decided to prepare this EIS, it again solicited comments from the public to help determine what issues should be studied in the EIS. Because these issues help define the scope of the EIS, this process is called "scoping." Public comments were received by mail, via fax, by telephone, through the BPA website, and at a scoping meeting.

During the scoping period for the EIS, BPA requested comments through the following means:

- On June 29, 2010, BPA published a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and conduct public meetings for the Hooper Springs Transmission Project in the Federal Register (75 FR 39241). The Notice of Intent initiated a 30-day public scoping period.
- On June 30, 2010, BPA sent a letter to potentially interested and affected persons requesting comments and inviting the public to a scoping meeting. The letter was sent to people who live along the proposed transmission line routes; federal, state, regional, and local agencies that may have expertise or require permits for the Project; tribes with interest in the area; and other interest groups.
- BPA sent a press release to local media, and placed paid ads in local newspapers about the public scoping meeting and the comment period.
- An open-house style public meeting was held in Soda Springs, Idaho on July 29, 2010, to provide information about the Project and the EIS process, and to receive comments on the Project and its potential environmental impacts.
- Additional meetings were held with federal agencies, tribes, state agencies, and county staffs to provide project information and receive comments.
- BPA established a website with information about the Project and the EIS process: [www.bpa.gov/go/HooperSprings](http://www.bpa.gov/go/HooperSprings). BPA posted a link to all comments it received on the project website.

The July 29, 2010, public scoping meeting featured topic-specific stations and information. BPA staff was available to answer questions and help landowners locate their property on maps in relation to the alternative routes. BPA staff recorded verbal public comments in notes and on flip charts, and members of the public had an opportunity to provide written comments.

In addition, throughout the EIS preparation process, the BPA project manager, environmental project lead, and other staff have continued to hold meetings and maintain

contact with landowners, local governments, state agencies, representatives of tribes with interests in the area, C-TNF, BLM, BIA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and other agencies and interested parties.

BPA received seven written comments during the EIS scoping period. Verbal comments were also submitted by multiple individuals and organizations during the July 29, 2010, public scoping meeting. Comments related to NFS lands spoke primarily to land use plan compliance.

### Draft EIS Review Process

In March 2013, BPA distributed a draft EIS to the public (landowners; tribes; federal, state, and local agencies; interested groups; and others) for review and comment. BPA accepted comments through April 22, 2013. All comments received were posted online on the Hooper Springs Transmission Project comments webpage and are included in Volume 2 of this supplemental draft EIS. During the public comment period for the draft EIS, BPA requested comments through the following means:

- On March 8, 2013, BPA published a Notice of Availability for the Hooper Springs Transmission Project draft EIS and announced public meeting dates in the Federal Register (Vol. 78, No. 46). The Notice of Availability initiated a public comment period extending over more than 45 days.
- Also in March 2013, BPA sent a letter to about 375 potentially interested and affected persons requesting comments and inviting the public to an open-house style public meeting. The letter was sent to people who live along the proposed transmission line routes; federal, state, and local agencies that may have expertise or require permits for the project; tribes with an interest in the area; and other interest groups.
- BPA sent a press release to local media, and placed paid ads in the following newspapers about the draft EIS public meeting and the comment period:
  - Pocatello/Idaho State Journal - Wednesday, March 20, 2013, Wednesday, March 27, 2013, and Sunday, March 31, 2013
  - Soda Springs/Caribou County Sun - Thursday, March 21, 2013, and Thursday, March 28, 2013
  - Idaho Falls Post Register - Wednesday, March 27, 2013, and Sunday, March 31, 2013
- One open-house style public meeting was held on April 3, 2013, in Soda Springs, Idaho. At this meeting BPA received comments on the draft EIS.
- The draft EIS was posted on BPA's project website: [http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental\\_services/Document\\_Library/HooperSprings/](http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/HooperSprings/). Comments were accepted online. BPA also posted a link to all comments it received.
- BPA also held a project update meeting in September 2013 in Soda Springs to provide information on the current alternatives being considered.

About 45 people commented on the draft EIS during the comment period. Opinions and concerns expressed during this comment period echoed those received during the scoping

period. All comments and responses to those comments were included in the SDEIS (SDEIS, Volume 2).

### **Supplemental Draft EIS Review Process**

On October 22, 2013, BPA sent a letter to all potentially interested and affected persons describing its intent to prepare a supplemental draft EIS to evaluate Route Option 3A. During the supplemental draft EIS (SDEIS) public comment period, BPA requested comments by publishing a notice for the Hooper Springs Transmission Project SDEIS and announcing public meeting dates in the Federal Register; sending a letter to potentially interested and affected persons, requesting comments and inviting the public to an open-house style public meeting; sending a press release to local media, placing newspaper ads about the supplemental draft EIS public meeting and the comment period; and posting the supplemental draft EIS on BPA's project website:

[http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental\\_services/Document\\_Library/HooperSprings/](http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/HooperSprings/).

BPA published the Hooper Springs Transmission Project SDEIS in May 2014. The SDEIS served to supplement the draft EIS for the Project, which had been released by BPA in March 2013. The primary reason BPA chose to publish a SDEIS was BPA had identified a new alignment for the South Alternative (Route Option 3A) after release of the draft EIS, and wanted to ensure sufficient opportunity for public review and comment on that option. Accordingly, BPA prepared the SDEIS to include Route Option 3A. The SDEIS also included responses to all public comments that had been received by BPA on the draft EIS.

The SDEIS was filed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which published a Notice of Availability of the SDEIS in the Federal Register (Volume 79, No. 90) on May 9, 2014. Hard copy and CD versions of the SDEIS were distributed to interested parties and the SDEIS was posted on the BPA web site ([http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental\\_services/Document\\_Library/HooperSprings/](http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/HooperSprings/)). An open house style public meeting was held on May 27, 2014, in Soda Springs, Idaho. Twenty five people from the community attended the meeting.

The comment period for the SDEIS officially closed on August 7, 2014. A total of 33 comment forms, emails, and letters were received. All comments received during the comment period can be found in Chapter 4 of the FEIS.

### **Final EIS Review Process**

Review of the FEIS prior to issuing a decision is not required under Forest Service procedures, but it is required under BPA and BLM procedures. BPA will release the FEIS for comment; concurrently, the Forest Service will release a draft ROD for predecisional administrative review (36 CFR 218 and 219).

## ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED IN DETAIL

### No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would be the denial of the applications. Under the No Action Alternative, no authorization of uses associated with the project would be approved for NFS lands (no construction of the substations or the transmission line). No Forest Plans would be amended.

### Action Alternatives

Action alternatives for which Forest Service approval would be required are described below. This decision applies only to those segments with locations that would have crossed the Caribou-Targhee National Forest.

*North Alternative.* The North Alternative would include a new, approximately 33-mile-long, single-circuit 115-kV transmission line in Caribou County north of Soda Springs, Idaho that would extend from the proposed BPA Hooper Springs Substation generally north and then east to the existing LVE Lanes Creek Substation. This alternative also would include construction of the 138/115-kV BPA Hooper Springs Substation, which would be located about 3 miles directly north of the city of Soda Springs along Threemile Knoll Road. New 115-kV substation facilities within the boundaries of LVE's existing Lanes Creek Substation, which is located east of the unincorporated community of Wayan, Idaho, also would be constructed. A new 0.2-mile, single-circuit 138-kV transmission line that would extend from the proposed Hooper Springs Substation generally south to PacifiCorp's existing 345/138-kV Threemile Knoll Substation would be constructed to connect the new line to the regional transmission grid. Two route options were considered in the North Alternative.

*South Alternative (Route Option 3A – Preferred Alternative).* The South Alternative and its route options are the same as the alternatives considered by BPA in the 2009 Preliminary EA for the Project except for an additional route option (Option 3A). The South Alternative would include a new, approximately 22.5-mile-long, double-circuit 115-kV transmission line that would extend from BPA's proposed Hooper Springs Substation generally north to northeast for 6 to 8 miles before turning generally east to a proposed connection with LVE's existing transmission system in Caribou County, Idaho (see Map S-1). The new connection facility with LVE's existing transmission system would be located at a point about 2 miles southeast of the intersection of Blackfoot River Road and Diamond Creek Road. Similar to the North Alternative, the South Alternative would include construction of the 138/115-kV BPA Hooper Springs Substation and the 0.2-mile, single-circuit 138-kV transmission line to connect the line to PacifiCorp's existing 345/138-kV Threemile Knoll Substation.

Route Option 3A would follow a route similar to the first part of the North Alternative west of Highway 34 before turning and rejoining the same general corridor as the South Alternative and Option 3 east of Highway 34 until Option 3A's line mile 17. Between line miles 17 and 20, the corridor would travel northeast and southeast to the Blackfoot River

Narrows. From the Narrows, Option 3A would follow the same general corridor as the South Alternative for about 1 mile before heading northeast across the C-TNF and the Blackfoot River WMA to its point of connection with the existing LVE line. Option 3A would be about 24 miles long.

### **Route Alternatives Considered but Eliminated From Detailed Study**

*Higher Voltage Transmission Line Alternative.* BPA considered an alternative that would allow a direct connection of the proposed transmission line to PacifiCorp's existing 345/138-kV Threemile Knoll Substation rather than constructing the proposed 138/115-kV Hooper Springs Substation. This alternative was considered but eliminated from detailed study because of the following features of greater environmental impact: a 138-kV line; expansion of the Lanes Creek Substation; taller structures than the North Alternative, increasing visual impacts; a 150-foot-wide right-of-way.

*Blackfoot River Road Route Alternative.* This transmission line route alternative generally followed the same transmission line routes as the South Alternative and route options, except for a routing variation where these alternatives would have first crossed Blackfoot River Road near the existing power substation at the intersection of Haul Road and Blackfoot River Road. This alternative was eliminated because it would result in more acres of impacts on wetland areas than the South Alternative.

*Goshen-Lanes Creek Transmission Line Alternative.* BPA considered constructing a new 161-kV transmission line from PacifiCorp's Goshen Substation near Idaho Falls, Idaho, to a connection with LVE's existing transmission system at a point near Lanes Creek, Idaho, about 10 miles southeast of Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Because this alternative would require adding shunt capacitors to the system and be much longer than other alternatives (about 52 miles long), its cost would be much greater than the North or South alternatives; therefore the alternative was eliminated from further consideration.

*U.S. Forest Service Land Routing Alternatives.* The C-TNF Caribou Revised Forest Plan Guidelines states new transmission should be routed so they do not cross C-TNF lands or they should be located within or adjacent to existing transmission lines. Routing the new transmission line off of C-TNF lands is physically impossible because the power must be transmitted from LVE's Threemile Knoll Substation on the west side of the C-TNF to LVE's Tincup-Dry Creek transmission line or Lanes Creek Substation both located on the east side of the C-TNF. Additionally, routing the new transmission line in an existing transmission line corridor would add substantial length and cost to the project, therefore this alternative was considered but eliminated from detailed study.

*Alternative BPA Substation Sites.* BPA considered other possible locations for its proposed Hooper Springs Substation that would connect the proposed transmission line to PacifiCorp's existing Threemile Knoll Substation. All of these locations would be farther away from the Threemile Knoll Substation than the currently proposed location, and would require longer transmission line connections and would increase costs. Because of the increased costs and the potential for increased environmental impacts from longer transmission line connections, BPA eliminated these sites from further consideration.

### Alternatives to a Transmission Line

*Non-wires Alternatives.* In addition to considering alternatives that involve building new transmission lines, BPA evaluated “non-wires” alternatives to meet the project purpose and need. These alternatives are referred to as non-wires alternatives because they would address the purpose and need through measures not directly related to transmission facility construction. The combination of potential non-wires measures could at most defer, but not eliminate, the need to construct a transmission line, and there is a fundamental uncertainty about whether these measures could be fully implemented in time to effectively address the growing need for the Project. Given these factors, BPA eliminated non-wires alternatives from further detailed consideration.

*Undergrounding.* Underground cable system installation has historically been justifiable in terms of cost and reliability only in urban or metropolitan areas, and for limited distances. Because of the high cost of an underground line compared to overhead lines, unproven technology over long distances, reliability and reactive compensation issues for long installations, and increased land disturbance, the alternative of placing the new transmission line underground was not considered feasible for the project.

### ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE ALTERNATIVE

The environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that “will best promote the national environmental policy as expressed in NEPA’s section 101 (42 U.S.C. 4321). Ordinarily, the environmentally preferable alternative is that which causes the least harm to the biological and physical environment; it also is the alternative which best protects and preserves historic, cultural, and natural resources” (36 CFR 220.3). For this Project, the environmentally preferable alternative is the No Action Alternative. As described earlier, the No Action Alternative analyzed in the EIS is the predicted result of the denial of the Applicants’ request for authorization. Under the No Action Alternative, the Project would not be constructed on federal lands. No Project-related impacts to vegetation, soils and wildlife species and other resources would occur.

For the reasons detailed above for this decision, I did not select the environmentally preferable alternative; however, the Selected Alternative has been designed to avoid and minimize environmental impacts wherever possible, including through required mitigation and monitoring, while still allowing the Project to be constructed and operated to meet the Applicants’ purpose and need.

### FINDINGS REQUIRED WITH OTHER LAWS

#### National Forest Management Act

##### *Consistency with the Forest Plan*

The Forest Service meets the requirements of the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) by ensuring decisions are consistent with the applicable Forest Plan, developed and approved consistent with the NFMA implementing regulations at 36 CFR part 219.

The Caribou portion of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest is managed according to the Caribou Forest Plan.

Analysis indicated that the uses approved by this decision would not be consistent with the existing Caribou Forest Plan; therefore, this decision also includes an amendment to the Caribou Forest Plan. Appendix B provides explanation of how the amendment approved by this decision makes the approval of the Project consistent with the Forest Plan.

### ***Significance of the Forest Plan Amendments***

As provided by the NFMA implementing regulations at 36 CFR 219.17(b)(2), the plan amendments approved by this decision were completed in conformance with the provisions of the prior planning regulation, including its transition provisions (36 CFR part 219, published at 36 CFR parts 200 to 299, revised as of July 1, 2012). The prior planning regulation allows the responsible official to conduct amendments under the 1982 planning regulations in effect prior to November 9, 2000 (36 CFR parts 200 to 299, revised as of July 1, 2000). The responsible officials elected to conduct the amendments relating to this Project under the 1982 planning regulations. Under those procedures, the Forest Supervisor of the plan to be amended must make a determination whether the amendment would result in a significant change in the plan.

To make the determination of significance of the amendments, I considered the two circumstances that may cause a significant change to a land management plan provided in Forest Service Manual 1926.52 (Changes to the Land Management Plan that are Significant). The following is the result of my consideration:

#### **Changes that would significantly alter the long-term relationship between levels of multiple-use goods and services originally projected**

The Caribou Forest Plan establishes direction for the following desired future conditions: ecological processes and patterns, physical elements, biological elements, forest use and occupation. They reflect the relationship of multiple-use goods and services provided by the Caribou Forest Plan. Goals, as defined in the Caribou Forest Plan, reflect long-term outcomes of management activities; therefore, in determining the effects of the amendment on the long-term relationship between levels of multiple-use goods and services originally project, I considered effects of the amendment on the ability to achieve the goals associated with each of these desired conditions. Because the changes in multiple-use goods and services would be the result of the implementation of the Project, I considered effects for the Project in making my determinations of effects to the multiple-use goods and services provided by the Forest Plan.

#### **Ecological Processes and Patterns**

The goals for ecological processes and patterns address properly functioning condition (vegetation appropriate for physical and biological processes), insects and diseases as natural disturbance agents, and the natural role of fire.

The ability of the Forest to continue to provide for ecological processes and patterns is affected by the continued provision of the physical and biological elements necessary for those processes. As discussed below, I do not consider any

# Record of Decision

potential changes in physical and biological elements resulting from the amendment to be significant.

This amendment makes no change to management for insects and diseases as natural disturbance agents.

Because of the nature of the Project, the natural role of fire will be affected by the management of the ROW. The identified mitigation measures and the Project plan of development will reduce potential effects of fire that are not natural and due to management of the transmission line. Because the requirement to manage conditions to reduce the potential for fire is limited to the small area affected by the ROW, and my decision does not affect fire management elsewhere on the Forest, I do not consider changes due to the amendment in the natural role of fire to be significant.

## **Physical Elements**

The goals for physical elements address features of caves, soil productivity and soil erosion, air quality and emissions, land ownership, access, and uses, and minerals and geology.

Caves were not identified as a resource affected by the Project on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest.

The effects to soils are described above under the rationale for my decision. Because of the small area affected and the specified mitigation measures, I do not consider the Project to have a significant effect on the Caribou Forest Plan's provision of soil productivity and soil erosion.

As discussed below under the Air Quality Act, the Project will not affect the Forest Plan provisions on air quality.

My decision makes no change to land ownership, public access, or uses currently provided by the Caribou Forest Plan.

Goals for minerals and geology address mineral resources, paleontological resources, and reclamation of drastically disturbed sites. Per Section 3.12 of the Final EIS, impacts to mineral resources by the Project are expected to be low on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Mitigation measures will reduce impacts to paleontological resources. No significant change in the ability of the Forest to progress toward the goals for minerals and geology is expected by my decision.

## **Biological Elements**

The goals for biological elements address watershed and riparian resources, vegetation resources, noxious weeds and invasive species, plant species diversity, special forest products, and wildlife.

The Project area contains 6.9 acres of AIZs and approximately 0.3 acres of AIZs will be impacted from Project development and operation. With the application of the mitigation measures and site-specific crossing plans, the Project is not expected to result in a reduction or loss of function for the AIZ streams within the Project area.

## Record of Decision

The Project may impact approximately 323 acres of native vegetation communities, including sagebrush dominated, mountain shrub-dominated, grass-dominated, aspen-dominated, conifer-dominated, and wetlands communities (SDEIS Table 3-8). All of these vegetation types, and thus the products they may provide, continue to be available elsewhere on the Forest.

The Applicants will be required to adhere to all Forest Service requirements regarding weeds and invasive plant species for activities and uses on the Forest. The plan of development will include mitigation measures and plans to reduce the potential for impacts from fire and noxious weeds.

As described in Section 3.16 of the SDEIS, there are no documented occurrences of special status plant species along portion of the Project located on the Forest. Pre-construction surveys would be conducted in this area in order to aid in micro-siting the Project outside of any areas where newly discovered or previously unknown populations may exist.

Based on the analysis in Chapters 3 of the SDEIS and FEIS, the Biological Evaluation, and the Biological Assessment, this decision will not result in changes to ecological conditions that would result in the inability to sustain viable populations of any species in the area managed under the Caribou Forest Plan.

### **Forest Use and Occupation**

The goals for forest use and occupation address tribal coordination, facilities (buildings, water systems, and sewer systems), transportation (roads, trails, and access), recreation, scenic resources, and heritage resources.

My decision does not affect tribal coordination. Tribal concerns will continue to be addressed per Executive Order 13175, as described below.

My decision does not affect occupation or existing facilities. It also makes no change to the provisions for transportation, except to authorize road construction, reconstruction, and access for the Applicants to construct and maintain the Project.

The Project will impact scenic and recreational resources where it crosses the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Because the impact is limited to the area of the Project and the Forest will continue to support the spectrum of recreational opportunities, I do not consider this a significant alteration to the ability of the Forest to provide for scenic resources per the Caribou Forest Plan goals.

Cultural and historic resources will be protected through implementation of the mitigation measures and the plan of development, which will include measures based on the Programmatic Agreement regarding compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act; and the Programmatic Agreement itself (SDEIS Section 3.9).

### **Production of Commodity Resources**

The goals for production of commodity resources address grazing management and timber management.

## Record of Decision

My decision does not affect authorization of livestock grazing on the Forest. Although rangeland pasture may be affected during construction, the acreage is small and will not make a significant change to the Forest's ability to continue to provide for livestock grazing.

Although areas that may provide for timber production will be affected by the vegetation management required for the ROW, because the acreage is small and timber production will continue elsewhere on the Forest, I do not consider the change to be significant.

### **Changes that may have an important effect on the entire land management plan or affect land and resources throughout a large portion of the planning area during the planning period.**

The Forest Plan amendment does not have an important effect on the entire land management plan. The changes to the Forest Plan are limited to those few standards and guidelines relating to the Project. No other changes to the Forest Plan are affected by this decision. This amendment will not have an important effect on the entire land management plan.

The Forest Plan amendment does not have an effect on large portion of the planning area. The plan amendment approved by this decision applies primarily to the area of the corridor for the transmission line and associated areas of access for construction and maintenance. Approximately 36 acres will be affected by the amendment (the 3 mile long by 100 foot-wide ROW, adjacent vegetation cut to reduce the straight edge, and access roads outside the corridor). Most of the uses, activities, and disturbances for which the amendments are needed will be within the corridor. The total acres affected by the amendment for the Caribou Forest Plan will be less than 0.000033 percent of the more than 1.1 million acres managed under the Caribou Forest Plan. This is not a large portion of the planning area.

The amendment to the Caribou Forest Plan will not significantly alter the long-term relationship between levels of multiple-use goods and services originally projected. Neither will the amendment have a significant effect on the entire land management plan or affect land and resources throughout a large portion of the planning area during the planning period. Based on the above, I have determined that the Forest Plan amendment approved by this decision is not significant.

## **Endangered Species Act**

Under provisions of Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA, a federal agency that carries out, permits, licenses, funds, or otherwise authorizes an activity must consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as appropriate to ensure the action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any species listed as threatened or endangered.

As lead federal agency, the BPA led the consultation with the USFWS; the Forest Service participated as applicable for issues on NFS lands. The biological assessment (BA) was completed for the Applicants' entire proposal and thus includes the Forest Service uses approved by this decision. Effects on threatened or endangered species are disclosed in Section 3.7 of the SDEIS and more specifically in the BA.

## Clean Air Act

Analysis for effects to air quality is in Section 3.14 of the SDEIS.

There is no known phase or activity to be conducted during the Project that is not consistent with current air quality plans in Idaho.

Neither the construction nor operations phase of the Project is expected to do the following: 1) exceed state or federal general conformity thresholds; 2) cause any adverse impacts to air quality related values; 3) cause any adverse impact to air quality-related values in a federal Class I area or state wilderness area, because emissions impacts will be primarily confined to within 1,000 feet of the centerline of the corridor for the Project Preferred Routes, and no Class I areas are within this distance; or 4) exceed the Prevention of Significant Deterioration emissions thresholds of 250 tons per year of any attainment pollutant.

Neither the construction nor operations phase of the Project is expected to do the following: 1) contribute to any new violation of any state or federal ambient air quality standard in the Project area, 2) interfere with the maintenance or attainment of any state or federal ambient air quality standard in the Project area, 3) increase the frequency or severity of any existing violations of any state or federal ambient air quality standard in the Project area, or 4) delay the timely attainment of any standard, interim emission reduction, or other air quality milestone promulgated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or state air quality agency.

Considering the Project Preferred Route location, and the fact that the impacts from construction and/or operations would occur overwhelmingly within the corridor, no impacts are expected to sensitive receptors.

The activities are exempt from or have no applicable requirements for the other major regulatory programs relating to the Clean Air Act: National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants, Title IV (Acid Rain), Title V (Operating Permits), and comprehensive conformity analysis for nonattainment areas.

Violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards resulting from Project construction and operations are not anticipated.

The construction activities will comply with the applicable state fugitive dust control requirements through implementation of EPMS for dust control, included in the POD.

## Safe Drinking Water Act

Potential impacts of the Project Preferred Routes on drinking water sources (i.e., wells, springs, and shallow groundwater) were determined to be low (SDEIS, Section 3.6 and 3.14). The greatest risk to water wells of any use would be from accidental fuel spills or equipment leaks.

Described in Section 3.6.1, two groundwater monitoring wells are located within the South Alternative corridor. One is within both the transmission line and access road ROW, while the other is just within the transmission line ROW. Mitigation measures would be implemented to limit accidental spills or equipment leaks that may contaminate

groundwater. Additionally, as described in Section 3.6.4, spill response procedures would be implemented to manage hazardous material spills.

### **Clean Water Act**

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act, popularly known as the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), regulates discharges into waters of the United States.

Implementation of the Project may require a permit pursuant to the Clean Water Act as regulated by USACE for the placement of fill material and the potential disturbance of wetlands and other waters of the United States. Requirements for implementation of the Clean Water Act in Idaho are described below.

Section 401 (33 U.S.C. 1341 et seq.) certification is required for any permit or license issued by a federal agency for any activity that may result in a discharge into waters of the state, to ensure that the Project will not violate state water quality standards. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act, as amended, 33 U.S.C. 1341(a)(1), and Idaho Code 39-101 et seq., and 39-3601 et seq., IDEQ has authority to review Section 404 permits and issue water quality certification. Any Section 401 certification in Idaho also ensures that the Project would comply with water quality improvement plans developed for affected waterbodies and would not adversely impact water quality impaired streams (streams that already do not meet water quality standards).

Section 402 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1342 et seq.) authorizes stormwater discharges associated with industrial activities under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. For Idaho, EPA has a Construction General Permit authorizing federal facilities to discharge stormwater from construction activities disturbing land of 1 acre or more into waters of the United States, in accordance with various set conditions. BPA would develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) during final project design, which would be adapted by the contractor prior to construction, and revised onsite as necessary. A copy of the SWPPP is maintained onsite during construction and is a basis for environmental compliance inspection during construction.

Section 404 requires authorization from USACE when there is a discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, which include wetlands. The basic premise of Section 404 is that dredged or fill material cannot be discharged into water if the nation's waters would be significantly degraded or if a feasible alternative exists that is less damaging to the aquatic environment. As discussed in Section 3.6 of the SDEIS, construction of the South Alternative would result in approximately 2.8 acres of short-term impacts on wetlands and no long-term impacts. Construction of Route Option 3A would result in approximately 2.7 acres of short-term impacts on wetlands and 0.1 acre of long-term, direct impacts. BPA will apply for a Section 404 permit and coordinate with USACE concerning the Project and its potential effects on waters of the United States.

### **Executive Order 11988 (Floodplains) and Executive Order 11990 (Wetlands)**

The Project has been designed to comply with the requirements of EO 11988 (Floodplain Management), EO 11990 (Wetland Protection), and Sections 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act (SDEIS, Section 3.6).

EO 11988 requires federal agencies to avoid to the extent possible the long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains and to avoid direct and indirect support of floodplain development wherever there is a practicable alternative. EO 11990 requires the agencies take action to minimize destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands.

Described in Section 3.6 of the SDEIS, approximately 4.9 acres of wetlands occur within the right of way for Route Option 3A, including two crossing of the Blackfoot River. EO 11990 will be met by implementing the mitigation measures specified in Section 3.6.4 of the SDEIS. The application of these mitigation measures will minimize the impacts that could occur to wetlands and Aquatic Influence Zones (AIZ) identified in the Caribou Revised Forest Plan.

### **National Historic Preservation Act**

Section 106 (16 U.S.C. 470f) of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires federal agencies to take into account the effect of their undertakings on any district, site, building, structure, or object that is included in, or is eligible for, inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). As lead federal agency, BPA initiated Section 106 consultation with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in June 2011. To achieve compliance with Section 106, several mitigation measures have been identified to reduce or eliminated adverse impacts to archaeological and historic resources from the project (SDEIS Section 3.9.4).

### **Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Executive Order 13186**

Agency responsibility for the protection of migratory birds is found in the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and EO 13186. The analysis conducted in the SDEIS and FEIS and required mitigation measures support project compliance with the MBTA and EO 13186. Potential impacts to migratory birds from construction and operations of the project, as well as the mitigations measures that will be implemented to comply with the MBTA and EO 13186, are discussed in detail in Section 3.7 and 4.4 of the SDEIS.

### **Executive Order 12898 – Environmental Justice**

The analysis in Section 3.10 of the SDEIS suggests the potential presence of minority or low income communities in the vicinity of the project area; however, the percentage of minority and/or low-income populations in Caribou County and the surrounding communities is very low. The data analyzed in the SDEIS does not indicate the presence of environmental justice communities. Therefore impacts to minority, low-income, or tribal communities are not expected. Potential environmental justice populations are not expected to be disproportionately affected by the impacts associated with the project.

### **Executive Order 13175**

The United States has a unique legal relationship with American Indian tribal governments as set forth in the Constitution of the United States, treaties, executive

orders, federal statutes, federal policy, and tribal requirements, which establish the interaction that must take place between federal and tribal governments. An important basis for this relationship is the trust responsibility of the United States to protect tribal sovereignty, self-determination, tribal lands, tribal assets and resources, and treaty and other federally recognized and reserved rights. Government-to-government consultation is the process of seeking, discussing, and considering views on policy, and/or, in the case of this Project, environmental and cultural resource management issues.

In compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA (as amended) and the ACHP's revised regulations (36 CFR part 800), the BPA initiated government-to-government consultation with the Shoshone Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation, the Shoshone Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation, and the Northwest Band of the Shoshone Nation in June 2011. The consultation was conducted to inform the various Tribes of the proposed undertaking and solicit their concerns and/or comments regarding the possible impacts to places of cultural, traditional, or religious importance to the Tribes in the proposed project area. Section 3.6 of the SDEIS discusses the cultural resources in the project area.

### ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

*Predecisional Administrative review of decision to authorize Applicants' uses of NFS lands.* This decision to authorize the Applicants' uses on NFS lands is subject to predecisional administrative review pursuant to 36 CFR 218 Subparts A and B (objection process). Objections will be accepted only from those who have previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project either during scoping or other designated opportunity for public comment in accordance with 36 CFR 218.5(a). Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project unless based on new information arising after designated opportunities.

Individual members of organizations must have submitted their own comments to meet the requirements of eligibility as an individual, objections received on behalf of an organization are considered as those of the organization only. If an objection is submitted on behalf of a number of individuals or organizations, each individual or organization listed must meet the eligibility requirement of having previously submitted comments on the project (36 CFR 218.7). Names and addresses of objectors will become part of the public record.

Incorporation of documents by reference in the objection is permitted only as provided for at 36 CFR 218.8(b). Minimum content requirements of an objection as identified in 36 CFR 218.8(d) include:

- Objector's name and address with a telephone number if available; with signature or other verification of authorship supplied upon request.
- Identification of the lead objector when multiple names are listed, along with verification upon request.

## Record of Decision

- Name of project, name and title of the responsible official, national forest/ranger district of project.
- Sufficient narrative description of those aspects of the proposed project objected to, specific issues related to the project, how environmental law, regulation, or policy would be violated, and suggested remedies which would resolve the objection.
- Statement demonstrating the connection between prior specific written comments on this project and the content of the objection, unless the objection issue arose after the designated opportunity(s) for comment.

*Predecisional Administrative review of decision to amend the Caribou Forest Plan.* This decision to amend the Caribou Forest Plan is subject to administrative review pursuant to 36 CFR 219 Subpart B.

Objections will be accepted only from those who have previously submitted substantive formal comments related to a plan, plan amendment, or plan revision during the opportunities for public comment as provided in 36 CFR 219 Subpart A during the planning process for this decision. Objections must be based on previously submitted substantive formal comments attributed to the objector unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the opportunities for formal comment. The burden is on the objector to demonstrate compliance with requirements for objection (36 CFR 219.53).

Incorporation of documents by reference in the objection is permitted only as provided for at 36 CFR 219.54(b). Minimum content requirements of an objection as identified in 36 CFR 219.54(c) include:

- Objector's name and address with a telephone number if available; with signature or other verification of authorship supplied upon request.
- Identification of the lead objector when multiple names are listed, along with verification upon request.
- The name of the plan, plan amendment, or plan revision being objected and the name and title of the responsible official.
- Sufficient narrative description of those aspects of the proposed plan, plan amendment, or plan revision to which the objection applies.
- Statement explaining the objection and suggesting how the proposed plan decision may be improved. If applicable, the objector should identify how the objector believes the plan, plan amendment, or plan revision is inconsistent with law, regulation, or policy.
- Statement demonstrating the connection between prior specific written comments on this project and the content of the objection, unless the objection issue arose after the designated opportunity(s) for comment.

# Record of Decision

*Submission of objections.* Written objections, including any attachments, must be filed (regular mail, fax, email, hand-delivery, or express delivery) with the Reviewing Officer at: Objection Reviewing Officer, Intermountain Region USFS, 324 25th Street, Ogden, Utah 84401; or fax to 801-625-5277 within 60 days following the publication date of the legal notice of this draft decision in the newspaper of record. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered objections are 8:00 to 4:30 Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Electronic objections must be submitted in a format such as an email message, pdf, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), and Word (.doc or .docx) to [objections-intermtn-regional-office@fs.fed.us](mailto:objections-intermtn-regional-office@fs.fed.us). It is the responsibility of Objectors to ensure their objection is received in a timely manner (36 CFR 218.9).

The publication date of the legal notice in the Idaho State Journal, the newspaper of record, is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection of this project and plan amendment. Those wishing to object to this proposed project should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

## IMPLEMENTATION DATE

If no objection is filed within the 60-day time period, implementation of the decision may occur on, but not before, 5 business days from the close of the objection filing period. When objections are filed, the responsible official may not issue a decision document until the objection reviewing officer has responded in writing to all objections.

## CONTACT PERSON

For further information, contact Jack Isaacs, District Ranger, Soda Springs Ranger District, Caribou-Targhee National Forest, 410 E. Hooper Ave., Soda Springs, Idaho 83276.

---

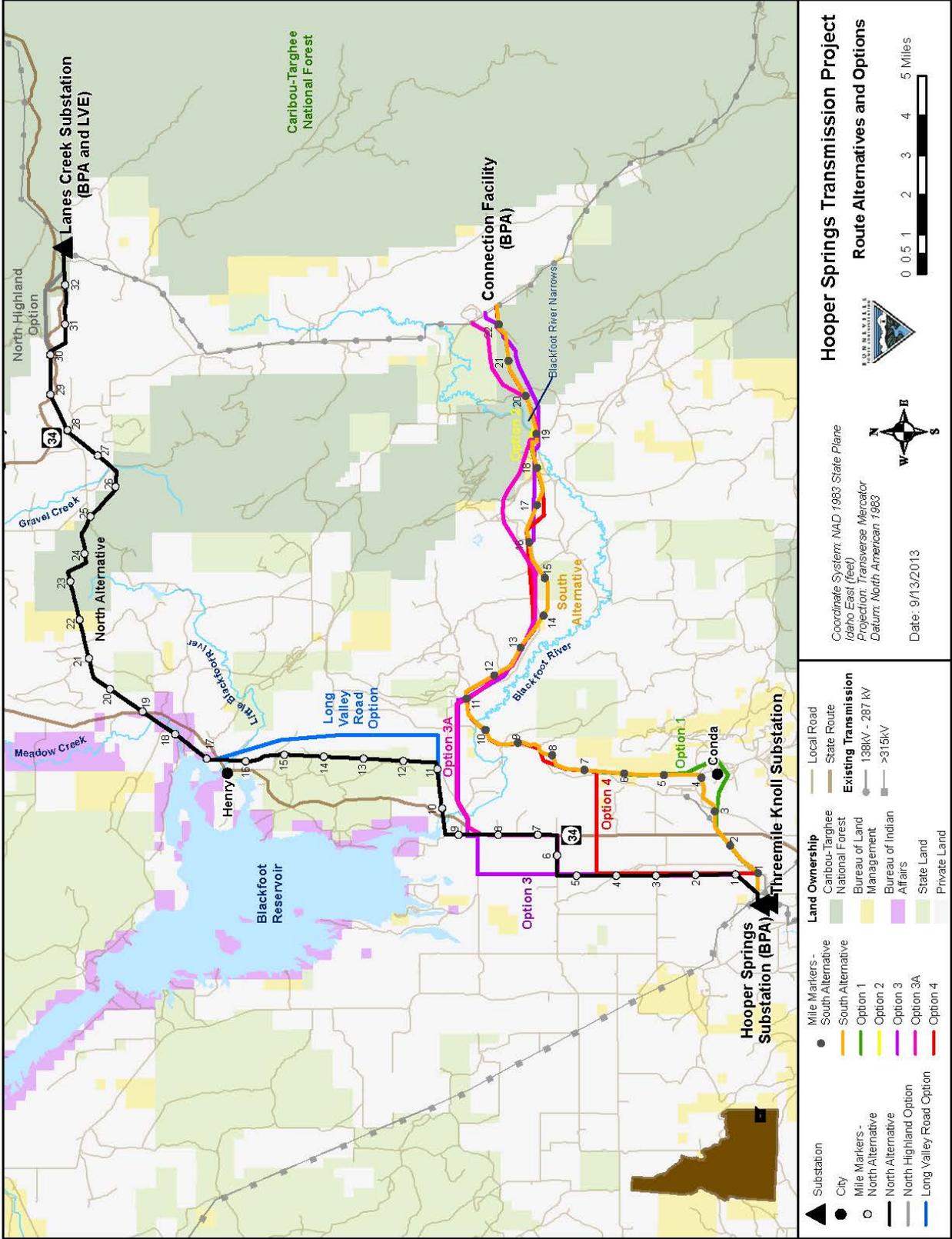
Garth Smelser

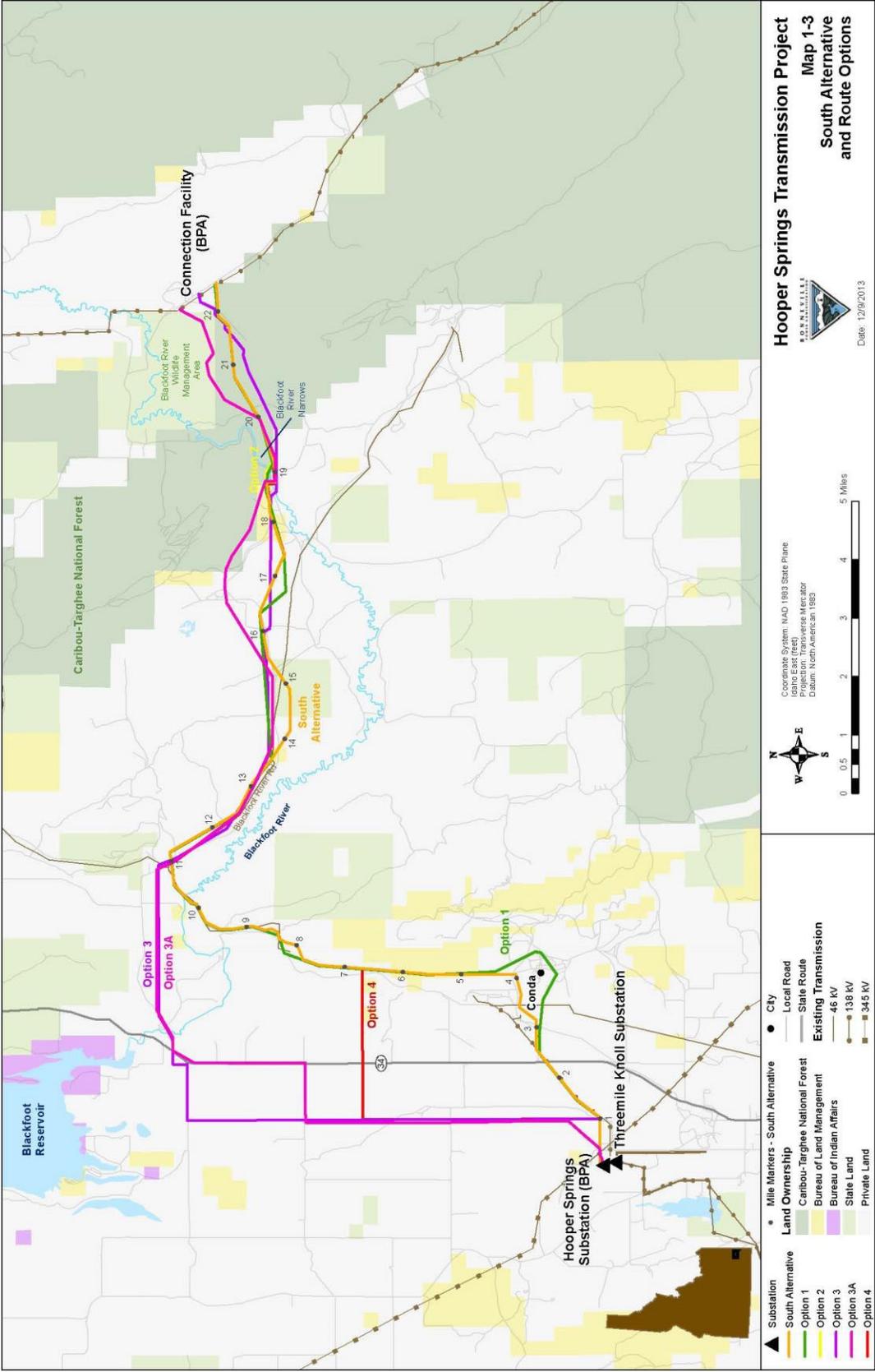
Forest Supervisor, Caribou-Targhee National Forest

---

Date

**APPENDIX A  
MAPS OF THE VICINTY AND PROJECT (ROUTE OPTION 3A) ON  
THE CARIBOU-TARGHEE NATIONAL FOREST**





**APPENDIX B  
AMENDMENT TO THE CARIBOU NATIONAL FOREST  
REVISED FOREST PLAN**

**Forest Plan Direction to be Amended within the Project Area**

This Forest Plan Amendment will designate a new corridor of Management Prescription 8.1, Concentrated Development Area, on lands currently designated as Management Prescriptions 5.2, Forest Vegetation Management; 2.7.2, Elk and Deer Winter Range; and 8.2.2, Phosphate Mine Areas to accommodate the Route Option 3A corridor. As described in the Caribou Revised Forest Plan (RFP 4-78), lands in Management Prescription 8.1 are “generally highly developed areas with much evidence of people, structures, roads, and often disturbed ground.” The portion of Route Option 3A that will traverse C-TNF lands will require a ROW approximately 3 miles long by 100 feet wide. In forested areas, the transmission line will require a 250-foot clearing width, as requested by the C-TNF, to ensure the long-term safety of the line from potential hazard trees and minimize the frequency with which BPA may be required to perform additional hazard tree clearing. Therefore, approximately an additional 75 feet of forest clearing will take place on each side of the ROW in forested areas. Table A-1 details the acreage of each existing management prescription that will be converted to Management Prescription 8.1 for Route Option 3A.

**Table A-1. Acreage Added to Prescription 8.1 by Existing Management Prescription**

<b>Management Prescription</b>	<b>Option 3A (Acres)<sup>1</sup></b>
5.2 Forest Vegetation Management	15.4
2.7.2 Elk and Deer Winter Range	20
8.2.2 Phosphate Mine Areas	0.25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36.3<sup>2</sup></b>

Access roads necessary to construct and maintain the transmission line will remain in their respective Management Prescriptions (5.2b; 2.7.2; 8.2.2; and 2.8.3) and will be managed to comply with those prescriptions. The area surrounding the proposed transmission line and new access roads for Route Option 3A will retain its existing Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class of Roaded Modified.

<sup>2</sup> Acreage added to Prescription 8.1 was calculated using the proposed 100 foot ROW width rather than the 250 foot clearing width.

## Record of Decision

The proposed amendment will allow “concentrated development in small areas for development and infrastructure needs,” consistent with the goals of Management Prescription 8.1. In accordance with standards for Management Prescription 8.1, if through opportunistic or incidental monitoring of the transmission line by BPA maintenance or USFS personnel, or consistent anecdotal reports, the line is found to be causing mortality, BPA would work with USFS to correct the problem. Standards and Guidelines regarding biological potential for woodpeckers are not a management consideration within the 8.1 Management Prescription.

**APPENDIX C  
FOREST PLAN CONSISTENCY PROVIDED BY THE AMENDMENT**

Table A-2 Project Consistency with Forest-wide Standards and Guidelines

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<b>FOREST-WIDE GUIDANCE</b>	
<b>Fire</b>	
Standard 1. All fires shall be suppressed if they are in areas not covered by a pre-approved fire management plan.	Fire management measures in the BPA master contract for the Project would include provisions for monitoring under certain conditions. BPA would also coordinate fire suppression measures with USFS.
Guideline 1. Prescribed and wildland fire use is allowed and encouraged unless prohibited by individual prescription area direction.	N/A. The Project would not involve the use of prescribed fire during construction or operation of the Project, because it would pose a danger to the line. Per Management Prescription 8.1, Fire/Fuels, Guideline 1, “mechanical treatments would be preferred in these areas.”
Guideline 2. When developing vegetation treatment projects, give priority to those reducing fuels in the wildland/urban interface. Strive to move vegetation currently in Fire Condition Class 3 to Condition Classes 1 and 2.	Fire management measures in the BPA master contract for the Project would include provisions for fuels reduction. To the extent possible, BPA would strive to move vegetation currently in Fire Condition Class 3 to Classes 1 and 2.
Guideline 3. When developing wildland fire use plans, consider noxious weed infestations when determining which areas to allow wildland fire use	BPA would consider noxious weed infestations in development and implementation of fire management measures.
<b>Caves</b>	
Standard 1. Retain vegetation in the vicinity of a cave or cave course if it is required to protect the cave’s microenvironment (habitat, climate, vegetation, etc.).	N/A. The Project would not be located near, nor would it disturb any known caves.
Guideline 1. Gating of cave entrances may be allowed as long as the entrance maintains natural airflow patterns.	N/A. The Project would not be located near, nor would it disturb any known caves.
Guideline 2. Management activities may be permitted within any area draining into or away from a cave if they are not likely to adversely affect the cave ecosystem.	N/A. The Project would not be located near, nor would it disturb any known caves.
<b>Soils—All Ecosystems</b>	
Standard 1. Land types identified as being unstable or marginally unstable in the Caribou National Forest Soil Resource Inventory shall be ground verified prior to soil disturbing activities to determine the capability of the land to sustain resource development activities including road construction.	BPA and contractors performed ground verification during summer of 2013 to determine the capability of the land to sustain road and transmission line construction activities.
Standard 2. Suitability for resource management activities shall be disclosed in the site-specific analysis.	The suitability of the Project area for each alternative is analyzed in this EIS document. See Section 3.5, Geology and Soils, for further discussion.

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<p>Standard 3. For ground-disturbing activities where detrimental soil disturbances (defined in Forest Service Handbook 2509.18) occur on areas of 10 acres or greater, plan and implement rehabilitation to meet desired future conditions.</p>	<p>Ground disturbance associated with ROW clearing and road construction exceeds 10 acres. Within the ROW, low-growing vegetation would largely be allowed to reestablish, but tall vegetation that could interfere with operation and maintenance of the transmission line would not. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion.</p> <p>Permanent and improved access roads would not be rehabilitated; however, roads would use low grades, out sloping, intercepting dips, water bars, and ditch-outs as needed to minimize erosion. See Section 3.5, Geology and Soils, for further discussion of mitigation measures. Ground-disturbing activities associated with either alternative would not prevent the area surrounding the proposed transmission line ROW and access roads from meeting Desired Future Conditions as described on Page RFP 3-2 of the CNF RFP.</p>
<p>Standard 4. On land types where landslides or landslide prone areas have been identified, a site-specific analysis shall be conducted to ensure project implementation is compatible with desired future conditions.</p>	<p>Based on analysis detailed in Section 3.5, Geology and Soils, the Project would not be intentionally sited on any land types that are landslide-prone. BPA would conduct engineering geotechnical surveys during spring 2014.</p>
<p>Guideline 1. Resource developments and utilization should be restricted to lands identified in the Soil Resource Inventory as being capable of sustaining such impacts.</p>	<p>The soils within the project area are expected to be capable of sustaining the impacts from the Project. See Section 3.5, Geology and Soils. BPA would coordinate with USFS as needed concerning review of the Soil Resource Inventory as applicable to the Project.</p>
<p>Guideline 2. Maintain ground cover, microbiotic crusts, and fine organic matter that would protect the soil from erosion in excess of soil loss tolerance limits and provide nutrient cycling.</p>	<p>Grubbing would be limited to areas around structure sites to reduce the impact on low-lying vegetation.</p> <p>Disturbance associated with permanent and reconstructed access roads for Option 3A would result in the permanent loss of ground cover on up to approximately 13 acres.</p> <p>See Section 3.4, Vegetation and Section, and Section 3.5, Geology and Soils, for further discussion.</p>
<p>Guideline 3. Detrimental soil disturbance such as compaction, erosion, puddling, displacement, and severely burned soils caused by management practices should be limited or mitigated to meet long-term soil productivity goals.</p>	<p>Mitigation measures would be implemented to minimize impacts to long-term soil productivity, including retention and on-site reuse of all topsoils removed; revegetation of all temporarily disturbed areas; break-up of compacted soils prior to reseeded; and monitoring of all reseeded areas. See Section 3.4, Vegetation and Section, and Section 3.5, Geology and Soils, for further discussion.</p>
<b>Soils—Forested Ecosystems</b>	
<p>Guideline 1. Reduce soil erosion to less than the soil loss tolerance limits on lands disturbed by management activities within one growing season after disturbance.</p>	<p>BPA would implement erosion control measures on all permanent access roads and would also initiate reclamation of all temporarily disturbed areas immediately following construction. BPA would replant all temporarily disturbed areas, but plans to allow for two growing seasons in order to measure success. See Section 3.4 Vegetation, and Section 3.5, Geology and Soils, for further discussion.</p>

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<p>Guideline 2. Sustain site productivity by providing the following minimum amounts of woody residue =3 inches in diameter dispersed on the site as outlined in Table 3.1, below. These do not apply within a 300-foot corridor on either side of roads designated as open on the most current version of the Travel Plan.</p> <p><b>Table 3.1 Minimum Woody Residue by Forest Habitat Type</b></p> <p><u>3-5 tons/acre:</u></p> <p>Limber pine/curleaf mountain mahogany (Pifl/Cele)            Douglas-fir /mountain snowberry (Psme/Syor)            Douglas-fir /common juniper (Psme/Juco) Lodgepole pine/heartleaf arnica (Pico/Arco)</p> <p><u>5-10 tons/acre</u></p> <p>Douglas-fir/ninebark (Psme/Phma)            Subalpine fir/pine grass (Abla/Caru)            Douglas-fir/mountain maple (Psme/Acgl)            Subalpine fir/heartleaf arnica (Abla/Arco)            Subalpine fir/Ross sedge (Abla/Caro)            Douglas-fir/blue huckleberry (Psme/Vagl)            Lodgepole pine/blue huckleberry (Pico/Vagl)            Douglas-fir/Oregon grape (Psme/Bere) Lodgepole pine/grouse whortleberry (Pico/Vasc) Douglas-fir/white spirea (Psme/Spbe) Lodgepole pine/pine grass (Pico/Caru)            Douglas-fir/pine grass (Psme/Caru)            Lodgepole pine/elk sedge (Pico/Cage)            Subalpine fir/white spirea (Abla/Spbe)</p> <p><u>10-15 tons/acre</u></p> <p>Douglas-fir/mountain sweetroot (Psme/Osch)            Subalpine fir/mountain arnica (Abla/Arla)            Subalpine fir/mountain maple (Abla/Acgl)            Subalpine fir/common snowberry (Abla/Syal)            Subalpine fir/grouse whortleberry (Abla/Vasc)            Subalpine fir/ninebark (Abla/Phma)            Subalpine fir/western meadow -rue (Abla/Thoc)            Subalpine fir/blue huckleberry (Abla/Vagl)            Subalpine fir/Oregon grape (Abla/Bere)</p> <p><u>15-20 tons/acre</u></p> <p>Engelmann spruce/sweetscented bedstraw(Pien/Gatr)            Subalpine fir/mountain sweetroot (Abla/Osch)</p>	<p>BPA would incorporate measures to provide minimum amounts of woody residue to the extent practical. This could include the retention of woody residue within the transmission line ROW as well as placement of woody residue within the ROW following construction.</p>

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<b>Air Quality</b>	
Standard 1. All management ignited fires shall comply with rules, regulations and permit procedures required by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Department of Environmental Quality or appropriate agency from Wyoming and Utah. Planned activities shall be conducted in accordance with the Idaho State Implementation Plan of the Clean Air Act, the Montana/Idaho Smoke Management Plan, and other plans and policies that control smoke emissions on the National Forest.	N/A. The Project would not include the use of prescribed burning.
Guideline 1. Follow visibility and clearing index guidelines when implementing management practices such as prescribed burning.	N/A. The Project would not include the use of prescribed burning.
Guideline 2. Ensure treatments using prescribed fire are consistent with EPA's Interim Air Quality Policy on Wildland and Prescribed Fires, or more current direction.	N/A. The Project would not include the use of prescribed burning.
<b>Lands and Land Exchanges</b>	
Standard 1. Priority shall be given to acquiring lands having special importance or unique characteristics such as riparian areas, historic sites, habitat for federally listed species, recreation sites, etc.	N/A. The Project would not include any land acquisition on USFS land.
Standard 2. Any planned activities on the National Forest which might disturb Geodetic control survey monuments and boundary markers shall be evaluated at the time of project planning and environmental analysis for each specific project.	BPA survey crews would verify the locations of any geodetic survey control monuments and/or boundary markers, and would coordinate with USFS as needed to avoid implementation of any activities that would disturb such markers.
Guideline 1. Access to the Forest should be maintained or improved, as needed, for administration, protection, and public access. Small scale adjustments of landownership may be made through sale and/or exchanges to facilitate economical and logical administration of Federal lands.	Upon completion of construction of the transmission line, new permanent and improved access roads would be gated to exclude public motorized access. Open public roadways would remain open. Traffic associated with maintenance vehicles would be infrequent and would have no impact on access to the Forest. Roadways that may be damaged by construction vehicles and heavy equipment during construction would be repaired and improved as needed. See Section 3.2, Recreation, and Section 3.11, Transportation, for further discussion.
Guideline 2. Maintain a landline location and boundary posting program to identify existing locations and prevent future occupancy trespass.	Upon completion of construction of the transmission line, new permanent and improved access roads would be gated to exclude public motorized access. Open public roadways would remain open. Traffic associated with maintenance vehicles would be infrequent and would have no impact on access to the Forest. Roads that may be damaged by construction vehicles and heavy equipment during construction would be repaired and improved as needed. See Section 3.2, Recreation, and Section 3.11, Transportation, for further discussion.
<b>Special Uses</b>	
Standard 1. Allow special uses that are compatible with other resources.	The intent of this EIS is to support a decision that ensures the Project would be constructed and maintained in such a way as to be compatible with other resources.
Standard 2. Establish and maintain current appraisal data, where required, rental fees and user fees for all special use authorizations.	BPA would establish and maintain current appraisal data, where required.
Standard 3. Adequate bonds or other security instruments shall be required for special use authorizations if it is determined that the use has potential for disturbance that may require rehabilitation or when needed to ensure other performance.	BPA acknowledges that, should it be determined that the proposed transmission line has potential for disturbance that may require rehabilitation, adequate bonds or other security instruments may be required for authorization of the special use permit.

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<b>Transportation and Utility Corridors</b>	
<p>Standard 1. Existing and proposed ROWs of the following types shall be designated as corridors (Prescription 8.1). This does not prevent the inclusion of lower-rated transmission lines or smaller pipelines within the corridors.</p> <p>Communication lines and zones for interstate use.</p> <p>Railroads.</p> <p>Federal, state, interstate, and forest highways.</p> <p>Electric transmission lines of 66KV and greater, including fiberoptics.</p> <p>Oil, gas, slurry, or other pipelines 10 inches or larger in diameter.</p>	<p>The Project is the subject of an application for amendment to the Caribou Forest Plan to designate the portion of the proposed transmission line ROW located on C-TNF lands as Prescription 8.1, Concentrated Development Area.</p>
<p>Standard 2. Proponents of new facilities within existing corridors, and new corridor routes, shall demonstrate that the proposal is in the public interest, and that no other reasonable alternative exists to public land routing.</p>	<p>The Project is the subject of an EIS. Chapter 1 of the EIS describes the underlying public need it intends to serve. Given the somewhat linear nature of the C-TNF it would be very difficult to site around the Forest.</p> <p>The interconnection with the existing LVE transmission line at the eastern terminus of Option 3A lies on the opposite side of an approximately 3-mile wide section of C-TNF land from the western portion of the corridor. Given the linear nature of the C-TNF in the Option 3A corridor, it would be infeasible to site around the Forest.</p>
<p>Standard 3. Allow for essential access for repair and maintenance of facilities within energy corridors.</p>	<p>Option 3A would include approximately 5.5 miles of permanent and reconstructed access roads.</p> <p>Access roads would be constructed and used specifically for essential repair of and maintenance access to the proposed transmission line ROW. These roads would be gated during the operation and maintenance phase of the proposed transmission line to exclude public motorized access. See Section 3.2, Recreation, for further discussion.</p>
<p>Guideline 1. Utility corridors should have irregular clearing widths and follow patterns of existing natural openings.</p>	<p>The edges of the Option 3A ROW would be feathered, and BPA would coordinate with USFS to ensure that ROW clearing is consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines for utility corridors.</p>
<p>Guideline 2. Long distance lines of 35KV or smaller and short - distance lines of 115KV or smaller should be buried.</p>	<p>Option 3A would be approximately 24 miles long and would traverse approximately 3 miles of USFS land. These would not qualify as short-distance lines and therefore would be unfeasible to bury.</p>
<p>Guideline 3. Utility structures should be made to blend with the existing landscape to the extent feasible.</p>	<p>Under Option 3A, the transmission line ROW and structures would be visible from Blackfoot River Road and the Blackfoot River in the vicinity of the Blackfoot River Narrows.</p>
<p>Guideline 4. Where feasible, new facilities should be limited to existing ROWs having widening potential</p>	<p>The alternatives analyzed in the EIS were selected as the most feasible options based upon an alternatives analysis conducted in support of a preliminary EA. See Chapter 2, Proposed Action and Alternatives, for further discussion. All new facilities on USFS lands are restricted to the proposed transmission line ROW.</p>
<p>Guideline 5. Before new corridors or widening of existing corridors are approved, consideration should be given to wheeling, uprating, or multiple circuiting of transmission lines or increasing pipeline capacity by addition of compressors or looping.</p>	<p>The alternatives analyzed in the EIS were selected as the most feasible options based upon alternatives analysis conducted in support of a preliminary EA and subsequent public scoping efforts. See Chapter 2, Proposed Project and Alternatives, for further discussion.</p>

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 6. Avoid parallel corridors. Consolidate facilities within existing energy corridors where feasible.	The Project would avoid parallel utility corridors.
Guideline 7. Pipelines and other related utilities should share utility corridors except as needed to meet other resource goals	N/A. The Project would not include the routing of any pipelines.
<b>Hydropower Facilities</b>	
Standard 1. Forest Service personnel shall provide terms/conditions or recommendations to FERC under authority of the Federal Power Act when a proposed hydropower project (on or off Forest land) has the potential to affect Forest resources.	N/A. The Project does not include the construction of any hydropower facilities.
<b>Minerals and Geology—General Mining</b>	
Standard 1. Lessee/operator shall conduct pre-mining, concurrent, and/or post-mining water quality and aquatic habitat monitoring (both surface and groundwater) on all phosphate-mining sites where bond release has not occurred, using most current sampling procedures and protocols.	Option 3A would not involve mining but would cross one or more phosphate mining areas that may have heavy metal and selenium soil contamination, BPA has worked closely with USFS, BLM, and the mining companies to identify a potential pathway for its transmission facilities through the phosphate mining areas in an effort to avoid known contamination and minimize potential for release of contamination into waterbodies. Additionally, Option 3A would include both a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and Spill Prevention and Response Procedures to control and prevent releases into waterbodies and adjacent AIZs (See Section 3.5.4, Geology and Soils, and Section 3.13.4, Public Health and Safety).
Standard 2. Best Management Practices shall continue to be developed, refined and implemented to ensure that no release of hazardous substances into the environment exceeding established state and/or federal standards occurs.	As stated above, BPA has worked closely with USFS, BLM, and the mining companies to identify a potential pathway for its transmission facilities through phosphate mining areas in an effort to avoid known contamination and minimize potential for release of contamination into waterbodies. Option 3A would include both a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and Spill Prevention and Response Procedures to control and prevent releases into waterbodies and adjacent AIZs (See Section 3.5.4, Geology and Soils, and Section 3.13.4, Public Health and Safety).
Standard 3. Prior to closure of inactive or abandoned underground mines, surveys for cave-dependent species shall be completed and applicable mitigation measures developed/implemented.	N/A. Option 3A would not involve the closure of any inactive or abandoned mines.
Standard 4. When surface disturbing activities are proposed within geologic units having a moderate or high potential for the occurrence of vertebrate fossils (other than fish or sharks), a field survey of the area shall be made prior to, and if possible, during the proposed activities.	Option 3A is not expected to traverse geologic units having a moderate or high potential for the occurrence of vertebrate fossils. BPA would continue to coordinate with USFS on this matter, and if it is determined that there is potential for the occurrence of vertebrate fossils, field surveys would be conducted prior to, and if possible, during construction of the transmission line.
Standard 5. Recreational gold dredging shall be conducted in accordance with applicable Forest direction and Idaho Department of Water Resources' Application for a Permit to Alter a Stream Channel-Recreational Dredging Application (For Suction Dredges with Nozzle Size of 5 inches Diameter or Less and Equipment rated at 15 hp or less).	N/A. Option 3A would not involve recreational gold dredging.

**U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest**

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 1. Development of locatable minerals should minimize surface disturbance, sedimentation, air pollution, visual impairment, and meet applicable State Water Quality Standards.	Option 3A would not involve the development of locatable minerals. Proposed measures to mitigate surface disturbance, sedimentation, air pollution, visual impairment are discussed in Sections 3.3, Visual Resources; 3.5, Geology and Soils; 3.13, Public Health and Safety; and 3.14, Air Quality. Sections 3.6, Water Resources, Floodplains and Wetlands and 3.13, Public Health and Safety, discuss mitigation measures intended to ensure that the project meets applicable state water quality standards.
Guideline 2. Give priority to use of currently developed mineral material (sand, clay, gravel and stone) sources over undeveloped sources. New sources can be identified when existing sources are unable to economically or safely supply the quality and quantity of material needed.	To the extent that sand, clay, gravel, stone, or other mineral resources may be necessary for construction of the transmission line and roads, BPA would prioritize sourcing of these materials from existing and currently developed sources.
<b>Minerals and Geology—Drastically Disturbed Lands<sup>1</sup></b>	
	The Project would not disturb a large area of surface soils or highly alter topography. Therefore, it is not expected that lands impacted by the Project would be considered “drastically disturbed.” Revegetation and other mitigation measures associated with the Project are discussed below as they apply to the Standards and Guidelines for Drastically Disturbed Lands.
Standard 1. Mines shall be administered to help assure compliance with applicable State and/or Federal surface and groundwater regulatory standards.	N/A. The Project does not include any mining activity.
Standard 2. Diversions to control surface flow and infiltration on overburden piles, pit backfill, and all disturbed areas shall be designed to be self-maintaining or maintained by the lessee.	N/A. The Project does not include any mining activity.
Standard 3. Soil resources shall be inventoried to National Cooperative Soil Survey standards for Order 2 or more detailed levels. Volumes and suitability of soil resources for reclamation shall be determined before disturbance.	N/A. As the Standards and Guidelines for Drastically Disturbed Lands would likely not apply, it is not expected that an Order 2 or more detailed soil survey would be necessary
Standard 4. Topsoil and selected subsoils suitable for reclamation, as identified in the soil inventory, shall be salvaged on all slopes where equipment can safely operate and either stockpiled and protected or directly placed.	All native topsoil removed for structure and access road construction would be stockpiled and reused on-site for restoration activities. See Section 3.5, Geology and Soils, for further discussion of proposed mitigation measures.
Standard 5. Mining operations covering multiple year periods shall include plans for concurrent reclamation, which shall be reviewed and, if necessary, updated annually with the operator.	N/A. The Project does not include any mining activity.
Standard 6. Interim reclamation shall be conducted according to a plan submitted at the time the Forest Service is notified of a temporary shutdown.	N/A. The Project does not include any mining activity.
Standard 7. Reclamation vegetation shall be monitored for bio-accumulation of hazardous substances prior to release for multiple use management.	N/A. The Project does not include any mining activity.

<sup>1</sup> Drastically disturbed lands are extremely large areas where the surface soil layers or topography have been highly altered or rearranged through human activities such as mining. (Caribou Revised Forest Plan, p. 3-14)

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Standard 8. The lessee/operator shall monitor reclamation work annually and report to the Forest Service until reclamation is accepted and the bond released.	N/A. As the Standards and Guidelines for Drastically Disturbed Lands would likely not apply, it is not expected that a bond would be required.  Reclamation and reseeding efforts would be monitored during construction and afterward as needed. BPA would conduct monitoring of all ground-disturbed areas for 5 years for noxious weed invasions, and take corrective action as necessary, in coordination with C-TNF personnel and in adherence to the Forest's weed management efforts. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, and Section 3.5, Geology and Soils, for further discussion of proposed mitigation measures.
Standard 9. Loss of available surface water sources for uses such as wildlife or grazing, as a consequence of mining operations shall be replaced or mitigated by the mine operator. This includes the loss of water quality sufficient to maintain post-mining uses.	N/A. The Project does not include any mining activity.
Standard 10. Within mine areas, native vegetation shall be retained undisturbed when disturbance of the site is not necessary for minerals development or safety.	N/A. The Project does not include any mining activity.
Standard 11. Actual cost reclamation bond amounts shall be determined and bonds secured prior to surface disturbance or project implementation.	N/A. The Project does not include any mining activity.
Standard 12. Surface water management shall be designed and maintained to control water runoff, erosion, sedimentation, and contamination.	BPA would implement erosion control measures during construction to control runoff, erosion, and sedimentation, and would revegetate disturbed areas upon completion of construction. Where appropriate, erosion control measures would be left in place and maintained during operation of the Project.
Guideline 1. Suitable topsoil/subsoil should be spread over the selected area of application in a way that best supports biological diversity and prevents the release of hazardous substances.	Native topsoil removed for structure and access road construction would be stockpiled and reused on-site for restoration activities to promote regrowth from the native seed bank in the topsoil.
Guideline 2. Selection of plant species for establishment should reflect the surrounding ecosystem and post remedial land use. Plant materials used should be adapted to the climate of the site. Consideration and preference should be given to promoting natural succession, native plant species, and structural diversity.	Appropriate seed mixes, application rates, and seeding dates would be used to revegetate temporarily disturbed areas following completion of construction activities. Native topsoil removed for structure and access road construction would be stockpiled and reused on-site for restoration activities to promote regrowth from the native seed bank in the topsoil. BPA would coordinate with the Forest botanist and silviculturalist for proper seed mixes to be used in revegetation efforts.  See Section 3.4, Vegetation, and Section 3.5, Geology and Soils, for further discussion of proposed mitigation measures.
Guideline 4. Reclaimed areas should be graded and shaped, where possible, to a stable topographic relief that conforms and blends in with the variability of surrounding slopes. Final reclaimed slopes shall not be steeper than 3:1.	N/A. The Standards and Guidelines for Drastically Disturbed Lands would likely not apply to the Project, and no large areas of land would need to be reclaimed. BPA construction plans would include re-grading temporarily disturbed areas to their original morphology.
Guideline 5. Implement appropriate BMP's identified in current Best Management Practices for Mining In Idaho and other appropriate sources.	N/A. The Project does not include any mining activity.

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 6. Ground cover should be assessed prior to release of the reclamation bond to assure: 1) minimum ground cover exists to attain long-term soil productivity requirements; 2) ground cover should persist at minimum cover needs without artificial assistance (e.g. watering, fertilizers, etc.); and 3) meet or trend towards post-mining land use goals.	N/A. The Project does not include any mining activity.
Guideline 7. In reclaimed areas, vegetation should include species that meet wildlife habitat needs. Wildlife structures (slash piles, logs, rock piles) using native vegetation and materials are designed to provide cover for wildlife movements in created openings.	To the extent practical, Option 3A would avoid the removal of vegetation and vegetation communities that provide important wildlife habitat, including large trees and snags and tall, thick sagebrush stands. Appropriate seed mixes, application rates, and seeding dates would be used to revegetate temporarily disturbed areas following completion of construction activities. Wildlife habitat structures including slash piles or logs would be retained or placed on the ROW as practicable. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, and 3.7, Wildlife, for further discussion.
Guideline 8. Roads, disturbed areas, and facilities no longer needed for mining operations should be reclaimed as prescribed in the reclamation plan within one year after the lands become available for reclamation.	N/A. The Project does not include any mining activity.
Guideline 9. Objectives for scenery may or may not be met on drastically disturbed lands.	N/A. The Project does not include any drastically disturbed lands.
<b>Watershed and Riparian Resources</b>	
Guideline 1. Not more than 30 percent of any of the principal watershed <sup>2</sup> and/or their subwatersheds (6 <sup>th</sup> HUC) should be in a hydrologically disturbed condition <sup>3</sup> at any one time.	Of the 6 <sup>th</sup> level HUC (12-digit) watersheds that contain USFS land affected by the Option 3A, the Project would impact no more than 0.4 percent
Guideline 2. Proposed actions analyzed under NEPA should adhere to the State Source Water Assessment Plan to achieve consistency with the Safe Drinking Water Act, and amendments, to emphasize the protection of surface and ground water sources used for public drinking water.	There are no groundwater monitoring wells located on USFS land within the Option 3A ROW. There are therefore no anticipated direct impacts to groundwater or wells for Option 3A. See Section 3.6, Water Resources, Floodplains, and Wetlands, for further discussion.

<sup>2</sup> These Project Work Inventory (PWI) watersheds have been delineated on the C-TNF and are at approximately the same scale as 5th level hydrologic unit codes (HUC) that were used in the ICEBMP assessment effort.

<sup>3</sup> Hydrologically Disturbed Condition. Changes in natural canopy cover (vegetation removal) or a change in surface soil characteristics (such as compaction) that may alter natural streamflow quantities and character.

Hydrologically Recovered Condition. Vegetative life form where natural canopy coverage is achieved and subsequent streamflow quantities and character (timing and amount) reflect more natural conditions. Roads are considered hydrologically recovered if obliterated or ripped and drained and have 80 percent or more ground cover.

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 3. Projects in watersheds with 303(d) listed waterbodies and/or delineated Source Water Protection Areas should be supported by scale and level of analysis sufficient to permit an understanding of the implications of the project within the larger watershed context.	Within the project area, the Blackfoot River, Little Blackfoot River, Meadow Creek and Mill Canyon Creek are listed on the 2010 303(d) list. See Section 3.6, Water Resources, Floodplains, and Wetlands for specific analysis of impacts associated with these waterbodies. Option 3A would not impact the Little Blackfoot River, Tin Cup Creek or Chippy Creek, their intermittent tributaries, or associated Aquatic Influence Zones (AIZs).  No more than 0.4 percent of any 6 <sup>th</sup> level HUC watershed would be affected by Option 3A, and impacts to the waters within these watersheds would be primarily short term. At a watershed level these impacts would be de minimis.
Guideline 4. Proposed actions analyzed under NEPA should adhere to the State Nonpoint Source Management Plan to best achieve consistency with both Sections 313 and 319 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.	The Idaho state plan was considered in the evaluation of the Project. Many of the mitigation measures proposed are intended to reduce increased sedimentation, a major non-point source of pollution in area waterbodies as a result of construction. See Sections 3.5, Geology and Soils, and Section 3.6, Water Resources, Floodplains, and Wetlands.
<b>Vegetation</b>	
Standard 1. Do not conduct management activities that may alter canopy vegetation within 400 feet of a Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) snow measuring site without first contacting NRCS.	BPA would confirm the location of any NRCS snow measuring sites within the project area, and would contact NRCS regarding any canopy-altering management activities that may take place within 400 feet of a snow measuring site.
Standard 2. In each 5th code HUC which has the ecological capability to produce forested vegetation, the combination of mature and old age classes (including old growth) shall be at least 20 percent of the forested acres. At least 15 percent of all the forested acres in the HUC are to meet or be actively managed to attain old growth characteristics.	The removal of forest vegetation in the affected HUCs should not limit the Forest's ability to meet this standard. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further detail.
Standard 3. The definition of old growth characteristics by forest type found in "Characteristics of Old-Growth Forests in the Intermountain Region (Hamilton 1993) shall be used unless more current direction is developed.	BPA and contractors conducted old growth surveys for the Option 3A corridor in August of 2013. Based on the definition of old growth characteristics by forest type found in Hamilton (1993), none of the stands surveyed met the criteria for old growth.
Standard 4. Silvicultural prescriptions shall be completed for all forested vegetation treatments.	The BPA Forester would coordinate with the Forest silviculturalist to develop the appropriate prescription.
Guideline 1. Manage to reduce the decline of aspen and promote aspen regeneration and establishment. Provide protection from grazing where needed and consistent with management objectives.	Option 3A would permanently impact approximately 5 acres of aspen-dominated forest types. The Option 3A corridor traverses areas of C-TNF land where grazing is allowed but not specifically identified as a management goal. If necessary, protection from grazing would be provided as is consistent with management objectives.  Impacts to aspen-dominated communities would be limited to the transmission line ROW and off-ROW access roads. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion.
Guideline 2. Focus treatments on aspen clones which are at the greatest risk of conversion to conifer.	Some aspen communities would be permanently impacted by the Project. Impacts to aspen-dominated communities would be limited to the transmission line ROW and off-ROW access roads.

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency																																																																				
<p>Guideline 3. For aspen and conifer types, acres classified as mature and old growth should be in blocks over 200 acres in size unless the natural patch size is smaller. (A block can consist of a combination of mature and old growth forest types). Within these blocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain the dead and down woody material guidelines for wildlife. (See Wildlife Standards and Guidelines for Dead and Down material).</li> <li>▪ Silvicultural techniques may be used to maintain or improve old growth and mature forest characteristics.</li> <li>▪ If a catastrophic event (such as fire) reduces the acres of old growth and mature forest below 20 percent of the forested acres in a principal watershed, identify replacement forested acres. When necessary, use silvicultural techniques to promote desired characteristics in the replacement acres.</li> </ul>	<p>BPA and contractors conducted old growth surveys for the Option 3A corridor in August 2013. Based on the definition of old growth characteristics by forest type found in Hamilton (1993), none of the stands surveyed met the criteria for old growth.</p>																																																																				
<p>Guideline 4. When delineating old forests, use the definitions of late seral stages by forest type as shown in the Table 3.2 below. These are guidelines and site-specific stand structure should determine delineation of late seral stands.</p> <p><b>Table 3.2 Characteristics of Late Seral Forests by Vegetation Overstory Type.</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="175 884 790 1234"> <thead> <tr> <th>Forest Type</th> <th>Age</th> <th>Trees per Acre</th> <th>DBH in inches (diameter at breast height)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Lodgepole pine</td> <td>100+</td> <td>40+</td> <td>9+</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mixed Conifer</td> <td>100+</td> <td>40+</td> <td>12+</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Spruce/fir</td> <td>110+</td> <td>20+</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Douglas-fir</td> <td>14+</td> <td>25+</td> <td>14+</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Aspen</td> <td>0+</td> <td>20+</td> <td>10+</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Forest Type	Age	Trees per Acre	DBH in inches (diameter at breast height)	Lodgepole pine	100+	40+	9+	Mixed Conifer	100+	40+	12+	Spruce/fir	110+	20+	12	Douglas-fir	14+	25+	14+	Aspen	0+	20+	10+	<p>The definitions of mature, old forest/late seral, and old growth used in this survey are based on criteria presented in “Forest Stand Structure” (Beck 2010), a draft white paper that synthesizes definitions provided in the RFP and elsewhere. Table 1 shows the thresholds used in this study to evaluate stand structure.</p> <p><b>Table 1. Forest Size Structure Classes*</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="868 884 1528 1520"> <thead> <tr> <th>Description</th> <th>Cover Type</th> <th>Age (years)</th> <th>Trees per Acre</th> <th>dbh/Size (inches)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Mature</td> <td>Douglas-fir</td> <td>90-139</td> <td>~50+</td> <td>9+</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lodgepole Pine</td> <td>80-99</td> <td>~50+</td> <td>8+</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Aspen</td> <td>40-59</td> <td>~35+</td> <td>7+</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Old Forest/Late Seral</td> <td>Douglas-Fir</td> <td>140+</td> <td>25+</td> <td>14+</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lodgepole Pine</td> <td>100+</td> <td>40+</td> <td>9+</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Aspen</td> <td>60+</td> <td>20+</td> <td>10+</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Old Growth</td> <td>Douglas-Fir</td> <td>200</td> <td>10</td> <td>18+</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lodgepole Pine</td> <td>140</td> <td>25</td> <td>11+</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Aspen</td> <td>100</td> <td>20</td> <td>12+</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* Forest Stand Structure, Beck 2010</p> <p>BPA and contractors conducted old growth surveys for the Option 3A corridor in August of 2013. Based on the definition of old growth characteristics by forest type found in Hamilton (1993), none of the stands surveyed met the criteria for old growth. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion.</p>	Description	Cover Type	Age (years)	Trees per Acre	dbh/Size (inches)	Mature	Douglas-fir	90-139	~50+	9+	Lodgepole Pine	80-99	~50+	8+	Aspen	40-59	~35+	7+	Old Forest/Late Seral	Douglas-Fir	140+	25+	14+	Lodgepole Pine	100+	40+	9+	Aspen	60+	20+	10+	Old Growth	Douglas-Fir	200	10	18+	Lodgepole Pine	140	25	11+	Aspen	100	20	12+
Forest Type	Age	Trees per Acre	DBH in inches (diameter at breast height)																																																																		
Lodgepole pine	100+	40+	9+																																																																		
Mixed Conifer	100+	40+	12+																																																																		
Spruce/fir	110+	20+	12																																																																		
Douglas-fir	14+	25+	14+																																																																		
Aspen	0+	20+	10+																																																																		
Description	Cover Type	Age (years)	Trees per Acre	dbh/Size (inches)																																																																	
Mature	Douglas-fir	90-139	~50+	9+																																																																	
	Lodgepole Pine	80-99	~50+	8+																																																																	
	Aspen	40-59	~35+	7+																																																																	
Old Forest/Late Seral	Douglas-Fir	140+	25+	14+																																																																	
	Lodgepole Pine	100+	40+	9+																																																																	
	Aspen	60+	20+	10+																																																																	
Old Growth	Douglas-Fir	200	10	18+																																																																	
	Lodgepole Pine	140	25	11+																																																																	
	Aspen	100	20	12+																																																																	
<p>Guideline 5. Use methods of vegetation treatment that emulate natural disturbance and successional processes.</p>	<p>The Project would use methods of vegetation treatment that emulate natural disturbance and successional processes.</p>																																																																				

**U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest**

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 6. Forest vegetation manipulation is allowed on unsuitable timberlands to accomplish individual management prescription directions, other resource benefits, or for the reduction of hazardous fuels in urban interface zones. Production of wood products should not be the primary consideration.	Forest vegetation manipulation would be necessary for construction of the ROW and access roads. Production of wood products is not a primary consideration of the Project.
Guideline 7. Vegetation manipulation may include mechanical treatments, chemical treatments, commercial or non-commercial timber harvest of wood products, prescribed fire, wildfire for resource benefit, or other appropriate methods. Manipulations should emphasize ecological and multiple use outcomes over being “above-cost.”	Vegetation manipulation associated with either alternative would include mechanical treatment within the ROW, and adjacent to the ROW as needed to remove danger trees. Merchantable timber removed as a result of ROW clearing would be sold commercially. Vegetation manipulation would emphasize ecological and multiple-use outcomes over being “above cost.” See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion of mitigation measures. Future vegetation management may include mechanical and chemical treatments.
Guideline 8. Wood fiber should be utilized consistent with ecosystem management and multiple use goals.	The Project would require the removal of all trees within forested areas of the 100 foot ROW and subsequent sale of all merchantable timber harvested; however, production of wood fiber is not a primary goal of this Project.
Guideline 9. Give priority to vegetation treatments in private land interface zones or in those vegetation types identified as having high degree of departure from HRV.	BPA would work with all private landowners adjacent to C-TNF lands to avoid vegetation impacts. BPA also would coordinate with the Forest botanist to avoid specific vegetation types if they are present within the project corridor.
Guideline 10. Woodland types including mountain mahogany, juniper and maple should be prioritized for treatments based on site-specific needs.	The Project would not cross woodland types including mountain mahogany, juniper and maple.
<b>Noxious Weeds and Invasive Plant Species</b>	
Standard 1. Only weed-free hay, straw, pellets, and mulch shall be used on Forest.	Only weed-free hay, straw and mulch would be used to control erosion during construction and revegetation activities. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion of mitigation measures.
Standard 2. All seed used shall be certified to be free of noxious weed seeds from weeds listed on the current All States Noxious Weeds List.	All seed used would be certified to be free of noxious weed seeds from weeds listed on the current All States Noxious Weeds List. Seed mix would be coordinated with the Forest botanist. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion of mitigation measures.
Standard 3. Gravel or borrow material sources shall be monitored for noxious weeds and other invasive species. Sources infested with noxious weeds shall be closed until the weeds are successfully controlled.	Gravel or borrow material sources would be monitored for noxious weeds and other invasive species. Sources infested with noxious weeds would be closed until the weeds are successfully controlled. BPA may need to coordinate with USFS to inspect borrow source.
Standard 4. Noxious weeds shall be aggressively treated throughout the Forest, unless specifically prohibited, following the Caribou Noxious Weed Strategy. Using Integrated Weed Management, methods of control and access shall be consistent with the goals of each prescription area.	BPA would conduct monitoring of all ground-disturbed areas for 5 years for noxious weeds invasions, and take corrective action as necessary, according to the Caribou Noxious Weed Strategy and the BPA Transmission System Vegetation Management EIS. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion of mitigation measures.

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 1. Weed treatment projects, especially those using herbicides, should be timed to achieve desired effects on target vegetation, while having minimal effects on non-target vegetation.	The BPA Transmission System Vegetation Management EIS calls for the use of localized and spot application of herbicides as needed. BPA would coordinate closely with USFS land managers to time herbicide applications appropriately to avoid effects on non-target vegetation. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion of mitigation measures.
Guideline 2. Protect biological control insectories and allow harvest for distribution to other weed infestations, providing the original insectory can be maintained.	The Project would not be located near, nor would it affect, any biological control insectories.
Guideline 3. Monitor, as needed, disturbed areas, such as landings, skid trails, roads, mines, burned areas, etc., for noxious weeds or invasive species and treat where necessary.	All reclaimed areas would be surveyed and/or monitored to determine whether noxious weeds have been spread within the project area. Corrective actions would be taken as needed. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion of mitigation measures.
Guideline 4. Evaluate the potential for invasion by noxious weeds into proposed vegetation units and wildland fire use plan areas and modify units or mitigate where necessary.	All reclaimed areas would be surveyed and/or monitored to determine whether noxious weeds have the potential to spread to proposed vegetation units and wildland fire use plan areas. Corrective actions would be taken as needed. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion of mitigation measures.
<b>Plant Species Diversity</b>	
Standard 1. Projects and activities shall be managed to avoid adverse impacts to sensitive plant species that would result in a trend toward federal listing or loss of viability.	The Project would be managed to avoid adverse impacts to sensitive plant species that would result in a trend toward federal listing or loss of viability. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion of sensitive plant species and mitigation measures.
Standard 2. Do not allow collection of rare plants, except for research or scientific purposes, under the direction of the Forest or Regional Botanist.	The Project would not involve the collection of rare plants.
Guideline 1. Native plant species from genetically local sources should be used to the extent practical for erosion control, fire rehabilitation, riparian restoration, road ROWs seedings, and other revegetation projects.	Native plant species from genetically local sources would be used to the extent practical for erosion control, fire rehabilitation, riparian restoration, road ROW seedings, and other revegetation projects per coordination with the Forest botanist.
Guideline 2. Where practical, disturbed sites should be allowed to revegetate naturally where the seed source and soil conditions are favorable (e.g. low erosion potential, deeper soils) and noxious weeds are not expected to be a problem.	Where practical, disturbed sites would be allowed to revegetate naturally where the seed source and soil conditions are favorable (e.g. low erosion potential, deeper soils) and noxious weeds are not expected to be a problem. Native topsoil removed for structure and access road construction would be stockpiled and reused on-site for restoration activities to promote regrowth from the native seed bank in the topsoil. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, and Section 3.5, Geology and Soils.
Guideline 3. Known occurrences or habitat for rare plants on the "Forest Watch" list and rare or unique plant communities on the Forest should be maintained.	Surveys conducted in 2007 in support of a preliminary EA suggest that no rare plants are located within the Option 3A corridor. BPA and contractors would conduct additional rare plant surveys for the Option 3A corridor during 2014 if necessary.  Option 3A would limit vegetation removal, such as danger tree clearing, to the minimum amount necessary to minimize loss of potential habitat for special status species. See Section 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion of rare plant presence and mitigation measures.

**U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest**

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 4. Maintain, and where possible, increase unique or difficult-to-replace elements such as areas of high species diversity aspen, riparian areas, tall forbs, rare plant communities, etc.	Option 3A would limit vegetation removal to the minimum amount necessary to minimize loss of potential habitat for special status species and unique or difficult-to-replace plant communities. See Section, 3.4, Vegetation, for further discussion.
Guideline 5. The Forest Botanist or Ecologist should review seed mixes used for revegetation to insure no adverse impacts to threatened, endangered, sensitive species, other species at risk and the overall native flora within the analysis area.	BPA would coordinate with USFS regarding seed mixes to be used for revegetation.
<b>Special Forest Products</b>	
Standard 1. Provide for the historical, cultural, and recreational uses, as well as the rights and privileges afforded Native Americans under treaties and agreements, before commercial uses of special forest products are allowed.	The Project would not involve the commercial use of special forest products.
Guideline 1. Permits may be issued to authorize the collection of plant species (e.g., vascular and nonvascular) for personal use where collection is not likely to adversely affect species viability.	The Project would not involve the collection of plant species for personal use.
Guideline 2. In cases where plant collection permits are issued, encourage collection from areas where plants would be removed as a result of other activities. Encourage collection of seeds or cuttings instead of removing whole plants.	The Project would not involve the collection of plant species for personal use.
<b>Management Indicator Species</b>	
Standard 1. In project analyses affecting the habitats listed below, assess impacts to habitat and populations for the following management indicator species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grassland and open canopy sagebrush habitats—Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse</li> <li>▪ Sagebrush habitats—Sage Grouse</li> <li>▪ Mature and old forest habitats—Northern Goshawk</li> </ul>	The EIS analyzes the impacts of Option 3A as they relate to the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, sage-grouse, and northern goshawk, as well as these species' respective habitats. See Section 3.7, Wildlife, for further discussion.
<b>Sensitive Species</b>	
Guideline 1. Survey for the presence of sensitive species if suitable habitats are found within a project area a minimum of once prior to or during project development.	Suitable habitat for a number of sensitive species exists within the area surrounding the Option 3A corridor. Special status species observed during field surveys along the Option 3A corridor during 2011 surveys includes the northern goshawk and the three-toed woodpecker. BPA and contractors conducted additional surveys for the Option 3A corridor during 2013; these surveys recorded a flammulated owl near a ridge top of a mature aspen stand. Pre-construction surveys would be conducted for nesting bird species in furtherance of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Forest goals.

**U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest**

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<b>Dead and Down Material</b>	
<p>Guideline 1. Following forested vegetation treatments, an average of 11 logs per acre should be left consisting of logs in decomposition classes 1, 2, and/or 3 (where they exist).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In specific areas where fuel loading and fire hazards are a concern (i.e. urban interface areas), the number of logs per acre can be reduced to meet acceptable fuel loading standards.</li> <li>▪ This guideline does not apply within 300 feet of an open designated route.</li> <li>▪ These requirements can be achieved, in part, with the down woody debris requirements for soils; they are interrelated and are not cumulative.</li> <li>▪ Logs do not need to be evenly distributed over the forested acres. Some acres may have no logs, while others may have many more than 11 logs per acre. The guideline is to have an average of 11 logs per acre on a least 60 percent of the forest acres of each analysis area.</li> </ul>	<p>BPA would retain and/or place dead and down woody material within the ROW to the extent practical. Because it would be limited to a ROW width of 100 feet, the presence of the line should not affect the average amount of down woody debris per acre to an extent that would create a detrimental impact or cause an area to fall below the average levels stated in the guideline.</p>
<b>Animal Damage Management</b>	
<p>Standard 1. Activities shall be conducted in compliance with the most recent APHIS-Wildlife Services (WS) Predator Damage Management direction.</p>	<p>Activities would be conducted in compliance with the most recent Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)-Wildlife Services (WS) Predator Damage Management direction.</p>
<b>Snag/Cavity Nesting Habitat</b>	
<p>Standard 1. Public, workforce, and contractor safety shall be considered and provided for in selecting the arrangement of retained snags and trees.</p>	<p>BPA would only remove snags that posed a risk to the public, workforce, contractor, and integrity of the transmission line.</p>
<p>Standard 2. Snags with existing cavities or nests shall be the priority for retention.</p>	<p>Roadway and transmission line ROW clearing widths would be 30 and 250 feet, respectively. Snags with existing cavities or nests would be preserved off-ROW when there is no danger to the line.</p>
<p>Standard 3. Snag height shall be 15 feet or greater for all forest types.</p>	<p>Snags of 15 feet in height or greater would be retained off-ROW, when there is no danger to the line.</p>
<p>Guideline 1. Snag dbh (diameter at breast height) &gt; 12 inches or largest diameter for the stand for all forest types and should be retained in clusters, where possible.</p>	<p>Snags of dbh greater than 12 inches, or largest diameter for the stand, would be retained in clusters where possible, provided they are located off-ROW and pose no danger to the line.</p>

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency																																									
<p>Guideline 2. Hard-snag densities for various biological potentials should be approximately as follows by forest type. Biological potentials for woodpeckers were determined through analysis during the Targhee RFP (1997) and are incorporated in Table 3.3, below. The analysis area for calculating biological potential for woodpeckers should usually be the specific management prescription area polygon. Smaller analysis areas can be used when identified for site-specific projects.</p> <p><b>Table 3.3 Biological Potentials by Forested Vegetation Type.</b></p> <p>Number of Snags per 100 Forested Acres<sup>1</sup></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="164 598 857 926"> <thead> <tr> <th>Percent of Biological Potential</th> <th>Aspen</th> <th>Douglas-fir Spruce/Fir</th> <th>Lodgepole</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>100</td> <td>828</td> <td>978</td> <td>877</td> </tr> <tr> <td>80</td> <td>62</td> <td>782</td> <td>702</td> </tr> <tr> <td>60</td> <td>497</td> <td>587</td> <td>526</td> </tr> <tr> <td>40</td> <td>331</td> <td>391</td> <td>351</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20</td> <td>16</td> <td>196</td> <td>175</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><sup>1</sup>In mixed species stands, use the average number of snags for dominant forest types.</p>	Percent of Biological Potential	Aspen	Douglas-fir Spruce/Fir	Lodgepole	100	828	978	877	80	62	782	702	60	497	587	526	40	331	391	351	20	16	196	175	<p>Snags cannot be retained within the ROW or where they pose a threat to the transmission line; however, hard-snag densities for various biological potentials as discussed in Guideline 2 would be maintained to the extent practical.</p> <p>Per Management Prescription 8.1, Wildlife, Standard 1, biological potential for woodpeckers is not a management consideration in Concentrated Development Areas.</p>																	
Percent of Biological Potential	Aspen	Douglas-fir Spruce/Fir	Lodgepole																																							
100	828	978	877																																							
80	62	782	702																																							
60	497	587	526																																							
40	331	391	351																																							
20	16	196	175																																							
<p>Guideline 3. Retain live trees for future snag recruitment using the following guidelines in Table 3.4:</p> <p><b>Table 3.4 Live Trees for Snag Recruitment</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="164 1108 857 1451"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Percent of Biological Potential</th> <th colspan="5">Number of Live Trees per 100 Forested Acres</th> </tr> <tr> <th>≥1 inch dbh</th> <th>≥7-9.9 inch dbh</th> <th>≥5-6.9 inch dbh</th> <th>&lt;5.0 inch dbh</th> <th>Total Trees per acre</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>100</td> <td>800</td> <td>500</td> <td>500</td> <td>700</td> <td>2500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>80</td> <td>600</td> <td>400</td> <td>400</td> <td>600</td> <td>2000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>60</td> <td>500</td> <td>300</td> <td>300</td> <td>400</td> <td>1500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>40</td> <td>300</td> <td>200</td> <td>200</td> <td>300</td> <td>1000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20</td> <td>200</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> <td>500</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Percent of Biological Potential	Number of Live Trees per 100 Forested Acres					≥1 inch dbh	≥7-9.9 inch dbh	≥5-6.9 inch dbh	<5.0 inch dbh	Total Trees per acre	100	800	500	500	700	2500	80	600	400	400	600	2000	60	500	300	300	400	1500	40	300	200	200	300	1000	20	200	100	100	100	500	<p>Live trees cannot be retained in the ROW or where they pose a threat to the transmission line; however, live trees would be retained for future snag recruitment to the extent practical as discussed in Guideline 3.</p>
Percent of Biological Potential		Number of Live Trees per 100 Forested Acres																																								
	≥1 inch dbh	≥7-9.9 inch dbh	≥5-6.9 inch dbh	<5.0 inch dbh	Total Trees per acre																																					
100	800	500	500	700	2500																																					
80	600	400	400	600	2000																																					
60	500	300	300	400	1500																																					
40	300	200	200	300	1000																																					
20	200	100	100	100	500																																					
<p>Guideline 4. If existing snag levels are below the biological potential for woodpeckers that is identified for a particular prescription area, no dead standing trees should be harvested. Snag creation should only occur if specified as mitigation in a project level analysis.</p>	<p>Snags cannot be retained in the ROW or where they pose a threat to the transmission line; however, snags would be retained to the extent practical, similar to live trees as discussed in Guideline 3. Per Management Prescription 8.1, Wildlife, Standard 1, biological potential for woodpeckers is not a management consideration in Concentrated Development Areas.</p>																																									
<p>Guideline 5. Strive not to disturb or destroy existing nests, whether active or inactive.</p>	<p>The Project would strive not to disturb or destroy existing nests, whether active or inactive. Pre-construction nest surveys would be conducted to limit disturbance.</p>																																									

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<b>Bald Eagle Habitat—Occupied nesting zones (Zone I, 0.25 mile radius of nest) and primary use areas (Zone II, 0.5 mile radius of nest)</b>	
Standard 1. Use silvicultural techniques which maintain or promote mature and old growth timber stand characteristics in both the short and long-term, but reduce the risks of insects and disease epidemics.	The results of old growth surveys conducted in 2013 indicate the forest stands within the Option 3A corridor do not meet Region 4 old-growth criteria. While the Project would require that all tall-growing vegetation within a 250-foot wide corridor in forested areas be cleared to ensure the safety of the transmission line, the amount of forest clearing is relatively minimal in comparison to the area of forested land in the region surrounding the project. Option 3A would therefore not be expected to preclude efforts to maintain or promote mature and old growth timber stand characteristics throughout the forest.
Standard 2. Vegetation management, such as timber harvest or thinning, which could disturb an active bald eagle nest can occur only between September 1 and January 31 or when documented as unoccupied.	Surveys conducted for the Option 3A corridor during the spring of 2013 identified two inactive bald eagle nests, but no known active nests, within 1 mile of the project corridor. Additional pre-construction nesting bird surveys would be conducted prior to tree removal.
Standard 3. Prohibit new structures, such as power lines, that have the potential to cause direct mortality to bald eagles.	Surveys conducted for the Option 3A corridor during the spring 2013 identified two inactive bald eagle nests, but no known active nests, within 1 mile of the project corridor. Additional pre-construction nesting bird surveys would be conducted prior to tree removal.
Guideline 1. "Control" should be the suppression response for wildfires to minimize loss of habitat unless a site-specific analysis demonstrates differently.	"Control" would be the suppression response for wildfires to minimize loss of habitat unless a site-specific analysis demonstrates differently.
Guideline 2. Prohibit wildlife management or predator management activity with the potential to cause mortality to bald eagles, such as exposed traps.	No wildlife management or predator management activity would be associated with the Project.
Guideline 3. All human activities should be minimized from February 1 to August 1.	If BPA decides to proceed with the Project, construction of the proposed substation and transmission lines would be expected to take place in two phases, each lasting from spring to fall, over a period of 16 months; therefore, human activities cannot be minimized during the entire period between February 1 and August 1.
<b>Bald Eagle Habitat—Home ranges (Zone III, 2.5 mile radius of nest)</b>	
Standard 1. Follow existing, site-specific management plans (when they exist) for each bald eagle territory or ZONE III management direction in the Bald Eagle Management Plan for the Greater Yellowstone Area when site-specific management plans do not exist.	Option 3A would follow existing, site-specific management plans (when they exist) for each bald eagle territory or ZONE III management direction in the Bald Eagle Management Plan for the Greater Yellowstone Area when site-specific management plans do not exist.  Surveys conducted in 2013 identified two inactive bald eagle nests within 1 mile of the project corridor. Several bald eagles were observed soaring and/or foraging during these surveys, but no active bald eagle nests were documented. Additional raptor surveys would be conducted for the Option 3A corridor prior to tree removal.

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Standard 2. Within a 2.5-mile radius of nest, prohibit all use of herbicides and pesticides which cause egg shell thinning as determined by EPA labeling.	Surveys by BPA and contractors in spring 2013 documented no active bald eagle nests within 1 mile of the Option 3A corridor, but identified two inactive nests. Pre-construction nesting bird surveys would be conducted prior to any tree removal associated with either alternative. BPA does not use any herbicides which cause eggshell thinning as determined by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) labeling.
<b>Bald Eagle Habitat—Winter Foraging and Roosting</b>	
Guideline 1. Activities and developments should be designed to minimize conflicts with bald eagle wintering and migration habitat.	The construction period would be from May to October; therefore, activities and development should have no impacts on bald eagle winter habitat.
<b>Gray Wolf</b>	
Standard 1. Restrict intrusive human disturbances (motorized access, vegetation management, livestock grazing, etc.) within one mile around active den sites and rendezvous sites between April 1 and June 30 when there are five or fewer breeding pairs of wolves in the Yellowstone Nonessential Experimental Population Area (applies to the portion of the Forest east of Interstate 15) or the Central Idaho Nonessential Experimental Population Area (applies to the portion of the Forest west of Interstate 15). After six or more breeding pairs become established in each experimental population area, land use restrictions will not be necessary (USFS 2003).	Forested habitats in the C-TNF may provide some foraging and migratory habitat for gray wolves; however, documented and anticipated use of the project corridor by wolves is low. The Project would not disturb, nor would it be located near, any known, active gray wolf denning or rendezvous sites. See Section 3.7, Wildlife, for further discussion.
Standard 2. If and when wolves are de-listed, they will be managed in accordance with approved state management plans.	BPA would coordinate with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) concerning any management activities that may impact wolves.
Standard 3. When six or more breeding pairs are established, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will issue “Take” permits (valid for 45 days) to individuals holding Term Grazing Permits authorizing them to injure or kill gray wolves that are attacking livestock on their allotment. “Take” is permitted only after 1) USFWS is notified, 2) USDA -APHIS Wildlife Services verifies that a wolf is the cause of depredation, and 3) capture results by USDA-APHIS-WS are unsuccessful.	N/A. The Project would not involve the take of wolves.
<b>Peregrine Falcon Habitat</b>	
Standard 1. Within 15 miles of all known nest sites, prohibit all use of herbicides and pesticides which cause egg shell thinning as determined by risk assessment (USFS 2003).	Vegetation management activities associated with the Project would not use any herbicides that cause egg shell thinning.
Guideline 1. For proposed projects within two miles of known peregrine falcon nests, minimize such items as: (1) human activities (rock climbing, aircraft, ground and water transportation, high noise levels, and permanent facilities) which could cause disturbance to nesting pairs and young during the nesting period between March 15 and July 31; (2) activities or habitat alterations which could adversely affect prey availability.	No known peregrine falcon nests are within 2 miles of Option 3A. Pre-construction nesting bird surveys would be conducted prior to tree removal. If a nest is identified prior to tree clearing activities, BPA would consult with Forest and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) personnel on mitigation or avoidance protocols.
<b>Goshawk Habitat</b>	

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines				Consistency																																																												
<p>Standard 1. The management standards and guidelines in Table 3.5 below apply to all forest types within active and historic goshawk nesting territories.</p> <p><b>Table 3.5 Management Standards and Guidelines within Active Goshawk Nesting Territories.</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Attribute</th> <th>Nest Area</th> <th>Post-Fledging Family Area</th> <th>Foraging Area</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Number of Areas (S)</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Size of each area (acres) (S)</td> <td>&gt; 200 acres</td> <td>&gt; 400 acres</td> <td>&gt; 5,400 acres</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management Season<sup>5</sup> (G)</td> <td>Sept-Mar</td> <td>Sept-Mar</td> <td>Year-long</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Open Road Density<sup>4</sup> (G)</td> <td>No new system roads</td> <td>No new system roads</td> <td>Use management Prescription density</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">Size Class Distribution For Forested Acres (%) (G):</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nonstocked/seeding</td> <td>0%</td> <td>&lt; 20%</td> <td>&lt; 25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sapling</td> <td>0%</td> <td>&lt; 20%</td> <td>&lt; 25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pole</td> <td>0%</td> <td>&lt; 20%</td> <td>&lt; 25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mature/old<sup>1</sup></td> <td>100%</td> <td>&gt; 40%</td> <td>= 30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rotation Age (years)(G)</td> <td>--</td> <td>60 to 240 years</td> <td>60 to 240 years</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maximum Created Opening (Acres) (G)</td> <td>0</td> <td>&lt; 40 acres</td> <td>&lt; 40 acres</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Snags and Reserve Trees<sup>2</sup> (G)</td> <td colspan="3">as specified in management prescription</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Downed Logs (average/acre) (G)</td> <td>Forest-wide S&amp;Gs</td> <td>Forest-wide S&amp;Gs</td> <td>Forest-wide S&amp;Gs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thinning (G)</td> <td>Non-uniform<sup>3</sup></td> <td>Non-uniform</td> <td>By silvicultural prescription</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Attribute	Nest Area	Post-Fledging Family Area	Foraging Area	Number of Areas (S)	1	1	1	Size of each area (acres) (S)	> 200 acres	> 400 acres	> 5,400 acres	Management Season <sup>5</sup> (G)	Sept-Mar	Sept-Mar	Year-long	Open Road Density <sup>4</sup> (G)	No new system roads	No new system roads	Use management Prescription density	Size Class Distribution For Forested Acres (%) (G):				Nonstocked/seeding	0%	< 20%	< 25%	Sapling	0%	< 20%	< 25%	Pole	0%	< 20%	< 25%	Mature/old <sup>1</sup>	100%	> 40%	= 30%	Rotation Age (years)(G)	--	60 to 240 years	60 to 240 years	Maximum Created Opening (Acres) (G)	0	< 40 acres	< 40 acres	Snags and Reserve Trees <sup>2</sup> (G)	as specified in management prescription			Downed Logs (average/acre) (G)	Forest-wide S&Gs	Forest-wide S&Gs	Forest-wide S&Gs	Thinning (G)	Non-uniform <sup>3</sup>	Non-uniform	By silvicultural prescription	<p>To the extent practical, snags would be maintained at the levels prescribed in the CNF RFP, and tree removal within mature and late seral forest stands would be limited to the minimum extent necessary, provided trees are not in the ROW and do not pose a danger to the transmission line. Sufficient mature aspen and conifer forest habitat would remain functional at both the local and range-wide scales to maintain goshawk viability. The Project is therefore not likely result in any measurable impact to the species. See Section 3.7, Wildlife, for further discussion.</p>
Attribute	Nest Area	Post-Fledging Family Area	Foraging Area																																																													
Number of Areas (S)	1	1	1																																																													
Size of each area (acres) (S)	> 200 acres	> 400 acres	> 5,400 acres																																																													
Management Season <sup>5</sup> (G)	Sept-Mar	Sept-Mar	Year-long																																																													
Open Road Density <sup>4</sup> (G)	No new system roads	No new system roads	Use management Prescription density																																																													
Size Class Distribution For Forested Acres (%) (G):																																																																
Nonstocked/seeding	0%	< 20%	< 25%																																																													
Sapling	0%	< 20%	< 25%																																																													
Pole	0%	< 20%	< 25%																																																													
Mature/old <sup>1</sup>	100%	> 40%	= 30%																																																													
Rotation Age (years)(G)	--	60 to 240 years	60 to 240 years																																																													
Maximum Created Opening (Acres) (G)	0	< 40 acres	< 40 acres																																																													
Snags and Reserve Trees <sup>2</sup> (G)	as specified in management prescription																																																															
Downed Logs (average/acre) (G)	Forest-wide S&Gs	Forest-wide S&Gs	Forest-wide S&Gs																																																													
Thinning (G)	Non-uniform <sup>3</sup>	Non-uniform	By silvicultural prescription																																																													
<p><sup>1</sup> Mature and old age canopy closure for nest sites and post-fledging family areas should range between 75% and 100%.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> Refer to previous section on snag/cavity nesting habitat for explanation of biological potential.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> Maximize diversity of structure.</p> <p><sup>4</sup> Open roads in goshawk territories shall be given priority for closure to meet management prescription road density standards. First priority shall be to close roads in nest areas; second priority in post-fledging family areas; third priority in foraging areas. Where possible, open road density should be zero in the nest areas and the post-fledging family areas.</p> <p><sup>5</sup> This applies only to active nests. There is no restriction for nest areas where current surveys have documented that the nest is unoccupied. Management activities are defined as mechanical treatments and road building.</p>																																																																

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<b>Flammulated Owl Habitat</b>	
Standard 1. Do not allow timber harvest activities within a 30-acre area around all known flammulated owl nest sites.	Surveys conducted for this species in 2007 in the vicinity of the Option 3A corridor located suitable nesting sites but no active nests. During additional raptor surveys conducted in the spring 2013, a flammulated owl call was heard near a ridge top in a mature aspen stand. There are no known flammulated owl nest sites within 30 miles of the Option 3A corridor.  Pre-construction nesting bird surveys would be conducted prior to any tree removal. If a nest is identified prior to tree clearing activities, BPA would consult with Forest and USFWS personnel on mitigation or avoidance protocols.
<b>Boreal Owl Habitat</b>	
Guideline 1. Within a 3,600-acre area around all known boreal owl nest sites, maintain over 40% of the forested acres in mature and old age classes. (Hayward and Verner, 1994, Hayward, 1997)	Surveys conducted within the Option 3A corridor during the spring 2013 did not identify any known boreal owl nest sites within a 3,600-acre area surrounding the Option 3A corridor.  Suitable nesting habitat exists within the general vicinity of the project corridor, and boreal owls have a high probability of occurring in the area. Pre-construction nesting bird surveys would be conducted prior to any tree removal associated with either alternative. If a nest is identified prior to tree clearing activities, BPA would consult with Forest and USFWS personnel on mitigation or avoidance protocols.
<b>Great Gray Owl Habitat</b>	
Guideline 1. Within a 1,600-acre area around all known great gray owl nest sites, maintain over 40% of the forested acres in mature and old age classes. (Hayward and Verner, 1994)	Raptor surveys were conducted for the Option 3A corridor during the spring 2013 did not identify any active great grey owl nests within a 1,600 acre area surrounding the project corridor. Pre-construction nesting bird surveys would be conducted prior to tree removal. If a nest is identified prior to tree clearing activities, BPA would consult with Forest and USFWS personnel on mitigation or avoidance protocols.
Guideline 2. Restrict the use of strychnine poison to control pocket gophers within a 1/2 mile buffer around all active great gray owl nest sites.	The Project would not involve the use of strychnine poison to control pocket gophers.
<b>Trumpeter Swan Habitat</b>	
Standard 1. Maintain suitable trumpeter swan nesting habitat conditions in Elk Valley Marsh and other sites.	Elk Valley marsh is over 20 miles southeast of Option 3A. No suitable trumpeter swan nesting habitat is known to exist within the Option 3A ROW or access road corridors; therefore, the Project would not be expected to impact trumpeter swan nesting habitat.
Guideline 1. Change livestock grazing through management or fencing when grazing is adversely affecting trumpeter swan use or productivity.	The Project would not involve any cattle grazing.
<b>Harlequin Duck Habitat</b>	
Guideline 1. Avoid establishing new trails, roads, or facilities within 300 feet (on each side) of any stream reach with documented harlequin duck breeding activity.	The Project would avoid establishing new roads or facilities within 300 feet (on each side) of any stream reach with documented harlequin duck breeding activity.

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<b>Big Game</b>	
<p>Guideline 1. Provide for vegetation buffers of at least one sight distance (Thomas et al. 1979) around big game concentration/use areas, such as wallows and mineral licks. Sight distance is the distance at which 90 percent of a deer or elk is hidden from an observer. This will vary depending on site specific stand conditions.</p>	<p>Conversion of forested habitat within the transmission line and access road ROWs to low-growing vegetation could provide for increased foraging habitat for big game animals, but would also provide reduced cover for these species and could subject them to greater predatory pressures. Cover would remain available beyond the edge of the ROW, however, and a network of forested habitat would remain at the regional scale to ensure no net loss of habitat function. See Section 3.7, Wildlife, for further discussion.</p>
<p>Guideline 2. Provide for security or travel corridors near created openings.</p>	<p>Security would be available adjacent to the ROW. It is likely that some animals would utilize the cleared ROW as a travel corridor or for forage.</p>
<p>Guideline 3. Where summer or fall habitat conditions, including security areas<sup>17</sup>, are identified as a factor in not meeting State population objectives, work with State wildlife management agencies to address the issue(s).</p> <p><sup>17</sup> Security is an area of cover (vegetative or topographic) over ½ mile from an open motorized route and over 250 acres.</p>	<p>BPA would work with IDFG to determine whether summer or fall habitat conditions, including security areas, are identified as a factor in not meeting State population objectives, and would work with IDFG to address any issues.</p>
<b>Sage Grouse and Columbian Sharp-Tailed Grouse</b>	
<p>Standard 1. Cooperate with other state and federal agencies and private landowners to survey, inventory, and manage habitats for sage-grouse and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse.</p>	<p>Aerial surveys conducted in spring 2013 observed one male and two female greater sage-grouse on top of a steep ridge approximately 3,000 feet north of the Option 3A corridor. A follow-up ground visit of this site did not reveal any evidence of greater sage-grouse presence.</p> <p>BPA would continue to consult with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), USFWS, and IDFG, along with private landowners, to survey, inventory, and manage habitats for sage-grouse and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse prior to construction of the Project, if necessary. If active leks are identified prior to ROW clearing activities, BPA would consult with USFWS personnel on mitigation or avoidance protocols.</p>
<p>Guideline 1. Current guidelines for sage and sharp-tailed grouse management, such as Connelly et al. (2000), should be used as a basis to develop site-specific recommendations for proposed sagebrush treatments.</p>	<p>Current guidelines for sage and sharp-tailed grouse management, including Connelly et al. (2000) would be used to develop sagebrush treatments associated with the Project.</p>
<p>Guideline 2. Management activities should consider proximity to active lek locations during site-specific project planning. Those within 10 miles of an active sage-grouse lek and 2 miles of active sharp-tailed grouse leks should be considered further for suitability as grouse habitat.</p>	<p>Aerial surveys conducted in spring 2013 observed one male and two female greater sage-grouse on top of a steep ridge approximately 3,000 feet north of the Option 3A corridor. A follow-up ground visit of this site did not reveal any evidence of greater sage-grouse presence. No active sage-grouse leks are known to exist within 10 miles of the project corridor and no active sharp-tailed grouse leks are known to exist within 2 miles of the Option 3A corridor.</p> <p>Construction activity would be prohibited within 10 miles of an active greater sage-grouse lek and within 2 miles of active Columbian sharp-tailed grouse leks between the end of March and the beginning of May. See Section 3.7, Wildlife, for further discussion.</p>

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 3. If management activities would impact courtship, limit physical, mechanical, and audible disturbances in the breeding complex during the breeding season (March to May) within three hours of sunrise and sunset each day.	If BPA decides to proceed with the Project, construction of the proposed substation and transmission lines would be expected to take place in two phases, each lasting from spring to fall, over a period of 16 months.
Guideline 4. Where management actions will disturb nesting grouse, avoid manipulation or alteration of vegetation during the nesting period (May to June).	Pre-construction nesting bird surveys would be conducted prior to tree removal. See Section 3.7, Wildlife, for further discussion.
<b>Amphibians</b>	
Guideline 1. Ensure habitats in the Tincup Creek Drainage and other known toad breeding locations are managed to maintain or improve the existing population and distribution of western toads.	The Project would not impact western toad habitats in the Tincup Creek drainage.
Guideline 2. Ensure habitats in the Toponce area and other known northern leopard frog breeding locations are managed to maintain or improve the existing population and distribution of the frogs.	The Toponce area is over 25 miles from the Project. The Project would not impact breeding habitat for northern leopard frog.
Guideline 3. Maintain amphibian habitats when developing and modifying springs and wetlands.	Construction of Option 3A would result in approximately 1.07 acres (0.07 acre PUB plus 1 acre of PSS) of short-term impacts to wetlands within the 250 foot clearing width on C-TNF lands and 0.73 acre (0.66 acre PSS plus 0.067 acre PUB) of short-term wetland impacts within the proposed 100 foot ROW. No long-term impacts would occur on C-TNF lands because there no structures, pulling sites, or access roads would be proposed in those areas.  Impacts on riparian and wetland habitats as a result of the Project would be of short duration and would not result in any measurable impacts to potential amphibian habitat. See Section 3.6, Water Resources, Floodplains, and Wetlands, for further discussion.
<b>Bats</b>	
Guideline 1. All abandoned underground mines should be evaluated as bat habitat prior to closure. As an alternative to collapsing mine entrances, gate abandoned mines to retain roosting and hibernation habitat for bats. (Idaho Conservation Effort, 1995, M-1)	N/A. There are no known underground mines in the vicinity of the proposed project.
Guideline 2. Gating of mines should be considered where human disturbance is disturbing/displacing bats. Where gates are used, they should be designed in accordance with published literature (i.e., Tuttle and Taylor, 1994). (Idaho Conservation Effort, 1995, Appendix B)	N/A. There are no known underground mines in the vicinity of the Project.
Guideline 3. Discourage or restrict entry to mines and caves known to be occupied by hibernating bats or bats with young. Exceptions include surveys conducted by qualified personnel (Idaho Conservation Effort, 1995, I-3,4).	N/A. There are no caves or known underground mines in the vicinity of the Project.
Guideline 4. Prior to closure of inactive or abandoned underground mines, surveys for cave-dependent species should be completed and mitigation measures implemented	N/A. There are no caves or known underground mines in the vicinity of the Project.
<b>Landbirds</b>	
Guideline 1. Stands of mature trees (including snags and dead-topped trees) should be maintained next to wet meadows.	Stands of mature trees (including snags and dead-topped trees) would be maintained next to wet meadows, provided they are off-ROW and do not pose a danger to the line.

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 2. Where feasible, maintain 30 to 50 percent of the sagebrush habitat in a 5th code HUC in contiguous blocks greater than 320 acres to support sagebrush obligate species. (Page and Ritter 1999)	Given the limited sage brush removal necessary for the Project, at least 30 to 50 percent of the habitat would be retained.
Guideline 3. Practices which stabilize or increase native grass and forbs cover in sagebrush habitats with 5% to 25% sagebrush canopy cover should be implemented. (Page and Ritter 1999)	Practices which stabilize or increase native grass and forbs cover in sagebrush habitats with 5 to 25 percent sagebrush canopy cover would be implemented, except for permanent access road ROWs. Native grasses and forbs would be retained to the extent possible. See Section 3.4 Vegetation.
Guideline 4. In sagebrush habitats, manage herbaceous cover to conceal nests through the first incubation period for ground and low shrub-nesting birds. It is assumed that proper use of rest-rotation or deferred-rotation grazing should meet these conditions, although not every year on every area (Idaho Partners in Flight 2000).	The Project would be implemented in such a way as to minimize impacts to sagebrush habitat.
<b>Wolverine</b>	
Guideline 1. Restrict intrusive human disturbance within one mile around known active den sites, March 1 to May 15 (Idaho State Conservation Effort 1995).	If BPA decides to proceed with the Project, construction of the proposed substation and transmission lines would be expected to take place in two phases, each lasting from spring to fall, over a period of 16 months. The Project would not be located near, nor would it disturb, any known wolverine den sites.
<b>Tribal Coordination</b>	
Standard 1. Forest consultation procedures and intergovernmental agreements with the tribes to guide future cooperative efforts shall comply with the protocols set forth in the National Resource Book on American Indian and Alaska Native Relations Working Draft 1995 or its successor.	The Project would not require any intergovernmental agreements between tribes and C-TNF or BPA. BPA is conducting its own Section 106 consultation as part of its planning and decision-making process.
Standard 2. No groomed snowmobile trails accessing the Fort Hall Reservation shall be considered, unless requested by the Tribe.	N/A. The Project is not located near the Fort Hall Reservation.
<b>Facilities</b>	
Standard 1. Facilities shall comply with local, State and national health and safety standards	The Project would comply with local, state and national health and safety standards.
Guideline 1. Architectural designs should follow principles and concepts outlined in the Built Environment Image Guide (BEIG).	The Project would not involve the construction of any buildings except a control house within the Hooper Springs Substation.
<b>Transportation—Roads</b>	
Standard 1. Roads analysis (currently in Part 212 of Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations) shall be used to inform road management decisions; including construction, reconstruction, or obliteration of roads.	BPA would work with the C-TNF on all access road design to ensure that road design is consistent with the Forest Plan.
Standard 2. Road construction, reconstruction and maintenance standards and criteria shall be guided by roads analysis and documented through the use of road management objectives (RMOs).	BPA would work with the C-TNF to ensure that road construction, improvement, and maintenance standards and criteria would be guided by roads analysis and documented through the use of road management objectives (RMOs).
Standard 3. For roads scheduled for decommissioning, the site-specific analysis shall disclose and analyze effects of the closure methods.	For roads scheduled for decommissioning, the site-specific analysis would disclose and analyze effects of the closure methods.

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 1. Minimize construction of new transportation routes, evaluate existing routes, and reconstruct or relocate those routes not meeting management goals.	All access roads constructed specifically for Option 3A would be closed to the public and gated to exclude motorized use after completion of construction. All existing roads and other transportation routes currently open to the public would remain open following completion of construction.
Guideline 2. When highway construction or reconstruction is proposed in wildlife linkage areas, identify potential crossings and consider mitigation.	N/A. No highway construction or reconstruction is proposed as part of the Project.
Guideline 3. Design and construct roads to a standard appropriate to their intended use, considering safety, cost, and resource impacts, emphasizing protection of water quality.	BPA would work with the C-TNF to ensure that roads are designed and constructed to a standard appropriate to their intended use, considering safety, cost, and resource impacts, emphasizing protection of water quality.
Guideline 4. Avoid road construction on unstable slopes and highly erosive soils.	The Project would avoid road construction on unstable slopes and highly erosive soils. See Section 3.5, Geology and Soils.
Guideline 5. Identify safety hazards on Forest System Roads and correct or mitigate the situation, or close hazardous roads to public use.	All new access roads constructed specifically for Option 3A would be closed to the public and gated to exclude motorized use after completion of construction. All existing motorized roads and trails currently open to the public would remain open following completion of construction. Safety hazards would be identified on Forest System Roads and reported to USFS. Damage caused by BPA and contractors as a result of project construction would be corrected or mitigated by BPA.
Guideline 6. As needed, schedule roads to receive maintenance, repairs, or improvements to protect investment, maintain the intended serviceability, and protect other resources. Prioritize road maintenance activities using factors such as safety, resource protection needs, administrative needs, user comfort, and the identified traffic service level.	As needed, BPA would maintain, repair, or improve access roads to protect investment, maintain intended serviceability, and protect other resources.
Guideline 7. Surface gravel should be placed on roads where necessary to reduce rutting, surface erosion and to reduce maintenance costs.	Surface gravel would be placed on access roads where necessary. See Section 3.5, Soils and Geology, for further discussion.
Guideline 8. Conserve surface materials when blading and shaping roads.	All native topsoil removed for access road construction would be stockpiled and reused on-site for restoration activities. See Section 3.5, Geology and Soils, for further discussion.
Guideline 9. Existing cut slopes that contain suitable material may be widened and material used for surfacing.	Existing cut slopes that contain suitable material would be widened and material used for surfacing if necessary.
Guideline 11. Roads identified as unneeded in a roads analysis should be decommissioned, stabilized and returned to production.	Only those roads deemed necessary for transmission line maintenance would be maintained.
Guideline 12. Road closures should be located and designed to effectively control motorized use and minimize safety hazards.	All access roads would be closed and gated to exclude public motorized access. Road closures would be located and designed to effectively control motorized use and minimize safety hazards.
Guideline 13. All roads should be properly drained before closure.	All roads would be properly drained before closure.
Guideline 14. When a road is closed at the forest boundary, a vehicular turnaround should be provided on the forest to avoid impacts to adjacent non-federal lands.	BPA would work with the C-TNF on all access road design to ensure that road design is consistent with the Forest Plan.

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<b>Transportation—Access</b>	
Standard 1. Open Motorized Route Density (OMRD) shall not exceed the levels identified on the Plan ORMD Map. OMRD is defined as the miles of designated motorized roads and trails per square mile within a specific prescription area polygon.	All new access roads constructed specifically for Option 3A would be closed to the public and gated to exclude motorized use after completion of construction. All existing motorized roads and trails currently open to the public would remain open following completion of construction. Therefore, the Project would have no impact on OMRD.
Standard 1. Open Motorized Route Density (OMRD) shall not exceed the levels identified on the Plan ORMD Map. OMRD is defined as the miles of designated motorized roads and trails per square mile within a specific prescription area polygon.	All new access roads constructed specifically for Option 3A would be closed to the public and gated to exclude motorized use after completion of construction. All existing motorized roads and trails currently open to the public would remain open following completion of construction. Therefore, the Project would have no impact on OMRD.
Standard 2. The Open Motorized Route Density (OMRD) standards prescribed for each prescription area and travel restrictions as depicted on the Travel Plan do not restrict responses to emergency events to protect human life, property values and structures, and forest resources. Responses to emergency events include, but are not limited to, law enforcement, search and rescue, and fire suppression.	BPA acknowledges that the OMRD standards prescribed for each prescription area and travel restrictions as depicted on the Travel Plan do not restrict responses to emergency events to protect human life, property values and structures, and forest resources.
Standard 3. The travel planning process shall consider additional areas for non-motorized winter recreation.	All new access roads constructed specifically for the Project would be gated to exclude public motorized access. Authorized motorized vehicle access on these roads would be restricted to BPA personnel or C-TNF official administrative business only. All existing motorized roads and trails currently open to the public would remain open after completion of construction. See Section 3.2, Recreation, for further discussion.
Standard 5. Unless otherwise posted motorized access is allowed for parking, wood gathering, and dispersed camping within 300 feet of an open designated road.	All existing motorized roads and trails currently open to the public would remain open after completion of construction. Following completion of construction, the Project would not restrict any uses currently allowed within 300 feet of an open designated road, including parking, wood gathering, and dispersed camping See Section 3.2, Recreation, for further discussion.
Guideline 1. The construction of new or maintenance of existing, motorized and non-motorized access routes should be consistent with the ROS class in which they are located.	All access roads constructed specifically for the Project would be closed to the public and gated to exclude motorized use after completion of construction. All existing motorized and non-motorized access routes currently open to the public would remain open following completion of construction. The Project would therefore be consistent with the existing Routed Modified ROS class. See Section 3.2, Recreation, for further discussion.
Guideline 2. Areas open to cross-country motorized travel may be administratively restricted to designated routes or closed if unacceptable resource damage occurs.	BPA acknowledges that areas open to cross-country motorized travel may be administratively restricted to designated routes or closed if unacceptable resource damage occurs.
<b>Trails</b>	
Guideline 1. Protection measures for forest system trails should be included in management activity plans and authorizations.	Construction and maintenance activities would include measures to protect forest system trails.
Guideline 2. Operations, maintenance and rehabilitation of existing trails should be the priority over new construction.	BPA acknowledges that operations, maintenance, and rehabilitation of existing trails should be the priority over new construction.
Guideline 3. Encourage management and maintenance of winter trails by cooperative agreements with agencies and user groups.	N/A. The Project would not be providing or maintaining any winter recreational trails.

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<b>Recreation</b>	
Guideline 1. Developed sites within grazing allotments should be fenced where conflicts with livestock occur.	To the extent that any potential conflicts with grazing livestock may exist, cattle exclusion measures would be implemented.
Guideline 2. Waste disposal containers in developed recreation sites should be bear-resistant, where necessary.	N/A. The Project would not be located within any developed recreation sites.
Guideline 3. Rehabilitation of existing facilities should be the priority over new construction.	The Project would not construct any new recreational facilities, and is not expected to adversely impact any existing facilities to the extent that rehabilitation would be required.
Guideline 4. Projects should be planned and implemented to meet the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) as depicted on the Forest ROS map.	The ROS for Option 3A is Roaded Modified. The Option 3A is consistent with the Roaded Modified ROS class.
<b>Scenic Resources</b>	
Standard 1. Objectives for scenery (either VQOs or SIOs) shall be met along Scenic or Historic Byways, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and other sensitive travel routes and special emphasis areas.	Option 3A would traverse USFS Partial Retention and Modification lands and would meet these VQOs to the extent practicable. Option 3A also would cross the Blackfoot River on C- TNF land in the vicinity of the Blackfoot River Narrows. The Blackfoot River is listed on the NRI as potentially eligible for listing under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act because of its scenic and fisheries resources. Option 3A is not expected to foreclose any opportunities for listing of the Blackfoot River as a wild, scenic, or recreation river. BPA would consult with National Park Service (NPS) and C-TNF officials regarding any potential visual impacts along the Blackfoot River.
Guideline 1. New and reconstructed structures and facilities should be built to blend with the surrounding landscape, using the concepts outlined in the Built Environment Image Guide or current direction.	Under Option 3A, transmission line structures on C-TNF land would be steel and would be made consistent with the line, form, color, and texture of the landscape to the extent practical. It is expected this would minimize the visual impact of the transmission line on the visual landscape.  See Section 3.3, Visual Resources, for further discussion.
Guideline 2. Until the Scenery Management System is fully implemented, projects should be planned and implemented to meet the VQOs as displayed on the Forest VQO map.	Option 3A would be planned and implemented to meet the VQOs as displayed on the Forest VQO map. See Section 3.3, Visual Resources.
<b>Heritage Resources</b>	
Standard 1. Cultural resources inventories shall be conducted in consultation with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Local Native American Tribes, and interested individuals or organizations likely to have knowledge or interest in the historic properties in the area.	Pre-construction surveys and construction monitoring, including necessary consultation with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), potentially affected tribes, and C-TNF archaeologist would take place as part of the Project. See Section 3.9, Cultural Resources, for further discussion.
Standard 2. Unevaluated cultural resource sites <sup>4</sup> shall be treated as significant until comprehensive evaluations are completed.	Unevaluated cultural resource sites would be treated as significant until comprehensive evaluations are completed. See Section 3.9, Cultural Resources, for further discussion.
Guideline 1. Management plans for each historic property nominated to the National Register of Historic Places should be developed within 5 years.	N/A. The Project would not include the nomination of any properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

<sup>4</sup> 36 C.F.R. 800.4 requires that when proposing undertakings that might affect historic properties the Agency must 1) determine the scope of effects; 2) identify historic properties; and 3) evaluate the historic significance of the property.

**U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest**

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency						
<b>Grazing Management—Range Resources</b>							
Standard 1. Livestock grazing shall be restricted following prescribed or natural fire and/or rangeland planting or seeding before seed set of the second growing season, or until the objectives of the treatment are achieved.	Where decommissioning of temporary roads or mitigation of other disturbed areas would involve planting of rangeland vegetation, BPA would coordinate with C-TNF and grazing leaseholders as applicable to restrict livestock grazing until the objectives of revegetation treatments are achieved.						
Guideline 1. Stock driveways should be eliminated as opportunities occur.	Should opportunities to eliminate stock driveways occur during construction of the transmission line, these stock driveways would be eliminated.						
Guideline 2. Where water is developed at springs and seeps, return water to point of origin after livestock leave unit, if possible.	N/A. Option 3A would not involve the development of water at springs and seeps for livestock watering.						
Guideline 3. Seeding or establishment of monocultures should be avoided, and efforts should be made to establish and/or maintain a variety of desirable grass, forbs, and shrub species.	Disturbed areas would be re-seeded with a mix of native and C-TNF approved species.						
<b>Grazing Management—Forage Utilization</b>							
<p>Guideline 1. Apply upland forage utilization levels to all allotments as shown in the Table 3.6 below, unless determined through development of site-specific standards in the allotment management planning process. These utilization guidelines apply to native and desirable nonnative key plant species as recorded at the end of the grazing period (when the livestock leave the unit/pasture).</p> <p>Table 3.6 Upland Forage Utilization Levels</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="175 1052 824 1220"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="175 1052 488 1098">Vegetation Component</th> <th data-bbox="488 1052 824 1098">Allowable Percent Utilization</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="175 1098 488 1169">Grasses and Herbaceous Species (% dry weight)</td> <td data-bbox="488 1098 824 1169">35-55%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="175 1169 488 1220">(% dry weight)</td> <td data-bbox="488 1169 824 1220">25-35%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Vegetation Component	Allowable Percent Utilization	Grasses and Herbaceous Species (% dry weight)	35-55%	(% dry weight)	25-35%	The Project would not involve any grazing, and in general, BPA would avoid impacting access or forage utilization by existing grazing permit holders to the extent practical.
Vegetation Component	Allowable Percent Utilization						
Grasses and Herbaceous Species (% dry weight)	35-55%						
(% dry weight)	25-35%						
Guideline 2. Forest Service administrative site livestock pastures should comply with the forest-wide standards and guidelines for forage utilization and riparian management.	N/A. Option 3A would not establish any Forest Service administrative site livestock pastures.						
<b>Grazing Management—Livestock Grazing Permits</b>							
Standard 1. The ability of individuals holding grazing permits on public land to harass adult wolves in an opportunistic, noninjurious manner shall become part of their permit conditions so it is clearly understood exactly what can occur (USDI, F&W Svc. 1994a and 1994b).	N/A. BPA would not acquire any grazing permits as part of this project and does not anticipate a need to deter wolves from traveling near or within the transmission line corridor.						
Guideline 1. Permittees may be allowed motorized access to maintain or develop range improvements assigned in their grazing permits or for other authorized administrative activities. AMPs and Annual Operating Instructions should include direction to comply; travel permits should be issued to authorize this use.	There may be some grazing restrictions within the ROW footprint during construction of the line; however, these would be temporary, site-specific and generally limited to the active construction period. Where permittees may be allowed motorized access to maintain or develop range improvements on existing grazing permits, BPA would work with C-TNF and permit holders to avoid restricting access.						

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency																		
<b>Timber Management</b>																			
Standard 1. All commercial sales, including sawtimber, convertible products, select material, and commercial firewood, shall be advertised and sold on a bid basis, unless demand can be met and "sale on demand" sales can be justified.	Merchantable timber cleared during tree removal for ROW clearing would be advertised and sold on a bid basis, unless demand can be met and "sale on demand" sales can be justified in consultation with the Forest.																		
Standard 2. For tree planting projects, tree seedlings used shall be native species grown from seed from the appropriate seed zone, matched to site and elevation. Use the Expert System to determine seed transfer guidelines.	N/A. The Project would not include any tree planting. BPA would coordinate with the Forest botanist regarding appropriate seed mixes to be used for revegetation of disturbed areas.																		
Guideline 1. Design timber management projects to simulate natural patch sizes, shapes, connectivity, and species composition and age-class diversity in accordance with silvicultural prescription.	The Project is not a typical timber harvest and therefore would create a linear opening of uniform width.																		
Guideline 2. The silvicultural system used on managed timberlands should allow for control of pests, animal damage, including livestock, and vegetation competition to promote regeneration and tree growth at optimum levels.	N/A. The Project corridor would not be managed for timber production, as the ROW must be kept clear of trees and tall vegetation throughout the life of the Project.																		
Guideline 3. When feasible and appropriate, use prescribed burning to dispose of slash to reduce fire hazard and to provide seed beds for natural regeneration.	Smoke and hot gases from fire can create a conductive path for electricity, causing electric arcs that can endanger people and objects, and cause the line to go out. Therefore, prescribed fire is not feasible or appropriate to the Project and would not be used for slash disposal.																		
Guideline 4. A full complement of harvest systems and techniques may be used across the Forest unless specifically prohibited or limited by individual prescription direction.	Harvest techniques used for clearing of transmission line and access road ROWs would be appropriate to the applicable management prescription direction.																		
<b>Minimum Stocking Guidelines</b>																			
Guideline 1. Table 3.7, below, shows the minimum stocking which should occur before a regenerated area can be certified as stocked.	No restocking would take place in the ROW or on permanent access roads.																		
<b>Table 3.7 Minimum Stocking by Forested Vegetation Type.</b>																			
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="180 1213 358 1314">Species</th> <th data-bbox="358 1213 613 1314">Minimum Stocking (Trees/Acre)<sup>1</sup></th> <th data-bbox="613 1213 854 1314">Percent of Area Meeting Minimum Stocking</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="180 1314 358 1356">Lodgepole pine</td> <td data-bbox="358 1314 613 1356">170</td> <td data-bbox="613 1314 854 1356">70</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="180 1356 358 1398">Douglas-fir</td> <td data-bbox="358 1356 613 1398">140</td> <td data-bbox="613 1356 854 1398">70</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="180 1398 358 1440">Mixed Conifer<sup>2</sup></td> <td data-bbox="358 1398 613 1440">200</td> <td data-bbox="613 1398 854 1440">70</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="180 1440 358 1482">Spruce-fir</td> <td data-bbox="358 1440 613 1482">200</td> <td data-bbox="613 1440 854 1482">70</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="180 1482 358 1524">Aspen</td> <td data-bbox="358 1482 613 1524">5000</td> <td data-bbox="613 1482 854 1524">70</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Species	Minimum Stocking (Trees/Acre) <sup>1</sup>	Percent of Area Meeting Minimum Stocking	Lodgepole pine	170	70	Douglas-fir	140	70	Mixed Conifer <sup>2</sup>	200	70	Spruce-fir	200	70	Aspen	5000	70
Species		Minimum Stocking (Trees/Acre) <sup>1</sup>	Percent of Area Meeting Minimum Stocking																
Lodgepole pine		170	70																
Douglas-fir		140	70																
Mixed Conifer <sup>2</sup>	200	70																	
Spruce-fir	200	70																	
Aspen	5000	70																	
<sup>1</sup> Healthy, free-to-grow seedlings at least six (6 inches in height. Aspen may comprise a percentage of the stocking on conifer sites, dependent on the site-specific prescription (Rangelands 20(1): Decline of quaking aspen in the Interior West).																			
<sup>2</sup> Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, subalpine fir and Engelmann spruce.																			

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<b>Created Openings</b>	
Standard 1. The maximum size limit for forested vegetation openings created in one harvest operation by the even-aged silvicultural system shall normally be 40 acres. Openings may exceed 40 acres in aspen and lodgepole pine types contingent on Regional Forester approval, or as a result of natural catastrophic conditions such as fire, insect and disease, or windstorm.	The Project is not a typical timber harvest and therefore would create a larger, but linear opening. The Option 3A ROW and adjacent cleared area would convert up to approximately 29 acres of forested land to non-forested vegetation Proposed off-ROW access roads and pulling sites would convert up to an additional 4.2 acres of forested land to non-forested vegetation.
Standard 2. A harvested area of commercial forestland shall not be considered a created opening for silvicultural purposes when stocking surveys indicate that minimum stocking is achieved and average tree height equals or exceeds seven feet. When other resource management considerations (such as wildlife habitat, watershed needs, or visual requirements) prevail, a created opening shall no longer be considered an opening when the vegetation meets a particular management objective stated in the applicable management prescription.	No stocking would be conducted on the ROW. See above.
<b>Logging Systems</b>	
Guideline 1. Limit tractor skidding to slopes less than 40 percent and generally prohibit logging on slopes over 60 percent.	Tractor skidding would be limited to slopes less than 40 percent, and logging would generally be prohibited on slopes greater than 60 percent.
Guideline 2. Consider use of helicopter logging methods or other specialized logging methods on slopes in excess of 40 percent.	For slopes in excess of 40 percent, BPA would consider helicopter logging or other specialized methods as practical.
Guideline 3. Yarding operations should not take place when ground conditions are wet enough that there is a risk of rutting and compaction as determined by the sale administrator.	Yarding operations would not take place if ground conditions are wet enough that there is a risk of rutting and compaction.
Guideline 4. Minimize skid trails and temporary roads during logging operations. Identify skid trails and temporary roads requiring construction in the sale planning process and assure appropriate rehabilitation of these trails by the purchaser or in post-sale activities.	No temporary roads would be constructed on C-TNF lands as part of the Project; however, all permanent and reconstructed access roadways constructed specifically for the Project would be gated and closed to public motorized use. Any skid trails would be rehabilitated appropriately following construction of the Project. All existing motorized routes currently open to the public would remain open following completion of construction.
<b>General Practices</b>	
Standard 1. Suitability shall be verified at the site-specific level.	The Project is not a typical timber harvest and therefore the need to clear forested area for placement of the transmission line ROW would take precedence over the suitability of a site for timber production.
Guideline 1. Commercial sales of forest products should be offered in a variety of sale-size packages to meet the needs of small and large operations.	The Project is not a typical timber harvest. USFS would sell merchantable timber harvested as a result of ROW clearing directly to BPA in a settlement sale. BPA would hire a logger to conduct the logging work.
<b>Firewood</b>	
Guideline 1. Woody debris and dead standing snags are available, by permit, within 300 feet of an open motorized road for public firewood gathering unless the area is designated otherwise.	The Project is not anticipated to affect the availability, by permit, of woody debris and dead standing snags for public firewood gathering within 300 feet of an open road.
Guideline 2. The Forest may designate other areas for firewood gathering if needed to meet resource goals and public demand.	The Project is not anticipated to affect the ability of USFS to designate other areas for public firewood gathering if needed to meet resource goals and public demand.

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines		Consistency						
<b>SUBSECTION AND PRESCRIPTION AREAS</b>								
<b>PRESCRIPTION 2.7.2 (D)—ELK AND DEER WINTER RANGE</b>								
<b>Access</b>								
<p>The following table defines access allowable under prescription 2.7.1 (d)</p> <p><b>Table (d)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Season</th> <th>Type of Access</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Snow free season</td> <td>Motorized use allowed only on designated roads and trails</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Snow Season</td> <td>Motorized use allowed only on designated trails, some winter range has no designated routes</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Some site specific exceptions may apply; travel plan maps supersede this direction. Some winter range has no snow season designated routes</p>		Season	Type of Access	Snow free season	Motorized use allowed only on designated roads and trails	Snow Season	Motorized use allowed only on designated trails, some winter range has no designated routes	<p>All access roadways constructed specifically for the Project would be closed to exclude public motorized access upon completion of construction. All existing motorized routes currently open to the public would remain open following completion of construction. Motorized use by BPA maintenance personnel and vehicles would take place mostly during summer months or in response to an emergency. Emergency responses would last only as long as necessary to restore power.</p>
Season	Type of Access							
Snow free season	Motorized use allowed only on designated roads and trails							
Snow Season	Motorized use allowed only on designated trails, some winter range has no designated routes							
<b>PRESCRIPTION 3.2 (B, E, F)—SEMI-PRIMITIVE RECREATION</b>								
<b>Fire/Fuels</b>								
Guideline 1. Employ Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics to the extent possible.		N/A. The route of Option 3A as currently designed would not traverse any lands within Management Prescription 3.2.						
<b>Wildlife</b>								
Guideline 1. Maintain snags at =60 percent biological potential for woodpeckers.		N/A. The route of Option 3A as currently designed would not traverse any lands within Management Prescription 3.2.						
<b>Access</b>								
<p>Standard 1. The following table defines access allowable under prescription 3.2(b):</p> <p><b>Table (b)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Season</th> <th>Type of Access</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Snow free season</td> <td>Motorized use allowed only on designated roads and trails</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Snow Season</td> <td>Cross-country motorized allowed</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Some site specific exceptions may apply; travel plan maps supersede this direction.</p>		Season	Type of Access	Snow free season	Motorized use allowed only on designated roads and trails	Snow Season	Cross-country motorized allowed	<p>The route of Option 3A as currently designed would not traverse any lands within Management Prescription 3.2. In the short term, the Project could restrict public access to designated roads and trails as a result of area closures for safety reasons. The Project would not create any additional designated roads, as all access roads constructed specifically for the Project would be closed to exclude public motorized access upon completion of construction. All existing motorized routes currently open to the public would remain open following completion of construction. The Project would therefore have no impact on access in the long term. See Sections 3.1, Land Use, and Section 3.2, Recreation, for further discussion.</p>
Season	Type of Access							
Snow free season	Motorized use allowed only on designated roads and trails							
Snow Season	Cross-country motorized allowed							

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency						
<b>PRESCRIPTION 5.2 (B, C, F)—FOREST VEGETATION MANAGEMENT</b>							
<b>Disturbances</b>							
Guideline 1. Practices to prevent or control natural disturbances, such as insect and disease losses and wildfire, are emphasized.	The portion of Option 3A that would traverse lands in Management Prescription 5.2 is approximately 1.2 miles long and would impact approximately 14 acres of forest. Based on the relatively small amount of forest impacted, Option 3A would not be expected to prevent or exacerbate natural disturbances. As noted below, wildfires would be suppressed, per Management Prescription 8.1, Fire/Fuels Standard 1, which states, “all wildland fire shall be aggressively suppressed.”						
<b>Fire/Fuels</b>							
Guideline 1. Wildfires should be suppressed.	Wildfires would be suppressed, per Management Prescription 8.1, Fire/Fuels Standard 1, which states, “all wildland fire shall be aggressively suppressed.”						
Guideline 2. Prescribed fire may be used to reduce fuel loading; obtain natural regeneration; for wildlife habitat improvement; and for other purposes that meet the goals of this prescription.	Prescribed fire would not be used to reduce fuel loading, because smoke and hot gases from a fire can create a conductive path for electricity, and electrical arcs can endanger people and objects potentially causing an outage of the transmission line.						
<b>Wildlife</b>							
Guideline 1. Maintain snag habitat at =40 percent of the biological potential for woodpeckers.	Snag habitat would be maintained to approach 40 percent of biological potential for woodpeckers to the extent practical; however, no snags would be retained within the 100-foot-wide ROW or where they would otherwise pose a danger to the transmission line.  Per Management Prescription 8.1, Wildlife, Standard 1, biological potential for woodpeckers is not a management consideration in Concentrated Development Areas.						
<b>Vegetation</b>							
Guideline 1. Where aspen exists, it should be maintained or enhanced as a component through restoration treatments.	Option 3A would permanently impact approximately 5 acres of aspen-dominated forest types. Tree removal would be limited only to areas within the 100-foot ROW or where trees pose a danger to the line.						
Guideline 2. All ground-disturbed areas within an activity area should be monitored for five years for noxious weeds invasions.	BPA would conduct pre- and post-construction weed surveys to identify potential weed introduction/spread areas and focus monitoring/treatment in any areas where noxious weeds were present.						
<b>Access</b>							
<p>Standard 1. The following table defines access allowable under prescription 5.2(b):</p> <p><b>Table (b)</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="178 1617 792 1774"> <thead> <tr> <th>Season</th> <th>Type of Access</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Snow free season</td> <td>Motorized use allowed only on designated roads and trails</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Snow Season</td> <td>Cross-country motorized allowed</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Some site specific exceptions may apply; travel plan maps supersede this direction.</p>	Season	Type of Access	Snow free season	Motorized use allowed only on designated roads and trails	Snow Season	Cross-country motorized allowed	<p>In the short term, the Project could restrict public access to designated roads and trails as a result of area closures for safety reasons. The Project would not create any additional designated roads, as all access roads would be closed and gated to exclude motorized access. The Project would therefore have no impact on access in the long term. See Sections 3.1, Land Use, 3.2, Recreation, and 3.11, Transportation, for further discussion.</p>
Season	Type of Access						
Snow free season	Motorized use allowed only on designated roads and trails						
Snow Season	Cross-country motorized allowed						

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines		Consistency						
<p>Standard 2. The following table defines access allowable under prescription 5.2 (c)</p> <p><b>Table (c)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Season</th> <th>Type of Access</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Snow free season</td> <td>Cross-country motorized use allowed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Snow Season</td> <td>Cross-country motorized use allowed</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Some site specific exceptions may apply; travel plan maps supersede this direction.</p>		Season	Type of Access	Snow free season	Cross-country motorized use allowed	Snow Season	Cross-country motorized use allowed	<p>In the short term, the Project could restrict public access to designated roads and trails as a result of area closures for safety reasons. The Project would not create any additional designated roads, because all access roads would be closed and gated to exclude motorized access. The Project would therefore have no impact on access in the long term. See Sections 3.1, Land Use, 3.2, Recreation, and 3.11, Transportation, for further discussion.</p>
Season	Type of Access							
Snow free season	Cross-country motorized use allowed							
Snow Season	Cross-country motorized use allowed							
<p>Standard 3. The following table defines access allowable under prescription 5.2 (f)</p> <p><b>Table (f)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Season</th> <th>Type of Access</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Snow free season</td> <td>Motorized use allowed only on designated roads and trails</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Snow Season</td> <td>Non-motorized</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Some site specific exceptions may apply; travel plan maps supersede this direction.</p>		Season	Type of Access	Snow free season	Motorized use allowed only on designated roads and trails	Snow Season	Non-motorized	
Season	Type of Access							
Snow free season	Motorized use allowed only on designated roads and trails							
Snow Season	Non-motorized							
<p><b>Recreation</b></p>								
<p>Guideline 1. Avoid and mitigate impacts to recreation facilities and trails.</p>		<p>There are no developed recreation facilities in the project area; trails would be avoided and any impacts mitigated. Trails crossing the ROW could be closed temporarily for safety reasons, but would remain open following construction of the transmission line. See Section 3.2, Recreation, for further discussion.</p>						

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<b>Scenic Resources</b>	
Guideline 1. Opportunities to improve scenic integrity should be considered in proposed vegetation treatments.	BPA would incorporate various measures to preserve scenic integrity, which may include such management action as feathering of the ROW to minimize visual impact. BPA would work with the C-TNF forester to ensure that tree clearing is consistent with the forest plan
<b>Range</b>	
Guideline 1. Livestock grazing may be allowed on transitory forage produced following timber harvest where and when that use would not conflict with regeneration and restoration efforts.	Transitory forage may be produced following vegetation clearing associated with construction of the transmission line. Disturbed areas associated with the Option 3A ROW, access roads and pulling sites would be re-seeded with native or C-TNF approved vegetation which may or may not include forage species. Wherever grazing may be present, the presence of the line would not be expected to interfere with that use, and grazing would not be restricted except where it may conflict with regeneration and restoration efforts.
<b>Timber</b>	
Standard 1. Lands in this prescription are included in the suitable timber base and contribute to the Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ).	USFS would sell merchantable timber harvested as a result of ROW clearing directly to BPA in a settlement sale. BPA would hire a logger to conduct the logging work. Upon inclusion of the transmission line ROW in Management Prescription 8.1, these lands would be removed from the suitable timber base and would no longer contribute to the Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ), per management Prescription 8.1, Timber, Standard 1.
Standard 2. The ASQ attributed to stands on slopes between 40% and 60% and areas within Inventoried Roadless Areas is a noninterchangeable component (NIC) <sup>5</sup> .	No timber harvest would take place within Inventoried Roadless Areas under Option 3A. BPA would only harvest timber on slopes exceeding 40% as necessary to for the construction and safety of the line. Non-ground based equipment (helicopters or cable) would likely be required on slopes exceeding 40 percent on C- TNF lands. Upon inclusion of the transmission line ROW in Management Prescription 8.1, all lands within the ROW would be removed from the suitable timber base and would no longer contribute to the Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ), per management Prescription 8.1, Timber, Standard 1.
Guideline 1. Harvest and treatment residues should be made available for firewood and other products in a manner compatible with site preparation, productivity, and restocking requirements. Designated aspen areas should be made available for firewood.	Typically, BPA’s logging subcontractor would be responsible for disposing of the harvest residue. However, BPA would work with the C-TNF to make harvest residues available for firewood if appropriate.
Guideline 2. All forms of timber harvest, including salvage, to achieve stated goals and objectives are permitted.	Where it would cross forested areas, Option 3A would involve the clearing of all tall-growing vegetation within a 250-foot wide corridor. USFS would sell merchantable timber harvested as a result of clearing directly to BPA in a settlement sale. BPA would hire a logger to conduct the logging work.

<sup>5</sup> A portion of the ASQ, which cannot be substituted for from other areas or species types. Volume programmed from an NIC will not be replaced by volume from other areas of the Forest.

U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency						
<p><b>PRESCRIPTION 6.2 (B, E, F)—RANGELAND VEGETATION MANAGEMENT</b></p>	<p>N/A. The 6.2 Management Prescription does not occur on areas of the C-TNF traversed by Option 3A, and therefore does not apply to this Forest Plan Amendment.</p>						
<p><b>Vegetation</b></p>							
<p>Guideline 1. Focus vegetation treatments in those communities that have departed from their historical range of variability.</p>	<p>N/A. The 6.2 Management Prescription does not occur on areas of the C-TNF traversed by Option 3A, and therefore does not apply to this Forest Plan Amendment.</p>						
<p><b>Recreation</b></p>							
<p>Guideline 1. Recreation facilities, which are not detrimental to livestock management, may be provided</p>	<p>N/A. The 6.2 Management Prescription does not occur on areas of the C-TNF traversed by Option 3A, and therefore does not apply to this Forest Plan Amendment.</p>						
<p><b>Wildlife</b></p>							
<p>Standard 1. Maintain snags at = 40 percent of biological potential for woodpeckers.</p>	<p>N/A. The 6.2 Management Prescription does not occur on areas of the C-TNF traversed by Option 3A, and therefore does not apply to this Forest Plan Amendment.</p>						
<p><b>Access</b></p>							
<p>Standard 2. The following table defines access allowable under prescription 6.2 (e)</p> <p><b>Table (e)</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="180 968 769 1104"> <thead> <tr> <th>Season</th> <th>Type of Access</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Snow free season</td> <td>Non-motorized travel only allowed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Snow Season</td> <td>Cross-country motorized allowed</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Some site specific exceptions may apply; travel plan maps supersede this direction.</p>	Season	Type of Access	Snow free season	Non-motorized travel only allowed	Snow Season	Cross-country motorized allowed	<p>N/A. The 6.2(e) Management Prescription does not occur on any of the areas of the C-TNF traversed by the Option 3A corridor.</p>
Season	Type of Access						
Snow free season	Non-motorized travel only allowed						
Snow Season	Cross-country motorized allowed						
<p><b>PRESCRIPTION 2.8.3—AQUATIC INFLUENCE ZONE</b></p>							
<p>This management prescription applies to the Aquatic Influence Zone (AIZ) associated with lakes, reservoirs, ponds, perennial and intermittent streams, and wetlands, such as wet meadows, springs, seeps, bogs and other areas. These areas control the hydrologic, geomorphic, and ecological processes that directly affect water quality and aquatic life. They also provide unique habitat characteristics important to plant and animal species that rely on aquatic, wetland, or riparian ecosystems for all or a portion of their life cycle.</p> <p>The AIZ management prescription provides an extensive set of goals, standards, and guidelines regarding ecological processes and patterns, land use, fish and wildlife management, and access within the AIZ. These goals, standards and guidelines are discussed on pages RFP 4-45 through RFP 4-53 of the CNF Forest Plan.</p>	<p>No structures would be sited within Management Prescription 2.8.3. The Project would avoid siting roads within the AIZ to the extent practical, and would impact less than 0.3 acre within the AIZ. The ROW corridor would include approximately 6.9 acres of land located within the AIZ; however, the transmission line would span these areas and the majority would not require clearing or manipulation of vegetation.</p> <p>Goals, standards and guidelines for Management Prescription 2.8.3 that are applicable to the Project are discussed in Sections 3.1, Land Use , 3.2, Recreation, and 4.17.6, “Guidelines – Management Prescription 2.8.3 Aquatic Influence Zone.”</p> <p>Mitigation measures associated with impacts of the Project on AIZs are discussed in Section 3.6, Water Resources, Floodplains, and Wetlands.</p>						

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<b>Fire/Fuels</b>	
Guideline 1. Locate incident bases, camps, helibases, staging areas, helispots, and other centers for incident activities outside of AIZs. If the only suitable location for such activities is within the AIZ, an exemption may be granted following a review and recommendation by a resource advisor.	During construction, BPA would locate all fire protection equipment and staging areas outside of AIZs. BPA would continue to coordinate with local fire districts and C-TNF personnel to develop fire and emergency response plans for the operating phase of the line, and would prioritize locating any equipment or staging areas outside of AIZs (see Section 3.13.4, Public Health and Safety).
Guideline 2. When taking water from fish-bearing streams for suppression activities, intake hoses should be screened, taking into account the fish species, life stages, and streamflow present at the time.	BPA would coordinate all suppression activities with the C-TNF.
Guideline 3. Allow wildland fire use, prescribed fire, and mechanical fuel treatments to meet the desired future conditions of the AIZ.	Mechanical treatment would be used periodically to keep the transmission line ROW clear of tall-growing vegetation, and these treatments would be designed to meet the desired future conditions of the AIZ to the extent practical. Wildfires would be suppressed and prescribed fire would not be used to treat fuels, because smoke and hot gases from a fire can create a conductive path for electricity, and electrical arcs can endanger people and objects potentially causing an outage of the transmission line.
Guideline 4. Design fire suppression strategies, practices, and actions so they minimize disturbance of riparian ground cover and vegetation.	BPA would coordinate and design all suppression activities with the C-TNF.
Guideline 5. Avoid mixing and delivery of chemical retardant, foam, or additives to surface waters.	BPA would coordinate all suppression activities with the C-TNF including avoiding delivery of chemicals to surface waters.
<b>Lands</b>	
Standard 1. Special use authorizations for new projects involving instream facilities shall maintain minimum instream flows to maintain or improve desired AIZ attributes.	N/A. The Project would not involve the placement of any instream facilities and would not affect instream flow levels.
Standard 2. For licensing and relicensing, use conditioning authority granted under Section 4(e) of the Federal Power Act to ensure that hydroelectric facilities located within AIZs are located, operated, and maintained in a manner that protects, mitigates, or enhances Forest resources.	N/A. The Project would not involve the licensing or relicensing of a hydroelectric facility.
Guideline 1. Avoid locating facilities and utility corridors in Aquatic Influence Zones.	Option 3A would avoid locating facilities and utility corridors in AIZs. Less than 0.3 acre of impacts to AIZs would occur as a result of access road crossings of intermittent streams. The ROW corridor would include approximately 6.9 acres of land located within Management Prescription 2.8.3; however, the transmission line would span these areas and the majority would not require clearing or manipulation of vegetation. Long-term control of vegetation would occur in a small portion of previously-forested AIZs.
Guideline 2. For any diversion, fish passage and/or screening devices to prevent accidental loss of fish should be provided where needed.	N/A. The Project would not involve diversion of any streams.
Guideline 3. Use land acquisition, exchange, and conservation easements to meet desired AIZ attributes.	The Project would not involve the acquisition or exchange of land, or the establishment of conservation easements by either BPA or C-TNF. BPA would continue to coordinate with C-TNF to ensure that actions taken during construction, post-construction mitigation, and operation of the transmission line promote the achievement of desired AIZ attributes to the extent practical.

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 4. When reauthorizing existing special use authorizations or existing Forest Service projects involving instream facilities, exclusive of facilities retrofitted to existing dams, where feasible, provide for minimum instream flows as specified by the Forest or State.	N/A. The Project would not involve the operation or reauthorization of any instream facilities.
Guideline 5. For licensing and relicensing of hydroelectric projects, consider the posting of a bond to cover decommissioning costs associated with new structures such as dams and large buildings.	N/A. The Project would not involve the licensing or relicensing of any hydroelectric projects.
<b>Minerals/Geology</b>	
Guideline 1. Locate new structures, support facilities, and roads outside AIZs. Where no alternative to siting facilities in AIZs exists, locate and construct the facilities in ways that avoid or reduce impacts to desired AIZs attributes. Where no alternative to road construction exists, keep roads to the minimum necessary for the approved mineral activity.	Option 3A would avoid locating facilities and utility corridors in AIZs. No structures would be located within AIZs. Less than 0.3 acre of impacts to AIZs would occur as a result of access road crossings of intermittent streams.
Guideline 2. New leases for energy minerals should prohibit surface occupancy for exploration and development unless there are no other options for location and desired AIZ attributes can be met.	N/A. The Project would not involve new leases for energy minerals.
Guideline 3. The operating plans of existing leases for energy minerals should be modified to minimize impacts to desired AIZ attributes.	N/A. The Project would not involve the extraction of energy minerals.
Guideline 4. Do not locate debris, mine overburden, excess material, leaching pads, and other facilities within Aquatic Influence Zones, unless no other alternatives are available. If no other alternative exists, ensure that safeguards are in place to prevent release or drainage of toxic or other hazardous materials onto these lands.	In general, the Project would avoid ground disturbance or the placement of any materials within AIZs. If no other alternative exists, safeguards would be implemented to prevent release or drainage of toxic or other hazardous materials into AIZs. Option 3A would include both a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and Spill Prevention and Response Procedures to control and prevent releases into waterbodies and adjacent AIZs (See Section 3.5.4, Geology and Soils, and Section 3.13.4, Public Health and Safety).
Guideline 5. These areas would generally not be available for development of mineral materials unless AIZ attributes would be maintained or improved.	N/A. The Project would not involve the development of mineral materials.
<b>Biological Elements—General Riparian Area Management</b>	
Standard 1. Within legal authorities, ensure that new proposed management activities within watersheds containing 303(d) listed waterbodies improve or maintain overall progress toward beneficial use attainment for pollutants which led to listing.	The proposed project would include an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan that would incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs). The implementation of this plan and BMPs would ensure that 303(d) waterbodies would maintain overall progress towards attainment for pollutants which led to their listing.
Guideline 1. Felled trees should remain on site when needed to meet woody debris objectives and desired AIZ attributes.	BPA would coordinate with the C-TNF on woody debris placement within the ROW and AIZs.
Guideline 2. Use herbicides, pesticides, and other toxicants and chemicals only as needed to maintain desired AIZ attributes.	BPA would apply herbicides according to the BPA Transmission System Vegetation Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0285) and label recommendations. Use of herbicides, pesticides and other toxicants would be avoided within AIZs to the extent practical.

## U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 3. Avoid storage of fuels and other toxicants or refueling within AIZs unless there are no other alternatives. Any refueling sites within an AIZ should have an approved spill containment plan.	BPA would locate storage of fuels and other toxicants or refueling outside of AIZs. In general, the project would prepare and implement Spill Prevention and Response Procedures to avoid and contain accidental spills, including notification assessment, security, clean-up, and reporting requirements (see Section 3.13.4, Public Health and Safety).
<b>Biological Elements—Fisheries</b>	
Guideline 1. Where feasible, restore connectedness of disjunct populations and enhance fish passage for native fish.	The Blackfoot River would be the only fish-bearing stream crossed by the Option 3A corridor. The transmission line would span the Blackfoot River twice and no work would occur in fish-bearing streams. It is therefore expected that Option 3A would neither degrade nor enhance fish passage and population connectivity (See Section 3.8.3, Fish).
Guideline 2. Design and implement fish and other aquatic biota habitat restoration and enhancement actions in a manner that contributes to attainment of desired AIZ attributes.	Tree removal would occur in a small number of intermittent waterbody AIZs; however, impacts to individual AIZs would be low and tree removal would only occur as necessary to ensure the safety of the line.
Guideline 3. Coordinate with State Fish and Game management agencies to develop fish stocking strategies within the Forest. Discourage stocking of non-native fish species in lakes and streams managed for native fish populations.	N/A. The Project would not involve stocking of fish.
<b>Biological Elements—Wildlife</b>	
Standard 1. Snags shall be maintained at = 80 percent of biological potential for woodpeckers (See Tables 3.4 and 3.5).	Snag habitat would be maintained to approach 80 percent of biological potential for woodpeckers to the extent practical; however, no snags would be retained within the 100-foot-wide ROW or where they would otherwise pose a danger to the transmission line.
<b>Forest Use and Occupation—Access</b>	
Standard 1. Snowmobiles are prohibited on unfrozen watercourses.	Snowmobiles would not be used to traverse unfrozen watercourses.
<b>Forest Use and Occupation—Roads and Trails</b>	
Standard 1. All new and replaced culverts, both permanent and temporary, shall be designed and installed to meet desired conditions for riparian and aquatic species.	Under Option 3A, no new access roads would be constructed over any perennial waterbodies and no access roads crossing the Blackfoot River would be improved. Culverts placed at access road crossings of intermittent streams and drainages would be designed and installed to meet desired conditions for riparian and aquatic species.
Guideline 1. Avoid constructing roads within the AIZ unless there is no practical alternative.	Option 3A has been designed to avoid constructing roads within the AIZ to the extent practical; due to the nature of the topography in the area, a small number of access road crossing would be necessary at intermittent streams and drainages, resulting in a total impact of less than 0.3 acre to AIZ areas.
Guideline 2. Culverts (permanent and temporary) should be sized so that the probability of flow exceedance is fifty percent or less during the time the culvert is expected to be in place. Consider bedload and debris when sizing culverts.	BPA would size culverts accordingly and in coordination with the C-TNF.
Guideline 3. When feasible, use bridges, arches, and open-bottom culverts in fish-bearing streams.	Option 3A would not cross any fish-bearing streams with the exception of the Blackfoot River, which it would span.

**U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest**

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
Guideline 4. Avoid placing ditch relief culverts where they may discharge onto erodible slopes or directly into streams.	BPA would avoid placing ditch relief culverts where they may discharge onto erodible slopes or directly into streams. Roads would be designed to be out-sloping wherever possible to prevent the concentrated discharge of water. Where culverts, waterbars, or ditches do discharge, riprap slope protection would be installed to protect erodible slopes.
Guideline 5. Where feasible, install cross-drainage above stream crossings to prevent ditch sediments from entering streams.	BPA would install waterbars on all grades within 20 vertical feet of stream crossings to prevent sediments from entering streams.
Guideline 6. New or reconstructed roads and trails should cross the AIZ riparian areas as perpendicular as possible.	Access roads crossing AIZ areas have been designed to cross these areas as perpendicular as possible.
Guideline 7. Avoid making channel changes on streams or drainages.	BPA would avoid making channel changes on streams or drainages.
Guideline 8. Design and install drainage crossings to reduce the chances of turning stream flows down the road prism in case of a blocked or overflowing culvert.	BPA would design and install drainage crossings to reduce chances of turning stream flows down the road prism if culverts become blocked. BPA culverts would be designed conservatively to reduce the likelihood of blockage
Guideline 9. Road drainage patterns should avoid disruption of natural hydrologic flow paths.	Roads would be designed to avoid disruption of natural hydrologic flow paths. Roads would be designed to be out-sloping wherever possible to allow water to flow over them instead of channeling and causing concentrated discharge. Roads would be designed to be in high areas away from natural flow paths wherever possible.
<b>Recreation</b>	
Standard 1. Grazing by recreational stock shall meet AIZ grazing standards for utilization of riparian vegetation.	N/A. The Project would not involve grazing by recreational stock.
Standard 2. Design, construct, and operate new recreation facilities, including trails and dispersed sites, in a manner that maintains progress toward desired AIZ attributes.	N/A. The Project would not involve the design, construction, or operation of new recreational facilities.
Guideline 1. Manage existing recreation facilities, including trails and dispersed sites, to minimize adverse impacts and, where feasible, move towards desired AIZ attributes.	N/A. Option 3A would not directly impact any recreational facilities (See Section 3.2.3, Recreation).

**U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest**

Standards and Guidelines		Consistency		
<b>Grazing Management</b>				
Standard 1. Table 4.1, below, shall be used for riparian grazing until more site-specific standards are implemented using the Caribou Riparian Grazing Implementation Guide. If current Annual Operating Instructions have more stringent requirements they shall be used, however. Generally, the factor most critical for maintaining riparian and stream channel characteristics shall be used. These utilization guidelines apply to native and desirable nonnative key plant species as recorded at the end of the grazing period (when the livestock leave the unit/pasture).		N/A. Option 3A would not involve grazing, riparian or otherwise.		
<b>Parameter</b>	<b>Location Measured</b>	<b>Condition of Riparian (Lotic) Area</b>		
		<b>Properly Functioning \Condition</b>	<b>Functioning at Risk</b>	<b>Non-functioning</b>
% Herbaceous Species Utilization	Greenline	45%	35%	30%
	In AIZ	55%	45%	35%
% Woody Spp Utilization	-	45%	40%	30%
Stubble Height	Greenline	4 inches	6 inches	6 inches
% Bank Disturbance	Cumulative	30%	25%	20%
Standard 2. The most current version of the Caribou Riparian Grazing Implementation Guide shall be used for the primary source of direction for grazing in Forest riparian areas and shall be incorporated during allotment management planning.		N/A. Option 3A would not involve grazing, riparian or otherwise.		
Guideline 1. Avoid locating new livestock handling and/or management facilities inside of AIZs.		N/A. Option 3A would not involve any livestock handling or management facilities.		
Guideline 2. Where feasible, relocate or close existing livestock handling facilities that will not maintain progress toward desired AIZ attributes.		N/A. Option 3A would not involve any livestock handling or management facilities.		
<b>Timber</b>				
Standard 1. Aquatic Influence Zones are not included in the suitable timber base and do not contribute to the Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ).		The Project is not a typical timber sale. C-TNF would sell any merchantable timber located within the transmission line ROW corridor directly to BPA in a settlement sale and BPA would hire a logger to conduct the logging work. Tree removal would occur in a small number of wetland and intermittent waterbody AIZs; however, impacts to individual AIZs would be low and tree removal would only occur as necessary to ensure the safety of the line.		

# Record of Decision

**U.S. Forest Service, Caribou National Forest**

Standards and Guidelines	Consistency
<p>Guideline 1. Timber harvest, including fuelwood cutting, is generally not allowed unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ catastrophic events such as fire, flooding, wind, or insect damage result in degraded riparian conditions, and unscheduled timber harvest (salvage and commercial fuelwood cutting) is selected as the most desirable management practice</li> <li>▪ silvicultural practices are necessary to achieve desired vegetation characteristics and desired AIZ attributes.</li> </ul>	<p>The Project would not be a typical timber sale. Tree removal would occur for hazardous tree and safety and fire hazard related concerns; some of these trees which are identified as merchantable timber would be sold. Tree removal would occur in a small number of wetland and intermittent waterbody AIZs; however, impacts to individual AIZs would be low and tree removal would only occur as necessary to ensure the safety of the line (see Section 3.6.3, Water Resources, Floodplains, and Wetlands). Where possible, trees would be incorporated into mitigation, including snags, down woody debris (DWD), and large woody debris (LWD) to help promote the attainment of desired AIZ characteristics.</p>
<p>Guideline 2. Mechanized slash piling and burning should be minimized within the AIZ.</p>	<p>Mechanized slash piling would be minimized within the AIZ. No burning would take place during construction or operation of the Project, because it would pose a danger to the line.</p>
<p><b>PRESCRIPTION 2.1.6(b)—GRAVEL CREEK SPECIAL EMPHASIS AREA</b></p>	
<p>Goal 2. The area is managed according to the Memorandum of Understanding with the Idaho Dept. of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and the Army Corps of Engineers.</p>	<p>N/A. The 2.1.6(b) Management Prescription does not occur on any of the areas of the C-TNF traversed by the Option 3A corridor.</p>
<p>Objective 1. Coordinate a review of the status of the property with Idaho Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and the Army Corps of Engineers every three years.</p>	

**APPENDIX D  
RESPONSE TO COMMENTS ON THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT STATEMENT**

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	That is not to say that there isn't some degree of urgency here or that the Non- Wires Alternative should be the automatic conclusion of this analysis. But BPA has a responsibility under NEPA to develop a range of reasonable alternatives. It is critical to analyze a range of alternatives, especially when the majority of alternatives require substantial linear infrastructure, and permanent, irreversible impacts. The Non-Wires Alternative is particularly important for the BPA to consider because of the significantly reduced cost to implement, the avoidance of environmental impacts, and the potential to site any new infrastructure within the footprint of existing industrial facilities.	BPA rigorously explored and objectively evaluated a full range of reasonable alternatives, including evaluating the non-wires alternatives. However, the non-wires alternatives were eliminated from further detailed consideration because they could at most defer, but not eliminate, the need to construct a transmission line. Additionally, the non-wires alternatives studied were not found to be significantly less expensive than the transmission line. The conclusion of the study was that even if non-wires alternatives were achievable, they would not be a permanent solution to the reliability need of a second source transmission line into the area (see Volume 1, Section 2.5.6, Non-Wires Alternative).
HSTP214_0022	Earl Somsen, Phil Christensen, Mark Mathews	Caribou County Commissioners	The "North alternative" would be unacceptable to Caribou County. This is because of the many and much discussed issues already presented by testimonies and other means concerning environmental, aesthetical, property damage and various other issues.	Comment noted.
HSTP214_0023	Kathy Rinaldi, Bob Zimmer	Greater Yellowstone Coalition	Additionally GYC would encourage a transmission alignment that creates the least amount of new auxiliary, construction, and supporting infrastructure. The use of existing road and transmission corridors will minimize the potential adverse impacts on waters resources, terrestrial and avian species along with the disruptions to the ranching operations along the final route. Disruptions to ranch operation include crossing productive fields and interfering with optimal planting, irrigation and harvest practices.	Comment noted. As described in Volume 1, Section 2.2.4, Access Roads, it is BPA's practice to incorporate existing roads into the transmission line access road system wherever possible. BPA also makes use of temporary roads in areas where a permanent road is not desired. These areas include agricultural fields or wet areas where the ground is too soft to support equipment. Because there are no existing transmission line ROWs with associated access roads in the project area, the majority of roads needed for the Project would be new.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	BPA should consider using short, spur roads to access each tower instead of a single road along the ROW if the combined effects are lesser. Mitigation for access roads could be reduced road densities in the surrounding area. This would help reduce illegal OHV use, sediment delivery to streams, wildlife disturbance and noxious weed expansion.	BPA does consider the use of spur roads to structures where possible. However, where the transmission line would parallel Blackfoot River Road in line miles 14 to 17, a railroad is located between the road and proposed ROW. Crossing railroad tracks in numerous places would make access to the line difficult during times when the tracks are in use. Without access to the transmission line, reliability in the event of an emergency is not assured. For the structures in line miles 7 to 10, access roads running along the ROW would be constructed to utilize existing approaches off Highway 34. Adding additional approaches for spur roads at each structure would require additional ground disturbance and would be a safety concern along the highway. Additionally, as noted above, BPA does incorporate existing roads into the transmission line access road system wherever possible. Also BPA incorporates the use of "direction of travel" routes. Direction of travel routes are used by the transmission line contractor or BPA maintenance crews to access structures without doing any permanent road work

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
				(although the routes can be permanent). Temporary roads are specified in locations where improvements (fixing soft spots, adding gravel, re-grading, etc.) are required but permanent roads are not desired. These improvements would be removed, and the land restored to its original condition, following transmission line construction (see Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1, Access Roads, for additional information on direction of travel routes). Volume 1, Section 3.11, Transportation, describes BPA's proposed measures to decrease the potential for unauthorized public access and use, which in turn would reduce the potential for impacts to streams, wildlife, and noxious weed expansion. Unauthorized OHV access to C-TNF), BLM, or state lands would be reduced by adding heavy duty gates at strategic locations. Gates also would be installed if requested by private landowners. Use of "direction of travel" routes also would reduce OHV use because no road would exist in the long term.
HSTP214_0004		Varied	What is your projected start date if everything goes well?	BPA expects to issue a record of decision in early 2015 that will explain its decision about whether to build the Project and, if so, the alternative selected.
HSTP214_0021	Greg Mladenka	State of Idaho, Department of Environmental Quality	DEQ also will look to long term management to avoid and reduce impacts to water bodies affected by this action. Sediment input to streams and other water bodies is our primary concern. Facilities associated with the project will need to be designed and construction to avoid and minimize sediment impacts to surface waters during construction and throughout the life of the project. Additionally, where transmission lines cross live streams, vegetation adequate for shading these waters needs to be preserved to prevent thermal impacts.	Comment noted. As noted in Volume 2, Water Resources, Floodplains, and Wetlands, BPA would continue to coordinate with Idaho DEQ as applicable to address any concerns about water quality standards throughout the life of the proposed transmission line. As described in Volume 1, Section 2.2.5, Vegetation Clearing, and Volume 2, Vegetation Clearing, all tall-growing vegetation would be removed from the transmission line ROW. When vegetation grows or falls close to a transmission line it can cause an electrical arc that can start a fire, cause an outage of the line, or injure or kill someone. Tall vegetation cannot be allowed to grow within the 100-foot transmission line ROW. Section 3.6.4 describes mitigation measures that would be implemented throughout the project corridor to reduce possible impacts on water quality, especially where tall-growing vegetation would be removed.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	In addition, the analysis should provide an estimate of the costs to mitigate for the various impacts of each route in order to accurately compare the relative costs of different routes.	While NEPA does require agencies to identify and include in the action all relevant and reasonable mitigation measures that could improve the action, analyzing the cost of mitigation is not required. Per CFR 40 1502.23, a cost-benefit analysis is not required.
HSTP214_0020	Alan Prouty	J.R. Simplot Company	We believe any of these routes would be preferable to the No Action alternative. Simplot does not support the No Action Alternative.	Comment noted.
HSTP214_0010	Susan Smith	Idaho	It is our opinion that Idaho has acres of state and government property through which this line could pass	Comments noted.
HSTP214_0016	Greg Torgesen	Idaho	On the other hand, I believe that the original South Alternative or Option 1 minimizes negative impacts. By following those routes, the new power lines would travel near other lines that already disturb that immediate area. The lines would travel in a route already impacted by industry. In the area of concern near Monsanto's Blackfoot Bridge Mine, I	As described in Volume 1, Section 1, Purpose and Need, BPA's need for the Hooper Springs Transmission Project includes improving the stability and reliability of the transmission system in southeastern Idaho. The primary purpose is to maintain the reliability of BPA's transmission system to BPA and industry standards. The following describes BPA's rationale for not including a route through the Conda and Blackfoot Bridge mine areas as part of the preferred alternative: Conda Area <input type="checkbox"/> Active mining—The South Alternative and Options 1 and 2 pass through an

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
HSTP214_0001	Karen Krane	Idaho	<p>know from public comments made by Monsanto leadership that Monsanto is willing to cooperate in any way they can to enable passage of the power line. I'm confident that if BPA worked with Monsanto a solution to that area of concern could be found.</p> <p>My only proposal is to encourage Bonneville Power to use their considerable negotiating skills to work with Monsanto &amp; Agrium about the placement of new poles along a route that already has poles. Or perhaps somewhere in the back country that would not encroach upon the scenic by way or our little community of China Hat.</p>	<p>active mining area. Placing a transmission line within an active mining area would mean that access to the line is not available at all times. The haul road would likely be actively used. BPA requires year-round access to its structures and lines in the event of an emergency. Additionally, placement of a transmission line in an active mine area would present problems during maintenance and emergency situations that would compromise the overall system reliability.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Possible soil contamination—Regarding the Conda Mine Study Area, it was BPA's intent when proposing possible routes, to avoid construction, operation, and maintenance of a transmission line in areas of known contamination and to avoid direct contact with waste dumps, seeps, or mine pits. For this reason, Options 3 and 3A were proposed because they avoided the Conda Mine Study Area.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Safety—The safety of not only the mine workers but also of the transmission line maintenance workers would be impacted if the two activities are being conducted at the same time.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Limited space for the transmission line—There is approximately 170 feet between a large settling pond at Conda and the railroad tracks south of Conda Road. This leaves very little room to route a transmission line, including placement of access roads.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Railroad crossings—The transmission line would cross the railroad twice in this area. Access to the transmission line also would be difficult if the railroad is in use when line maintenance needs to occur.</p>
HSTP214_0004		Varied	<p>I understand that that is fraught with problems going across wetlands no matter what you do. Is there no way you could go across higher ground and not go across the bottoms and still follow that east side of the valley? Do you have to go down in to the wetlands I guess is what I'm asking? I'm not sure where that map is showing. Okay. Along through here, yes. Option one, I guess, basically following from over here and coming across and avoiding all the agricultural land. That's a huge issue for the farmers who are going to be stuck with those poles in their field because they'll have to farm around those from now on.</p>	<p>Blackfoot Bridge Mine Area</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Blackfoot Bridge Mine—The mine is active with excavation occurring throughout the area. As noted above, placing a transmission line within an active mine area does not meet the purpose of maintaining system reliability.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Woodall Springs wetlands—If a portion of Option 4 were included in the preferred alternative route, transmission line and access roads would be constructed within this large wetland complex located west of the Monsanto Haul Road. Fill in the wetland would likely exceed 0.5 acre. This is an area that commenters have recommended BPA avoid because of the habitat it provides for migratory birds.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fish Pond area between the haul road and the railroad—Routing the preferred alternative through this area is similar to the limited space available for the line in Conda. Both the South Alternative and Option 4 would cross through an area that is about 200-foot wide between the haul road and the railroad.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Triple-circuit transmission line—To use the South Alternative or Option 4 route, BPA would be required to construct a triple-circuit line (two 115-kV circuits for BPA and one 138-kV circuit for Rocky Mountain Power). BPA was told by a Rocky Mountain Power representative at the May 27 public meeting that there is not sufficient room for an entirely new line in this area. Structures in the 138-kV line that cross through the Blackfoot Bridge Mine have already had excavation occur around their bases (see Photo 1).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Monsanto Haul Road—This haul road has many restrictions on use. If the line was routed along the haul road and BPA proposed to use portions of the road to access the line, conflicts in the use of the road would occur. Presently the haul road is closed to external use with 24-hour notice required. This would not allow year-round access to the BPA transmission line, especially if there was an emergency.</p>
HSTP214_0022	Earl Somsen, Phil Christensen, Mark Mathews	Caribou County Commissioners	<p>Caribou County is committed to our role as a co-ordinating partner with BPA in the Hooper springs Transmission Project and developing the least obstructive, least disruptive, yet viable and beneficial power line route that will serve the needs of energy users. If Caribou county were to create a designated power line corridor, which Idaho State law provides the authority to do, this is the corridor we would authorize; from Hooper Springs Substation on "option 1" east to Conda then north on the "Monsanto haul road right of way" to mile marker 11, then east on the south preferred alternative to the connection facility at the Lanes Creek road.</p>	<p>Blackfoot Bridge Mine Area</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Blackfoot Bridge Mine—The mine is active with excavation occurring throughout the area. As noted above, placing a transmission line within an active mine area does not meet the purpose of maintaining system reliability.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Woodall Springs wetlands—If a portion of Option 4 were included in the preferred alternative route, transmission line and access roads would be constructed within this large wetland complex located west of the Monsanto Haul Road. Fill in the wetland would likely exceed 0.5 acre. This is an area that commenters have recommended BPA avoid because of the habitat it provides for migratory birds.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fish Pond area between the haul road and the railroad—Routing the preferred alternative through this area is similar to the limited space available for the line in Conda. Both the South Alternative and Option 4 would cross through an area that is about 200-foot wide between the haul road and the railroad.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Triple-circuit transmission line—To use the South Alternative or Option 4 route, BPA would be required to construct a triple-circuit line (two 115-kV circuits for BPA and one 138-kV circuit for Rocky Mountain Power). BPA was told by a Rocky Mountain Power representative at the May 27 public meeting that there is not sufficient room for an entirely new line in this area. Structures in the 138-kV line that cross through the Blackfoot Bridge Mine have already had excavation occur around their bases (see Photo 1).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Monsanto Haul Road—This haul road has many restrictions on use. If the line was routed along the haul road and BPA proposed to use portions of the road to access the line, conflicts in the use of the road would occur. Presently the haul road is closed to external use with 24-hour notice required. This would not allow year-round access to the BPA transmission line, especially if there was an emergency.</p>
HSTP214_0029	Tami Cole	Idaho	BPA, Please agree with our County	

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
HSTP214_0019	Roderick DREWEN	Idaho	<p>Commissioners and support all comments that the "South Route" is the most feasible Route to place power lines. Respect the Farmers and Rancher's land, the Migratory Waterfowl Flyways and the Beautiful Country Scenery that God gave to us to enjoy for many generations to come. Please stop the discontent of all those involved with the North Route and let us have the peace of mind knowing our land won't be affected with power poles!!!</p> <p>With a goal of reducing negative impacts of the alternatives, I suggest selecting the South Alternative, Option #1. Simply put, Option #1 traversing a proposed route from Hooper Springs substation eastward to near Conda, northward near or following the Monsanto Haul Road along the west side of Woodall Mountain to the junction of the Blackfoot River (mile #11) and eastward could significantly reduce impacts upon owners of agricultural lands compared to options 3 and 3A, greatly minimize impacts on migratory birds (especially cranes and waterfowl) that traditionally use the area east and south of Blackfoot Reservoir, and avoid impacts upon scenic and recreational values along state highway 34, with the powerline situated on the eastside hills. Your review of these subjects appears to be incomplete and superficial. Why would you suggest Options 3 and 3A knowing your proposed powerline would negatively impact and materially inconvenience agricultural landowners, negatively impact migratory birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, and disregard values associated with scenic byway Highway 34</p>	
HSTP214_0023	Kathy Rinaldi, Bob Zimmer	Greater Yellowstone Coalition	The lands surrounding the other alternatives also exhibit similar traits and all alternatives should be evaluated to incur the least possible impact to the surrounding habitats.	Impacts to habitats crossed by the alternatives and their options have been analyzed and are described in Volume 1, Chapter 3, Affected Environmental Consequences, and Mitigation Measures.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	We believe that BPA's top priority should be to avoid environmental impacts as possible, and then to minimize and mitigate these impacts if they cannot be avoided. We believe that the best way to avoid impacts is to further develop Non-Wires Alternative which	The distributed generation portion of the non-wires alternative was found to be infeasible because the local utility was unwilling to develop the local generation required and felt that it would be difficult to ensure that deliveries of LNG would be available during winter peak loads when roads can often be impassable. However, BPA and Lower Valley Energy are continuing with efforts to improve energy efficiency and demand response. These continuing efforts have been included in BPA's yearly load forecast.

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
HSTP214 0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	<p>combines energy efficiency, demand response, distributed generation and changes in energy consumption patterns. BPA had contracted with Energy and Environmental Economics (E3) to conduct the None-Wires feasibility analysis. BPA subsequently dismissed this alternative. We believe that BPA's dismissal of this alternative (SDEIS p. 2-38) was premature and based on dated assumptions that were not applied to other alternatives. E3's analysis (E3 2012) showed that through increasing efficiencies in the existing system and upgrading the existing infrastructure, it could be possible to defer transmission line construction until 2025 or longer. This prudent delay would allow BPA to better respond to issues such as potential listing of Greater Sage-grouse. In addition, this additional time would allow BPA to more thoroughly assess and mitigate environmental impacts of new transmission line on wildlife resources and private property. Furthermore, with improvements regarding energy efficiencies and other non-wire measures, the 2025 timeframe may even be longer.</p> <p>All timelines for complex projects such as this tend to become drawn out. Normally, the proponents and permitting agencies adjust all the various timelines accordingly. However, in this case, it appears as though BPA held one alternative to a different – and increasingly impossible – timeline while the timelines for the other, arguably more controversial, disruptive, impactful and harmful alternatives were effortlessly extended. The non-negotiable winter 2013-2014 deadline passed without any of the other alternatives being selected, constructed or brought online. It appears as though that the original deadline was unrealistic or overly ambitious and was not revised as it should have been.</p>	
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	<p>Throughout this project, private property owners, community members, and wildlife advocates have all questioned the urgency of this project and expressed significant concerns regarding the potential routes. From our review of the SDEIS, there is no clear</p>	<p>As required by CEQ, BPA would identify the environmentally preferred alternative in the Record of Decision (ROD). While the non-wires alternative was identified as a stop-gap measure to a transmission reliability problem (see Volume 1, Section 2.5.6, Non-Wires Alternative), it is likely not the agency's environmentally preferred. The No Action Alternative assumes that no transmission line would be built causing no impacts to the natural environment compared to a non-wires alternative.</p>

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
			environmentally preferable alternative except for the Non-Wires Alternative.	
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	As mentioned previously, this prudent delay would allow BPA to better respond to issues such as potential listing of Greater Sage-grouse, to more thoroughly assess environmental impacts of a new transmission line, to develop a mitigation approach for different issues, and to use the estimated mitigation costs as part of the route determination process. All these steps would result in a better sited, better planned project with fewer issues. Furthermore, with improvements regarding energy efficiencies and other non-wire measures, the 2025 timeframe may even be longer.	Comment noted.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	Under the arbitrary deadline imposed by BPA on E3's analysis, in order for the Non-Wires Analysis to be considered, it would have to have been constructed eight months before the comments closed on the SDEIS (August 7, 2014). We point out that, on the current schedule, the earliest possible date for any construction on BLM or Forest Service lands would be 2015, not counting administrative appeals or legal action. Even once a route is selected, BPA would still need to negotiate ROW arrangements with individual private property owners, which would take additional time. We note that the cost estimate has increased from \$55 million to \$70 million, which should give some pause for thought for the nonwire alternative.	Comment noted.
HSTP214_0024		Idaho	Also the east side of the haul road against the mountain is very solid ground with little or no marsh land. Where there may be marsh land, going with an underground wire might need to be considered.	As described above and in Volume 1, Section 2.5.7, Undergrounding, because of reliability and environmental concerns, undergrounding the transmission line has been eliminated from further detailed consideration.
HSTP214_0004		Varied	Do you have a preferred route marked?	The preferred alternative, Option 3A, is shown in pink on the project map.
HSTP214_0004		Varied	My question is what makes that route the preferred route over others?	Throughout the preparation of the draft and supplemental draft EISs, BPA studied all of the proposed routes by comparing a number of factors, including proximity of each route to wetlands, migratory bird nesting and other important bird use areas, big game habitat, scenic highways, old growth aspen stands, sage grouse habitat, residences, CERCLA investigation areas, sensitive state or federal lands, and proposed and active mines and mining leases. Also the acres of state, federal, and private land; the line lengths; number of access road miles; and cost were compared among the route alternatives. After considering all of the potential impacts from the alternatives and options, BPA identified Option 3A as the preferred alternative. This route would have the fewest impacts to most
HSTP214_0004		Varied	The least impact on what? The environment?	
HSTP214_0004		Varied	So what you're telling me, then, is, if I'm understanding what you're saying, the environmental impact is more important to you then the impact to the people involved that you	

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
HSTP214_0007	Karen and Keller Crane	Idaho	<p>are coming through?</p> <p>We were greatly surprised to hear Eric announce that the preferred route for the power line would be the one to encumber the China Hat area and our horse barn and the scenic byway. What was even more flabbergasting was to hear him say there was no special reason for this decision that it was just the way it is!</p>	<p>resources.</p> <p>Additionally, during the NEPA process, BPA received input from the Caribou County Commissioners, the Governor of Idaho, and the Governor's Office of Energy Resources (OER). A number of landowners with property along the North Alternative had contacted the Commissioners and the Governor who in turn contacted BPA. In fact, the Governor discussed the issue with Steve Wright, former BPA Administrator, and asked that he find a southern route that did not impact landowners along the North Alternative. BPA again met with Caribou County Commissioners, OER, landowners along both alternatives, including the BLM and C-TNF, and mining companies along the South Alternative. These conversations led BPA to take another look at the South Alternative and its four original options.</p>
HSTP214_0013	Al Kackley	Idaho	<p>I am in favor of the South Alternative's Option 3A for the following reasons: 1) Option 3A closely follows existing transmission lines. 2) Option 3A follows a path over lands, or near lands, that have been degraded by past mining activity. 3) While Option 3A slightly encroaches into a WMA rejecting this alternative, or all of the Southern Alternatives, would result in the building of 22-23 miles of new transmission lines and creating a new transmission corridor over areas of undeveloped and virgin lands (the Northern Alternatives).</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
HSTP214_0020	Alan Prouty	J.R. Simplot Company	<p>Simplot supports BPA's preferred Southern Alternative, Option 3A, and overall favors the southern routes. Simplot encourages BPA to refer to our previous comments (attached) related to the environmental benefits as well as managing the potential risk of contaminants from historical mining operations along any of these southern routes.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
HSTP214_0023	Kathy Rinaldi, Bob Zimmer	Greater Yellowstone Coalition	<p>GYC continues our objection to any alternative that will impact the Blackfoot River WMA. Selection of an alignment, specifically Option 3a, for the Hooper Springs Transmission Project which crosses into the WMA will create a project in which GYC's and is member's interests would be substantially harmed. In this case there are alternatives that will not impact the WMA.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
HSTP214_0035	Christine Reichgott	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10	<p>Since the additional route option 3A does not introduce new impacts or significantly affect the extent of impacts previously analyzed in the draft EIS, we would support its implementation along with mitigation measures identified in the SDEIS.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
HSTP214_0030	John	Idaho	<p>In addition, the suite of mitigation measures</p>	<p>CEQ defines mitigation as those actions that avoid the impact altogether by not taking a</p>

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
	Robison	Conservation League	described is best described as remediation actions or best management practices, but do not actually restore, keep whole, or otherwise compensate for the environmental impacts.	certain action or parts of an action; minimize impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation; rectify the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment; reduce or eliminate the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action; or compensate for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments. As described in Volume 1, Section 2.1. Transmission Line Siting, BPA seeks to avoid impacts on resources as much as possible. Because BPA's engineers work with BPA's environmental staff in identifying potential environmental and other constraints, the routes that are developed typically provide a good start at avoiding effects on sensitive environmental resources. During construction, implementation of mitigation measures limit impacts on resources. Following construction, areas temporarily disturbed during construction would be restored. In areas where disturbance is permanent such as access roads, mitigation such as seeding with native grasses would be implemented to reduce potential runoff. During transmission line maintenance, the same procedures would be implemented to protect sensitive resources. If compensatory mitigation is warranted (e.g., wetland fill would occur), BPA would develop and implement mitigation in coordination with the regulatory and land management agencies.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	We point out that the State of Idaho is in the process of developing a Mitigation Framework for Sage-grouse which is directly relevant to this situation and could be potentially helpful in offsetting impacts. Regarding impacts to the integrity of Blackfoot Wildlife Management Area, we recommend working with the State of Idaho and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game on a comprehensive mitigation strategy should Option 3A be ultimately selected.— Before a route is selected, there are several examples of conservation and restoration work in the area that BPA may be interested in reviewing in order to develop a mitigation program for the project. These examples include the work of the Sagebrush Steppe Regional Land Trust, local conservation organizations, and the Upper Blackfoot Confluence. The Upper Blackfoot Confluence is a partnership of conservation groups and private companies dedicated to restoration activities in the Blackfoot River watershed. We recommend that any mitigation strategy be integrated on a watershed scale so that benefits of any individual projects are coordinated with other restoration activities for maximum benefit.	Comments noted.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	Before any route is selected, we recommend that BPA discuss mitigation options for each alternative with the State of Idaho and the	

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
			<p>Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Wildlife resources affected by the project (both inside and outside the WMA) need to be fully mitigated. Potential avenues to discuss with IDFG include long-term habitat improvements for focal species (Yellowstone cutthroat trout, elk, mule deer, Brewer's sparrows, and Northern Leopard frog), addressing improved monitoring, noxious weed treatments, improved outreach, education and enforcement efforts, and pertain to the most recent WMA objectives.</p>	
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	<p>Resources in need of mitigation may include aspen, snags, bald eagle nesting platforms, enforcement of road closures, and increased monitoring. We note that the duration of the mitigation provided should last as long as the impacts persist.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	<p>Decommissioning unauthorized or redundant roads in the broader area could help on a number of fronts. Reduced road densities can reduce the pressure that firewood cutters place on snags that are important for wildlife. Road can also be decommissioned and be ripped to stimulate aspen growth. The C-TNF has an extensive aspen restoration program which could provide mitigation opportunities.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
HSTP214_0018	Jon Goode	Nu-West Industries, Inc.	<p>In response to Bonneville power Administration's (BPA) current proposed alternative for the Hooper Springs Transmission Project, and pursuant to our face to face meeting with BPA in our offices in Soda Springs on June 23, 2014, Agrium has the following concerns with the preferred alignment (3A) that should be taken into consideration in the EIS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues with regards to the proximity of the proposed transmission line alignments to our leases for future mining projects and real property:</li> </ul> <p>The proximity of the alignment to our potential "ultimate recovery" pit at our North Dry Ridge (NDR) mine may restrict our capability to recover all ore reserves present, as well as encumber our operational capability for operations such as blasting. Per the face to</p>	<p>BPA understands that the proposed transmission line, as a surface use, cannot restrict the full recovery of ore or encumber other mining operations. BPA plans to continue discussions with Agrium regarding the mitigation of impacts from the proposed Option 3A route adjacent to the North Dry Ridge, Wooley Valley, and Fox Hill mineral leases. BPA would work with Agrium to develop the necessary agreements to relocate BPA's transmission line to assure that future mining operations are free from danger or material interference with prospecting, mining, or processing operations, should the decision be made by BPA to proceed with construction of Option 3A.</p> <p>Regarding the borrow area described above, BPA and Agrium would develop an agreement that includes unencumbered access and re-grading or realigning the access road by BPA over the life of Agrium's remediation and mining activities should BPA proceed with construction of Option 3A.</p>

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
			<p>face meeting held on June 23, 2014, further meetings should be held with the BLM and Agrium in order to ensure that our mineral rights are fully protected with the proposed action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Future mining at our Wooley Valley and Fox hills leases may potentially be encumbered by the proposed action. If ore reserves are present beyond these leases, the ability for Agrium to recover those reserves could be limited based on the current preferred alignment.</li> <li>o BPA is proposing to use existing access road inside our Dry Valley property. This area is anticipated to be used as a growth media borrow zone. We would like to ensure that our ability to utilize this location as a borrow source for growth media remains unencumbered, which may necessitate BPA re-grading or realigning the access road at various stages over the life of our nearby remediation and mining projects.</li> </ul>	
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	<p>The SDEIS states that the transmission line would not have any effect on the eligibility of the Blackfoot River as a Wild or Scenic River. However, Option 3(A) would span the river twice. In addition, the SDEIS provides no analysis of how previous developments of this nature have or have not affected the designation of other rivers or the level of protections. Different designations (Wild, Scenic or Recreational) afford different degrees of protection. We believe that the development of the transmission line may downgrade the potential status of some reaches from “Scenic” to “Recreational” or may disqualify them entirely. The analysis needs to fully disclose these impacts and, if relevant, develop design features or alternatives to address them. The SDEIS states that BPA would consult with the National Park Service and C-TNF regarding any potential visual impacts. We believe that the time for such consultations is now, before an alternative is selected.</p>	<p>The segment of the Blackfoot River from its source to the Blackfoot Reservoir is included on the Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI), based on its outstandingly remarkable scenic and fisheries values. As the commenter notes, Option 3A would span the river twice. The first transmission line crossing of the Blackfoot River would be adjacent to a roadway bridge crossing located approximately 0.3 mile east of the intersection of Blackfoot River Road and Highway 34. Other development, including fences, buildings, and other agricultural development, along with mining activity, is also visible in the vicinity of the first crossing. The second transmission line crossing would be located approximately 9.8 miles east of the first crossing, in the vicinity of the Blackfoot River Narrows. This area is less developed, but an existing road is immediately adjacent to and visible from the river at this point. Along the length of the proposed transmission line route between the two river crossings, roads, a railroad, electrical power distribution lines, agricultural and residential development, and mining activity are all visible. As noted in Section 3.6, Water Resources, Floodplains, and Wetlands, proposed structures near the NRI-designated segment of the Blackfoot River would be located more than 250 feet from the river bank. No construction-related activities would take place adjacent to the river. Therefore, the transmission line would not alter the free-flowing nature of the Blackfoot River or have any impact on its outstandingly remarkable fisheries values as a result of either of the two proposed river crossings. As discussed above, a substantial amount of human development is visible along the proposed Option 3A route. As a result, the first transmission line crossing of the Blackfoot River would not be expected to have any appreciable impact on the river’s</p>

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
				<p>outstandingly remarkable scenic values. The second crossing would be in a less developed area; however, the line would cross perpendicular to the river at this point and quickly move out of sight beyond a ridgeline. Furthermore, the area of the Blackfoot River Narrows is topographically constrained. Thus it is anticipated that no structures would be visible from the river and the transmission line would only be visible in the immediate area of the crossing. As a result, it is unlikely that the transmission line would have any impact on the river's outstandingly remarkable scenic values at the second crossing.</p> <p>Taking the above into account, BPA anticipates that the construction and operation of the transmission line as described under Option 3A would not foreclose options to classify any portion of the NRI segment as a wild, scenic, or recreation river. BPA is currently consulting with the C-TNF regarding the NRI segment of the Blackfoot River.</p>
HSTP214_0039	Romelia Martinez	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes	<p>Construction of the proposed transmission line project and any of the alternatives will have a profound negative long-term visual effect on portions of the project that will be visible to the public because it "would create an obvious human-made or industrial element to the landscape" which will forever alter the integrity of the natural setting of the land. "The presence of a new transmission line would initially be a visual obstruction on the landscape, although over time motorists and residents would become familiar with the transmission line and associate it with the existing landscape." The Tribes HeTO does not agree that one will ever become familiar with the line and associate it with the landscape. The construction of the proposed project will also have an unnatural effect on the view of the sunset or sunrise "where the structures cross the skyline or are in the viewers', foregrounds" regardless of the effect rating illustrated in the Supplemental Draft EIS.</p>	<p>Comment noted. BPA recognizes that placement of a transmission line would have impacts on the visual quality within portions of the project area. Some impact ratings have been changed in Volume 1, Section 3.3, Visual Resources, to address this comment.</p>
HSTP214_0021	Greg Mladenka	State of Idaho, Department of Environmental Quality	<p>We encourage you to engage in discussions with DEQ in the early stages of this project so that potential impacts to water quality/aquatic resources can be taken into account and avoided if possible. Our main concerns are focused on temporary and permanent water quality impacts resulting from roads, staging areas, crossings and vegetation maintenance associated with the project.</p>	<p>As described above under Maintenance, BPA would continue to coordinate with IDEQ as applicable to address any concerns about water quality standards throughout the life of the proposed transmission line.</p>
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	<p>We believe that before a route is selected; the analysis needs to provide additional details on specific impacts to waterfowl, wildlife, the Blackfoot Wildlife Management Area, Greater Sage-grouse, trumpeter swans, sand hill cranes</p>	<p>BPA believes that it has adequately analyzed impacts to the above mentioned resources including the Blackfoot River WMA (see Volume 1, Section 3.7, Wildlife).</p>

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
			and other wildlife.	
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	The SDEIS has a map showing the Preliminary General Habitat (PGH) and Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH) but does not provide maps showing the specific locations of historic or current leks or locations where verified sage-grouse sitings have been recorded.	As part of BPA's data sharing agreement with agencies that manage wildlife (in this case IDFG), BPA does not publish locations of sage grouse leks or any other ESA listed or sensitive species' nesting or breeding areas. Additionally, publishing the location of these types of sensitive areas increases the risk of harm or disturbance from human activities.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	<p>We also note that these PGH and PPH designations are preliminary by nature and may be adjusted in the next year. The analysis of impacts to sage-grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, nesting birds, and other wildlife species should not be deferred to future surveys to be conducted after a Record of Decision is signed and prior to construction:</p> <p>Conduct pre-construction surveys for sage-grouse and Columbia sharp-tailed grouse leks in sagebrush habitats.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Pre-construction surveys would be conducted for nesting bird species in furtherance of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Forest Goals.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>Additional raptor surveys would be conducted for the Option 3A corridor prior to tree removal.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>The analysis of the potential impacts to wildlife is a key issue that should help determine which route is ultimately selected.</p>	The analyses of impacts on the wildlife species mentioned are presented in Volume 1, Section 3.7, Wildlife. The items listed above are proposed mitigation measures to further reduce potential impacts, specifically associated with construction timing and disturbance during avian mating and nesting period. If species are present in the construction areas, BPA would work with the federal and state wildlife agencies to avoid impacts to the extent practicable.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	<p>BPA seems to be underestimating the importance of doing thorough sage-grouse surveys in advance of route selection:</p> <p>If active leks are identified prior to ROW clearing activities, BPA would consult with USFWS personnel on mitigation or avoidance protocols.<sup>5</sup></p> <p>If active leks are identified prior to ROW clearing activities, it is far too late to discuss avoidance protocols. The time to identify and avoid leks is now, by selecting an alternative so the line avoids leks by several miles if at all possible.</p>	As part of the NEPA process, BPA has conducted both aerial and ground surveys for the presence of sage-grouse and other species. BPA has conducted annual sage-grouse surveys for the last two years for Option 3A coordinating with BLM, IDFG, and the C-TNF. The surveys have been done per the protocols established by BLM and IDFG. BPA has surveyed active and inactive leks in and around the proposed alignment noting that the closest active lek is more than 2 miles away and separated by roads and other agricultural-based development. Many of the historic leks in the area are no longer active and have not been active for a number of years. However, BPA realizes that birds move to new areas and has proposed to conduct pre-construction surveys to avoid impacts to lekking or nesting sage-grouse and other avian species.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation	In addition to mapping actual sage-grouse locations, the analysis should examine and	As noted above, as part of BPA's data sharing agreement with agencies that manage wildlife (in this case IDFG), BPA does not publish locations of sage grouse leks or any

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
		League	disclose the quality of sagebrush habitat along each route. The categories used (such as sagebrush-dominated) are not sufficiently detailed to provide meaningful information relative to potential impacts to sage-grouse and other wildlife. Different species of sagebrush are more significant to sage-grouse than others and the presence of native forbs and perennial grasses is a key component in assessing the quality of sagegrouse habitat. The analysis needs to provide additional information of the quality of the vegetation along each route.	other ESA listed or sensitive species' nesting or breeding areas. Additionally, publishing the location of these types of sensitive areas increases the risk of harm or disturbance from human activities. BPA has conducted general sage-grouse habitat surveys of the proposed transmission line and considered this information in its analysis. These surveys were conducted using protocols developed in concert with BLM and IDFG. It should be noted that the transmission line is outside of the Preliminary General Habitat (PGH) and Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH) for sage-grouse being developed by BLM.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	In terms of presenting information, the metrics used on p. 3-194 and 3-195 are inconsistent and make it harder to compare the impacts of different alternatives. The total area cleared is presented as an acreage amount in some alternatives while others are presented as "fewer acres", relative to the first description, instead of the actual amount (see description of Option 3A).	It was BPA's intent to provide a comparison of the impacts from the route options to the alternatives (e.g., compare options 1 through 4 to the South Alternative).
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	The SDEIS states that the potential for occurrence in both the North and South Alternatives is high. Numerous studies have highlighted the negative effects of linear infrastructure on sage-grouse persistence. As mentioned in our previous comments, allowing development of a transmission line through this landscape could result in harmful, and potentially irreversible impacts to greater sagegrouse habitat, both by damaging sage-grouse habitat through the construction and maintenance of power lines and by providing perches for raptors and other birds of prey to more easily prey on sagegrouse. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has found that transmission lines have a range of adverse impacts on sage grouse and their habitats. 75 Fed. Reg. 13909, 13928-29 (March 23, 2010). The Service's 12-month finding on sage grouse noted the many transmission line proposals pending in the western states and explained "If these lines cross sage grouse habitats, sage grouse will likely be negatively affected." Id at 13929. More recently, the BLM's Sage-grouse National Technical Team reached the same conclusion and recommended that the BLM "[m]ake priority 4	Comment noted.

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
			<p>sage-grouse habitat areas exclusion areas for new [right-of-way] permits” with narrow exceptions. Id. In addition, IM 2012-043 requires additional procedures for pending right-of-way applications that would affect more than one linear mile of sage grouse habitat. These procedures include a high-level interagency review process for any right-of-way project that would fail to “cumulatively maintain or enhance sage-grouse habitat.” The sage-grouse habitat that will be affected by proposed project routes has been acknowledged by the BLM as potentially important for protection.</p>	
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	<p>The SDEIS states that sage-grouse may be temporarily displaced from areas where the transmission line is being constructed, however, recent studies strongly suggest that, while individual sage-grouse may return for a short period of time, sage-grouse populations will not persist in these areas. The analysis needs to correct this and describe this displacement as a permanent and irretrievable effect. In addition, BPA needs to examine how to best mitigate for this loss of viable sage-grouse habitat (see section below).</p>	<p>The commenter suggests that the proposed transmission line will result in the loss of viable sage-grouse habitat; however, they have not included the studies that would support the claim. Based on the sage-grouse trends in the area, in terms of decreased number of active leks over the last few years, it is unclear that the habitat is viable. It could be suggested that the area traversed by the transmission line is marginal habitat. Sage-grouse identified in or near the proposed transmission line corridor during aerial surveys were not present during ground surveys. Given the lack of active sage-grouse activity in the area and being outside both PGH and PPH, it is unlikely that the construction and operation of the transmission line would result in population-level effects of sage-grouse in southeastern Idaho.</p>
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	<p>We are also concerned about impacts to other species of wildlife, particularly sand hill cranes, trumpeter swans and mule deer. We believe that additional analysis is needed on potential impacts and how to best avoid, minimize and mitigate them. We recommend that BPA use a Habitat Equivalency Analysis model to further quantify high quality habitats.</p>	<p>Comment noted. A habitat equivalency analysis (HEA) is typically used to determine compensatory mitigation needs, often applied to natural resource damage assessments related to hazardous releases or contamination. This approach was used by BLM, USFWS, IDFG, and Wyoming Fish and Game in the Gateway West Transmission Project to allow for the calculation of sage-grouse habitat mitigation. The Gateway West Project traverses 1,000 miles compared to the proposed 24-mile-long Hooper Springs transmission line (only approximately 5.4 miles across public lands). During consultations with BLM, USFS, USFWS, and IDFG, the need for an HEA was not suggested. As described above, BPA believes that it has adequately analyzed impacts on wildlife species (see Volume 1, Section 3.7, Wildlife). With respect to sand hill cranes and trumpeter swans, BPA proposes to install visibility enhancement devices, in compliance with the most recent APLIC and APP guidance, on the overhead ground wires to reduce the risk of collision. To avoid impacts on mule deer, construction between Dry Ridge and Upper Valley within the Blackfoot River WMA would be avoided during the elk and mule deer calving and fawning period (April 15 to July 1). When BPA makes a decision on whether to proceed or not with the Project, consultation with land management agencies regarding potential mitigation of impacts from the transmission line would occur. At that time, BPA and the consulting agencies would determine the best method to compensate for impacts to resources.</p>
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation	<p>We are also concerned about impacts to bird species that utilize the Gray’s Lake National</p>	<p>As described above and in Volume 1, Section 3.7.4, Mitigation, visibility enhancement devices would be installed on the overhead ground wires to reduce the risk of collision.</p>

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
		League	<p>Wildlife Refuge, Blackfoot Reservoir and Blackfoot River Corridor. We recommend additional analysis for how to locate, mark and orient transmission lines to minimize any collisions.</p> <p>We appreciate the consideration of design features to minimize perching and nesting by raptors, but note that the single-pole construction is not used consistently. The analysis needs to provide further rationale for why less-protective measures may be used in certain places.</p>	<p>Volume 3, Appendix H, Avian Collision Risk Assessment and Marking Plan, describes how the model was developed to identify high-risk areas along all of the alternatives and options.</p> <p>The preferred alternative, Option 3A, would consist entirely of 115-kV double-circuit steel structures.</p>
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	We note that the way the sage-grouse analysis is being conducted appears to be inconsistent with BLM Internal Memoranda for sage-grouse.	BPA coordinated with BLM and IDFG on survey design and protocol for conducting sage-grouse habitat and lek surveys.
HSTP214_0035	Christine Reichgott	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10	In addition, the final EIS should include outcomes of planned consultations with the US Fish and Wildlife Service on potential migratory birds' impacts and recommended measures to reduce risks and protect biota and habitat.	Unlike the Endangered Species Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act does not require formal or informal agency consultation. However in furtherance of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the executive order on migratory bird conservation, and the Department of Energy's Memorandum of Understanding with USFWS, BPA has been coordinating with USFWS on the development and use of an avian collision risk model and the development of a marking plan to reduce the potential risks of avian collisions.
HSTP214_0028	Jeremiah Torgesen	Idaho	Also, Option #3 would impact the bird population because it is on a bird migration route. I learned in school that Grays Lake is an important nesting grounds for sandhill cranes and a good possible location for a nesting grounds for whooping cranes as well. Whooping crane populations are low and it would be good to keep any obstructions to this population as far out of their way as possible.	Comment noted.
HSTP214_0019	Roderick Drewien	Idaho	For example, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Migratory Bird Management, Denver, flies these areas annually in September to survey cranes, and pinpoints crane locations by GPS. How could you possibly completely ignore these key data in your voluminous analysis? In addition to completely ignoring the large volume of crane data that the US Government has collected at considerable expense... your project relies on 20th century technology while attempting to meet 21st century needs.	BPA is not aware of those data nor has USFWS, during consultation with BPA, provided those data. Other data related to Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge provided by USFWS was incorporated in the analysis.
HSTP214_0037	John Chatburn	Idaho Governor's Office of Energy	While the OSC agrees that wolverines may exist within Caribou County, there is an extremely low potential that they would be adversely affected by this project. The OSC	Comment noted. If the decision is made to build the transmission line, BPA would consult with the C-TNF regarding implementation of best management practices such as timing restrictions. The proposed project would occur at a maximum elevation of 6,450 feet, which is well below the 8,200 foot elevation considered the minimum elevation for

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
		Resources	recommends that BPA use best management practices and seasonal restrictions when building the southern alternative in order to minimize impacts on this species.	wolverine denning in Idaho. Additionally, there are no known or expected den locations in the project area.
HSTP214_0037	John Chatburn	Idaho Governor's Office of Energy Resources	OSC agrees with Table 3-21 that this species will not be affected by the proposed project. There are no documented occurrences of the yellow-billed cuckoo near the proposed project area, nor any records of it occurring in Caribou County.	Comment noted.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	Additional information is needed on how herbicide spraying along the ROW may affect water quality and aquatic life, particularly when the ROW may cross the Blackfoot River and numerous intermittent streams.	As described in Volume 1, Section 2.2.8, Maintenance, and Volume 2, Vegetation Clearing, BPA's ROW vegetation management is guided by its Transmission System Vegetation Management Program EIS. BPA adopted an integrated vegetation management strategy for controlling vegetation along its transmission line ROWs in 2000. This strategy involves choosing the appropriate method for controlling the vegetation based on the type of vegetation and its density, the natural resources present at a particular site, landowner requests, regulations, and costs. BPA may use a number of different methods, including manual (hand-pulling, clippers, chainsaws), mechanical (roller-choppers, brush-hogs), biological (insects or fungus for attacking noxious weeds), and herbicides. Specific information on the types of herbicides used and measures implemented to avoid impacts to water quality can be found at <a href="http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/Vegetation_Management/">http://efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/Vegetation_Management/</a> .
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	We are concerned about impacts to the Pioneer Historic Byway Corridor and the Landon Trail and ask BPA to conduct additional analysis of impacts and ways to further reduce them.	As described in Volume 2, Cultural Resources, BPA has made every effort to gain access to lands where the Lander Trail may be located but has not been provided access. Section 3.9, Cultural Resources, describes where the North Alternative would cross the mapped Lander Trail. This portion of the road has not been evaluated for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, nor has BPA been allowed to survey for visible tracks. Additionally, because BPA cannot access the area, a viewsshed study of the road area has not been conducted.  Also discussed in Volume 2, Land Use, State Lands, the Corridor Management Plan for the Pioneer Historic Byway provides management prescriptions for preserving the visual and scenic qualities of the highway corridor. The Corridor Management Plan does not prohibit the construction of transmission lines, but rather recommends that road building and infrastructure development within the byway corridor should minimize visual impacts, and that future installation of overhead power lines along the byway corridor should be minimized. In an effort to reduce visual impacts, the transmission line would be sited to blend in with the background to the extent possible. Where the transmission line would parallel or cross Highway 34, the transmission line would be in the foreground and obvious to motorists; however, for large portions of the North Alternative corridor, the transmission line would be partially or completely obscured by topography. This would especially be true for the portion of ROW crossing state lands east of Highway 34, and the portion crossing BLM and C-TNF lands in the northeastern part of the North Alternative corridor. In this northeastern portion of the North Alternative, the use of wood pole structures from line miles 11 to 22 would further allow the line to blend in with the background.
HSTP214_0039	Romelia Martinez	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes	The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (Tribes) Heritage Tribal Office (HeTO) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the SDEIS for the	Comments noted.

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
			<p>proposed Hooper Springs Transmission Project. The proposed project located near Soda Springs, Caribou County, Idaho is within inherent ancestral lands of the Shoshone and Bannock people, and continues to hold important cultural properties, traditional hunting, fishing and gathering activities still practiced today by member of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes.</p>	
HSTP214_0039	Romelia Martinez	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes	<p>The Tribes HeTO would like a map illustrating the locations of each of the eight prehistoric sites, located near the Blackfoot River and associated tributaries (and their survey reports), relative to the project area.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The requested maps showing the site locations were included in a report provided to the Mrs. Carolyn Boyer Smith of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation in February 2014. The survey report, dated January 2104, is titled: Addendum #1: Archaeological Survey and Literature Review for the Proposed BPA Hooper Springs Transmission Project, Geotechnical Boring Locations for the South Alternative's Option 3A, Caribou County, Idaho. The references sites are shown in Appendix A. Aerial Maps Showing Geotechnical Boring Locations and Survey Coverage on Option 3A.</p>
HSTP214_0039	Romelia Martinez	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes	<p>The Tribes agrees with having cultural resource monitors present during the ground disturbing activities since the proposed project may perhaps disturb unknown cultural sites. The Tribes HeTO requests the presence of cultural resource monitors throughout the entire process during the ground disturbing activities of the proposed project and any other areas which will be impacted and not only where known cultural resources have been identified. The Tribes HeTO realizes that surveys for a major portion of the proposed project areas may have been conducted; however, this does not rule out the existence of subsurface materials; therefore, a cultural resource monitors presence will reduce the chances of disturbing unknown cultural resources.</p>	<p>Comment noted. BPA is open to discussions with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes regarding the presence of cultural resource monitors during construction of the transmission line should the decision be made by BPA to construct the line.</p>
HSTP214_0039	Romelia Martinez	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes	<p>The proposed project will involve ground disturbance; therefore, the Tribes HeTO requests the following inadvertent discovery clause incorporated into the Stop Work Order Plan. In the event of an inadvertent discovery (cultural resources and/or human remains) the Tribes HeTO requests a Stop Work Order of construction activities and immediate notification to the Tribes HeTO. Construction shall cease until proper treatment of cultural resources and/or human remains is achieved.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Should BPA make the decision to proceed with construction of the transmission line, inclusion of the above stipulation in the inadvertent discovery clause would be possible.</p>
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation	<p>As mentioned previously, there are a number of other developments in this area, including</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
		League	exploration and expansion of phosphate mines, that may have cumulative environmental effects. We are particularly concerned about water quality, habitat fragmentation, noxious weed expansion, and loss of secure habitat by wildlife. The analysis should take a more thorough look at the cumulative effects more thoroughly and develop alternatives that avoid, minimize and mitigate these impacts.	
HSTP214_0039	Romelia Martinez	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes	The Shoshone and Bannock Tribes HeTO value their cultural resources and rich history of this land which has been and currently still is being subjected to intrusive destruction. "Cultural resources in Caribou County have been and are being cumulatively affected because of past and present development activities... Cumulative impacts associated with these activities include disturbance of cultural sites, reduction of the cultural integrity of certain sites, and removal of cultural artifacts. Construction of the North Alternative or South Alternative and all route options could contribute incrementally, albeit in a very minor way, to these cumulative impacts." Most of the cumulative effects that occurred during past times were not applicable to present laws enacted exclusively for the protection of cultural resources. The Tribes HeTO hopes you will take this into consideration because the proposed project is contributing to which you describe as "Construction of the North Alternative or South Alternative and all route options could contribute incrementally, albeit in a very minor way, to these cumulative impacts.", is really major when all (past and present) effects are combined.	Comment noted. Text has been modified in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2, Cumulative Impacts Analysis, to address this comment.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	The USFWS is expected to make a determination on whether to list sage-grouse under the ESA in 2015. If sage-grouse are listed, substantial restrictions on infrastructure developments in sage-grouse habitat may be enacted. If sage-grouse are not listed, it will be because of the creation and implementation of a comprehensive state plan to recover the species. This state plan will likely include some restrictions on infrastructure development in sage-grouse habitat, particularly in areas identified as Core or	Comment noted.

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
			<p>Important. Because of previous habitat disturbance in this area, these plans may treat this area as General Habitat which is less restrictive and which may allow infrastructure of this nature in this location.</p> <p>A component of Idaho's Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan is a Sage-grouse Mitigation Framework for projects that impact sage-grouse habitat, including those in General Habitat. This Mitigation Framework is still in development but has been submitted to the BLM and USFWS as part of Idaho's Sage-grouse Alternative currently under review. This is a voluntary program but may have benefits over other mitigation programs. The concept is that developers could use this framework to offset impacts to sage-grouse habitat. Depending on the quality of the habitat and the nature of disturbance, mitigation funds could be assessed and directed to sage-grouse habitat improvement projects in Core and Important Areas. We are including a copy of the Mitigation Framework as a separate attachment. We would be happy to discuss this program with BPA for both this project and other BPA projects that may impact sage-grouse habitat.</p>	
HSTP214_0035	Christine Reichgott	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10	Because the project will require a number of permits, including Clean Water Act Section 401, 402 and 404 (p. 4-6), the final EIS should include information on the status of those permit applications and measures to protect water quality.	Volume 1, Section 4.9, Clean Water Act, describes BPA's intent to comply with all sections of the Clean Water Act. If a decision is made to construct the transmission line, BPA would apply for and obtain all necessary permits.
HSTP214_0019	Roderick Drewien	Idaho	I believe it is time for BPA to modernize the approach for this proposal and reduce conflicts with the citizens of Caribou County, wildlife, and other uses.	Comment noted.
HSTP214_0020	Alan Prouty	J.R. Simplot Company	Simplot remains open to working with BPA and Lower Valley on providing access onto Simplot-owned land to assist with the successful completion of this project.— Simplot remains a strong advocate for the construction of the Hooper Valley Transmission Project, regardless of the ultimate route chosen. Although we believe it is most appropriate that a project intended to serve the public is better placed on public land	Comment noted.

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
			where possible, Simplot is committed to provide the rights to use Simplot land if necessary to build the infrastructure that will improve the economic sustainability of this region.	
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	We appreciate the development of a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement to further analyze alternatives and describe impacts of this project.	Comment noted. Thank you.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	By effectively disqualifying the Non-Wires Alternative from further consideration with a now-arbitrary time frame, we believe that BPA is in danger of proceeding in an arbitrary and capricious manner. We believe that now is the best time for BPA to review its analysis and address these oversights in a Supplemental SDEIS.	As described above, BPA has evaluated a full range of reasonable alternatives, including evaluating the non-wires alternatives in the recently released supplemental draft EIS. The non-wires alternatives have been eliminated from further detailed consideration because these alternatives could at most defer, but not eliminate, the need to construct a transmission line.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	While the Hooper Springs scenario is greatly different, there may be some similarities, particularly with regard to mitigation and enhancement strategies. Please incorporate the RAC's recommendations with our comments.	Comment noted.
HSTP214_0034	Allison O'Brien	U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance	The Department of the Interior has reviewed the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Hooper Springs Transmission Project, Caribou County, Idaho. The Department has no comments on the document at this time.	Comment noted.
HSTP214_0035	Christine Reichgott	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10	In our comments on the draft EIS in April 2013, the EPA expressed concerns about the proposed project due to its potential impacts to water, land use and farmlands, and vegetation and wildlife resources. We appreciate BPA responses to our comments in the SDEIS. In particular, we are pleased with BPA's anticipated measures to protect water resources and avoid sensitive resource areas, such as the Blackfoot River Wildlife Management Area and wetlands, as much as possible.	Comment noted. Thank you.
HSTP214_0035	Christine Reichgott	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10	Based on our review, we believe that the SDEIS provides adequate discussion of the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed action, including the additional route option 3A. The EPA, therefore, has rated the SDEIS as LO (Lack of Objections). An explanation of this rating is enclosed for your reference.	Comment noted. Thank you.

## Record of Decision

Letter #	Owner	Organization	Comment	Response
HSTP214_0037	John Chatburn	Idaho Governor's Office of Energy Resources	The OER appreciates Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) willingness to explore the southern routes as alternatives moving forward with this project. Through hard work and collaboration with the OER, BPA drafted the southern alternatives that are preferable to the OER because they have the least amount of impact on the citizens and resources within the project area.	Comment noted. Thank you.
HSTP214_0037	John Chatburn	Idaho Governor's Office of Energy Resources	The Idaho Department of Lands, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Idaho State Historic Preservation office do not have specific comments on the SDEIS and will continue to be engaged in the National Environmental Policy Act process for this project.	Comment noted.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	Furthermore, Guideline 2 of the Caribou Forest Plan for sage-grouse states that management activities should consider proximity to active lek locations during site-specific project planning. Those within 10 miles of an active sage-grouse lek should be considered further for suitability as grouse habitat. Despite one passage in the SDEIS stating that the Caribou-Targhee contained no sage-grouse habitat, a sage-grouse was seen on C-TNF land in 2007.	Comment noted.
HSTP214_0030	John Robison	Idaho Conservation League	<p>We note that Guideline 5 for the Caribou National Forest specifically states that before new corridors are approved, consideration should be given to uprating, multiple circuiting, among other measures.<sup>6</sup></p> <p>It appears as though some of the alternatives examined in the 1998 Lower Valley Power and Light Transmission System Reinforcement Project EIS7 could apply to this situation. This could include double hanging the Palisades-Snake Line.</p>	As described above, one of the main issues in this service area is that the entire load is currently served from Goshen Substation. The two main source lines into the area are in the same ROW for more than 20 miles leaving the region susceptible to loss of the entire load from a single event (such as a brush fire or a lightning strike). The proposed Project provides a second source line into the area that would be able to support at least some of the load during a catastrophic event. Uprating or multiple circuiting existing ROW would not solve the problem where the entire region is served from one substation. For this reason, BPA determined that the Hooper Springs Transmission Project (building a new line) is needed to provide reliable service to the area.