Environmental Assessment
for the
Rocky Mountain Power 345-kV Goshen to Kinport Transmission Line Right-of-Way Grants Project

Location: Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation, Bingham, Bannock, and Power Counties, Idaho

Prepared For:

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
P.O. Box 306
Pima Drive
Fort Hall, ID 83203

U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs
Fort Hall Agency
P.O. Box 220
Fort Hall, ID 83203-0220

U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation
Upper Snake Field Office
470 22nd Street
Heyburn, ID 83336

Prepared By:

Tetra Tech, Inc.
4750 West 2100 South, Suite 400
Salt Lake City, UT 84120

September 2022

DISCLAIMER STATEMENT AND SIGNATURE

Tetra Tech, Inc. has been contracted by Rocky Mountain Power to prepare this Environmental Assessment. Tetra Tech, Inc. declares no financial or other interest in the outcome of the proposed project pursuant to the requirements of 40 Code of Federal Regulations Section 1506.5(b)(4).

Signature

9-27-2022

Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

APPENDICES

ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

Acronyms/Abbreviations	Definition
%	percent
AFRMP	American Falls Resource Management Plan
APE	Area of Potential Effect
APLIC	Avian Power Line Interaction Committee
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DM	Departmental Manual
DOI	United States Department of the Interior
E.	East
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EO	Executive Order
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FPI	Facility Point Inspection
GAP	Gap Analysis Project
I-86	Interstate Highway 86
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation
ITAs	Indian Trust Assets
kV	kilovolt
PM	particulate matter
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NESC	National Electrical Safety Code
NHD	National Hydrography Dataset
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NOA	Notice of Availability
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWI	National Wetland Inventory
O&M	operations and maintenance
R.	Range

Acronyms/Abbreviations	Definition
Reclamation	Bureau of Reclamation
RMP	Rocky Mountain Power formerly Utah Power and Light
ROW	right-of-way
S.	South
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
T.	Township
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
U.S.C.	United States Code
USFO	Upper Snake Field Office
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
WUS	wetlands and other waters of the United States

1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to analyze and disclose the environmental consequences of two Proposed Actions related to the segment of the existing 345-kilovolt (kV) Goshen to Kinport transmission line that is on the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation (Reservation), from the northern Reservation boundary to the Kinport Substation in Idaho (**Figure 1**). The approximately 37-mile transmission line is owned and operated by Rocky Mountain Power (RMP; formerly Utah Power and Light Company), a wholly owned subsidiary of PacifiCorp. The two Proposed Actions are: (1) renew the RMP right-of-way (ROW) grant for the segment on the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' tribal and allotted trust lands, administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA); and (2) grant a new ROW to RMP for the segment on lands administered by the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) Upper Snake Field Office (USFO). The ROW renewal and new ROW grant would allow RMP to continue to access, operate, and maintain the transmission line.

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA) requires federal agency officials to consider environmental consequences of their proposed actions before decisions are made. It was determined through initial agency coordination that the BIA would act as the lead agency and Reclamation would be a cooperating agency for NEPA purposes.

This EA was prepared to comply with NEPA requirements, the Indian Affairs NEPA Guidebook (59 IAM 3-H; BIA 2012), the Reclamation NEPA Handbook (Reclamation 2012), and other regulations and guidelines, as applicable. This EA presents the two Proposed Actions and the No Action Alternative and discloses the environmental consequences that may result from each. As a result of the analyses presented herein, the BIA and Reclamation will decide to either proceed with the Proposed Actions, proceed with the No Action Alternative, or direct that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be completed. If the Proposed Actions are selected, Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSIs) would be issued and signed by the BIA and Reclamation.

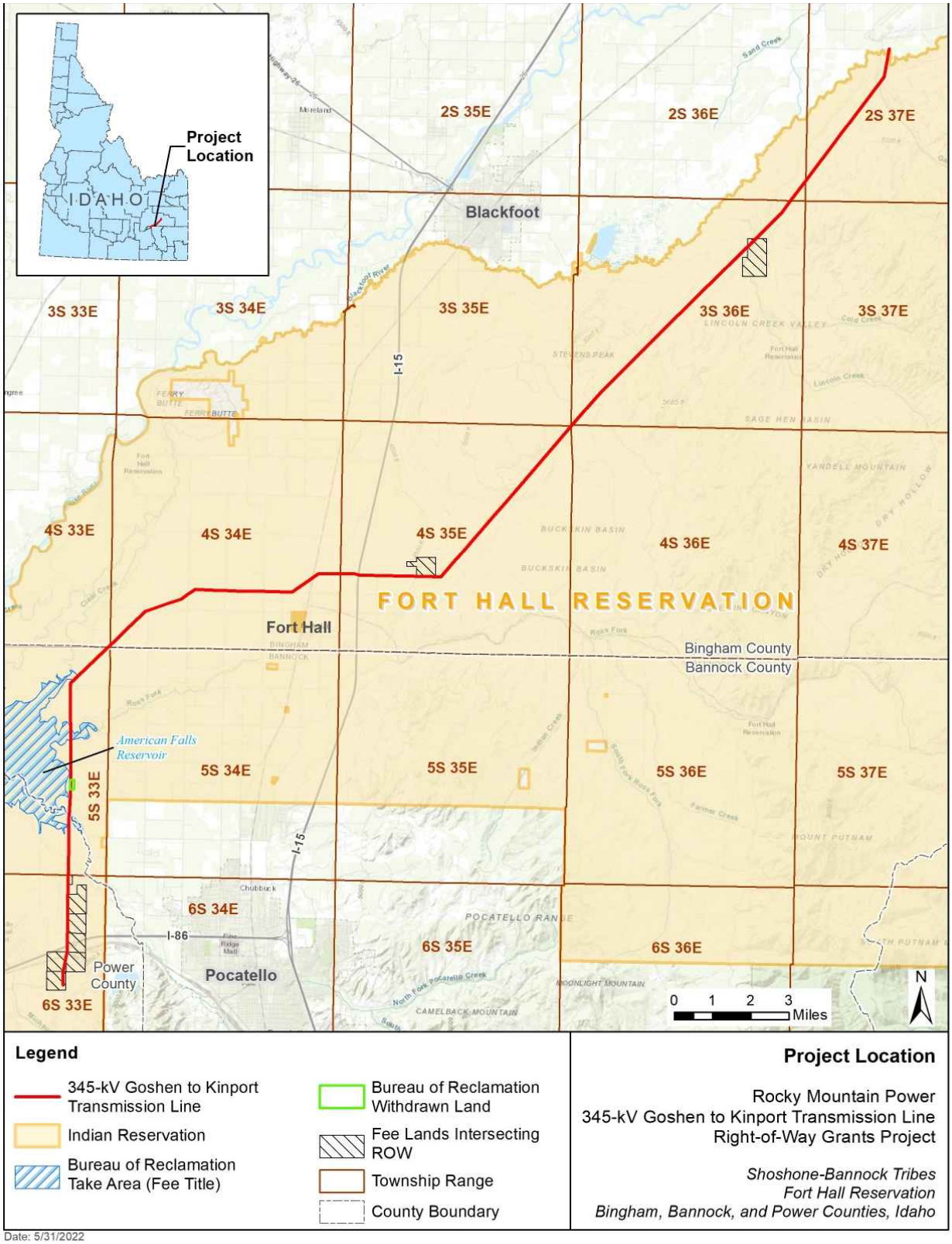
1.2 BACKGROUND AND LOCATION

The ROW of the 37-mile transmission line includes 170 steel structures and encompasses approximately 624 acres within the Reservation. The transmission line extends southwesterly from the northern boundary of the Reservation at the Blackfoot River to the Kinport Substation near the city of Pocatello, Idaho (**Figure 1)**. The ROW is described below according to land administrator or landowner.

1.2.1 Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' Tribal and Allotted Trust Lands Administered by BIA

Portions of the transmission line and associated ROW on Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' tribal and allotted trust lands are administered by the BIA. The original ROW on Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' tribal and allotted trust lands was granted by the BIA on August 13, 1973, for a 50-year term. The easement was granted for the construction of a 345-kV steel structure transmission line over, across, in and upon Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' tribal and allotted trust lands located in Bingham, Bannock, and Power counties, Idaho within the Reservation.

Figure 1. Project Location



1.2.1.1 Location

Approximately 33.2 miles of the transmission line is on Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' tribal and allotted trust lands within the Reservation. The associated ROW on Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' tribal and allotted trust lands is 140 feet wide, plus additional areas for guy line anchors, and encompasses approximately 561.5 acres in the following area:

Boise Principal Meridian, Idaho
Township (T.) 2 South (S.), Range (R.) 36 East (E.),
Section 36;
T. 2 S., R. 37 E.,
Sections 16, 17, 20, 29, 30, and 31;
T. 3 S., R. 35 E.,
Section 36;
T. 3 S., R. 36 E.,
Sections 1, 2, 10, 11, 15, 16, 20, 21, 29, 30, and 31;
T. 4 S., R. 33 E.,
Section 36;
T. 4 S., R. 34 E.,
Sections 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, and 32;
T. 4 S., R. 35 E.,
Sections 1, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 28, 29, and 30;
T. 5 S., R. 33 E.,
Sections 1, 2, 11, 12, 13, 14, 23, 24, 25, 26, 35, and 36; and
T. 6 S., R. 33 E.,
Section 1.

1.2.2 Reclamation-Administered Lands

Portions of the transmission line and proposed ROW are on Reclamation-administered lands within the Reservation (**Figure 1**). Although the transmission line was constructed in the 1970s, neither Reclamation nor RMP could locate a ROW grant for the portion of the transmission line on Reclamation-administered lands; therefore, a new ROW grant must be obtained.

The Reclamation-administered lands within the Reservation are either lands that have been withdrawn from public entry or are lands that were acquired in fee (**Figure 1**), both for the purposes of the American Falls Reservoir. The American Falls Reservoir is one of five reservoirs completed as part of the Minidoka Project, which was authorized by the Secretary of the Interior in 1904 pursuant to the Reclamation Act of 1902 to store flow of the Snake River system for irrigation use and electricity production. American Falls Reservoir and associated Reclamation-administered lands are operated to accommodate a wide variety of resource needs in accordance with existing federal laws and Reclamation policy; however, the primary operation strategy is storage of water for irrigation of lands. Further background on the Reclamation-administered lands within the Reservation is provided below.

Withdrawn Lands

On July 5, 1921, the Secretary of the Interior ordered federal lands located within the Reservation in Idaho to be withdrawn from public entry and to be used for the American Falls Reservoir site under the Minidoka Project. This withdrawal was ordered pursuant to Section 13 of the Act of June 25, 1910 (36 Stat. 855), which states that "…the Secretary of the Interior is authorized, at his discretion, to reserve from location, entry, sale, allotment, or other appropriations any lands within any Indian reservation, valuable for power or reservoir sites, or which may be necessary for use in connection with any irrigation project heretofore or hereafter to be authorized by

Congress…". In accordance with Article 4 of the 1868 Fort Bridger Treaty, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have the right to hunt on unoccupied lands of the United States, which would include the withdrawn lands.

Fee Lands

Section I of the Act of May 9, 1924 (43 Stat. 117) authorized the acquisition of additional lands within the Reservation for the American Falls Reservoir. The lands involved were those to be inundated by the impounding of 1,700,000 acre-feet of water within said proposed reservoir, together with a five-foot freeboard. Under the 1924 Act, the lands were acquired in fee, "subject to the reservation of an easement to the Fort Hall Indians to use the said lands for grazing, hunting, fishing, and gathering of wood, and so forth, the same as obtained prior to this enactment, in so far as such uses shall not interfere with the use of said lands for reservoir purposes."

1.2.2.1 Location

Approximately 0.7 miles of the transmission line is on Reclamation-administered lands within the Reservation in Bannock and Power counties, Idaho. The associated ROW is 140 feet wide, and encompasses approximately 12.0 acres in the following area:

Boise Principal Meridian, Idaho
T. 5 S., R. 33 E.,
Sections 13, 14, 24, 25, and 26.

1.2.3 Other Fee Lands

Portions of the transmission line and associated ROW are on other fee lands within the Reservation. These are lands that are owned by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, individual Indian(s), or individual non-Indian(s), but excludes those lands described in Section 1.2.2 that are administered by Reclamation, and which would be under a separate ROW grant. The original BIA ROW grant for the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' tribal and allotted trust lands, issued August 13, 1973, for a 50-year term (see Section 1.2.2 above), covered these other fee lands.

1.2.3.1 Location

Approximately 2.8 miles of the transmission line is on these other fee lands within the Reservation (excluding Reclamation-administered fee lands), in Bingham and Power counties, Idaho (**Figure 1**). The associated ROW is 140 feet wide and encompasses approximately 50.3 acres in the following area:

Boise Principal Meridian, Idaho
T. 3 S., R. 36 E.,
Section 11;
T. 4 S., R. 35 E.,
Section 21; and
T. 6 S., R. 33 E.,
Sections 1, 12, 13, and 14.

1.3 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' and the BIA's purpose and need for action is to consider RMP's application to renew its existing ROW grant in accordance with 25 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 169. The original easement granted by the BIA for the ROW will expire on August 13, 2023, and must be renewed for RMP to access and continue to operate and maintain the transmission line.

Reclamation's purpose and need for action is to consider RMP's application for a ROW grant in accordance with 43 United States Code (U.S.C.) 387 and 43 CFR 429. Although the transmission line has existed for nearly 50 years, documentation of the ROW grant could not be located. The ROW grant would provide authorization for

RMP to use Reclamation-administered lands for the transmission line and would allow RMP to access and continue to operate and maintain the transmission line.

RMP's purpose and need is to renew the existing BIA ROW and obtain a new ROW grant from the Reclamation, so that RMP can access and continue to operate and maintain the transmission line and provide reliable power to its customers.

1.4 DECISIONS TO BE MADE

The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes and the BIA will decide whether to approve the ROW renewal application for the transmission line across Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' tribal and allotted trust lands, and if approved, the applied terms and conditions.

Reclamation will decide whether to approve the ROW application for the transmission line across Reclamation-administered lands, and if approved, the applied terms and conditions.

1.5 RELEVANT STATUTES, REGULATIONS, AND PLANS

The BIA acts on requests for ROWs across Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' tribal and allotted trust lands using the authority in 25 U.S.C. 323-328 and 25 CFR 169.

Reclamation acts on requests for ROWs across Reclamation-administered lands using the authority in 43 U.S.C. 387 and regulations under 43 CFR 429. Management of Reclamation-administered lands around American Falls Reservoir is guided by the American Falls Resource Management Plan (AFRMP) (Reclamation 1995). However, Reclamation-administered lands within the Reservation are not within the scope of the AFRMP and management of these lands is coordinated directly with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (Reclamation 1995).

This document complies with the updated Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ's) Regulations for Implementing Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508, effective September 14, 2020) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) NEPA regulations (43 CFR 46). In addition, this EA follows the implementing procedures in DOI Departmental Manual (DM) 516, the Indian Affairs NEPA Guidebook (59 IAM 3-H; BIA 2012), and the Reclamation NEPA Handbook (Reclamation 2012). Major laws and regulations that apply to the Proposed Actions include the Endangered Species Act (ESA), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Executive Order (EO) 13007 Indian Sacred Sites, Secretarial Order 3175 Department Responsibilities for Indian Trust Assets (ITAs), and EO 12898 Environmental Justice.

The proposals were reviewed for conformance with applicable Shoshone-Bannock Tribes land use and management plans, including: Rangeland Assessment and Range Management Plan (Resource Concepts, Inc. 2010), Woodland Management Plan (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2008), Fire Management Plan (Fire Logistics, Inc. 2000), Draft Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2017-2022 (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2017), Land Use Policy Ordinance (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2010), Livestock Ordinance (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2002), Waste Management Act (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2009), and Noxious and Invasive Plant Management Plan (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2021a). The Proposed Actions are consistent with the management direction in these plans. See Appendix A for a summary of the conformance review.

1.6 SCOPING, TRIBAL CONSULTATION, AND PUBLIC INPUT

Two scoping letters were sent out on February 14, 2020, and September 2, 2020, to notify and seek comments from the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes and allottees. No comments were received.

The Notice of Availability (NOA) for the EA and BIA FONSI were posted at the BIA Fort Hall Agency and Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Offices on September 29, 2022. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes also posted notice through their social media outlet (Facebook). The NOA was published in the Bingham, Bannock, and Power counties newspapers and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes newspaper on September 29, 2022. Reclamation posted the EA and Reclamation FONSI at the USFO and on their website in October 2022. No public meetings were held because the transmission line already exists and will remain in its current location, the lack of public interest to date, and the administrative nature of the proposals. The NOA for the EA, BIA FONSI, and Reclamation FONSI were published at the same time as the decision to proceed. The time between the NOA and the time when the Proposed Actions may be implemented will correspond to the 30-day appeal period on the decision to proceed as required in 25 CFR 2.7.

1.7 ISSUES CONSIDERED FOR ANALYSIS

Through scoping, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation identified the following issues for analysis in this EA:

- Would native plant communities be affected by continued operation and maintenance (O&M) of the transmission line, such as through changes to composition and vigor of the vegetation in the ROW, and potential spread of noxious weeds and other invasive, non-native species?
- Would aquatic resources be affected by continued O&M of the transmission line?
- Would the continued O&M of the transmission line result in disturbance or injury/mortality of bald eagles, golden eagles, and other migratory birds and other high interest wildlife, or affect their habitat?
- Would the continued O&M of the transmission line affect Ute ladies'-tresses (threatened species), yellow-billed cuckoo (threatened species), monarch butterfly (candidate species) or their habitat?
- Would the continued O&M of the transmission line affect historic properties, specifically sites listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)?
- Would the continued O&M of the transmission line affect Indian Sacred Sites?
- Would the continued O&M of the transmission line affect ITAs?
- Would the renewed and new ROW grants and associated continued O&M of the transmission line cause disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations?

Appendix A presents a review of other principal components of the environment not carried forward for further analysis and provides rationale for why they would not be affected by the Proposed Actions.

2.0 ALTERNATIVES

This chapter describes the Proposed Actions and the No Action Alternative. The Proposed Actions satisfy the purpose and need of the proposals, as described in Section 1.3. The No Action Alternative (Chapter 3) was analyzed because it provides useful baseline for comparison of environmental effects and demonstrates the consequences of not meeting the purpose and need associated with the proposals. No other alternatives were considered because the transmission line already exists and has been operating at this location for nearly 50 years. The proposals to continue O&M of the transmission line within the associated ROW will either be authorized by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation (Proposed Actions) or it will not (No Action Alternative).

2.1 PROPOSED ACTIONS

2.1.1 Proposed Action for BIA ROW

The BIA Proposed Action has been designed to satisfy the purpose and need identified for the Proposed Action (Section 1.3). The Proposed Action is for the BIA to issue a renewal of the existing ROW grant that includes 561.5 acres on Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' tribal and allotted trust lands as described in Section 1.2.1. The duration of the ROW grant would be a 25-year term with an option to renew. For the 50.3 acres of the ROW on fee lands that are not Reclamation-administered (as described in Section 1.2.3), a ROW would be negotiated with the individual landowners.

RMP would continue to access the BIA-administered ROW to perform O&M activities on the transmission line over the duration of the ROW grant. See Section 2.1.3 for further details on the O&M activities that would be performed.

2.1.2 Proposed Action for Reclamation ROW

The Reclamation Proposed Action has been designed to satisfy the purpose and need identified for the Proposed Action (Section 1.3). The Proposed Action is for Reclamation to issue/approve a new ROW grant that includes 12.0 acres of withdrawn and fee lands, as described in Section 1.2.2. The duration of the ROW grant would be a 25-year term with an option to renew.

RMP would continue to access the Reclamation-administered ROW to perform O&M activities on the transmission line over the duration of the ROW grant. See Section 2.1.3 for further details on the O&M activities that would be performed.

2.1.3 RMP Future Operations and Maintenance Activities

RMP would continue to access the ROW to perform O&M activities on the transmission line over the duration of the ROW grants described above. These activities would be the same regardless of land administrator or landowner (i.e., BIA and Reclamation-administered portions of the ROW, and other fee lands).

RMP follows their *Overview of Operation & Maintenance Activities for Electric Transmission and Distribution Power Lines* document (RMP 2011) when conducting work on their electric transmission lines and distribution power lines. Under the renewed and new ROW grants, RMP would continue to conduct the following types of O&M activities:

- Routine O&M activities (includes inspections, corrective maintenance, and vegetation management)
- Major corrective maintenance activities, if needed
- Emergency maintenance activities, if needed.

There would be no new surface disturbance associated with the renewed and new ROW grants. Any disturbance associated with future O&M activities would be confined to the ROW, which was previously disturbed during construction of the transmission line. RMP would continue to use existing roads that have previously been approved for access to gain entry to the ROW, transmission line, and associated structures (e.g., poles and guy wires). Overland access from these roads would occur as needed to reach specific structures requiring O&M activities. Overland access would not require grading, vegetation removal, or other improvements. RMP would obtain approvals from the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation before implementing O&M activities.

2.1.3.1 Routine Operations and Maintenance Activities

Routine O&M activities include inspections, corrective maintenance, and vegetation management. RMP performs these activities to identify and repair deficiencies. All activities would be confined to the ROW and would not require new ground disturbance. However, small areas around structures may be re-disturbed within the ROW. Re-disturbance may also occur from vegetation management, but such activity would occur infrequently because most of the vegetation in the ROW is naturally low in stature.

Inspections

Visual Assurance Inspection – This inspection occurs at a frequency ranging from twice per year to every other year and is conducted on the ground or by air (i.e., helicopter, airplane, and/or drone). The purpose of the inspection is to assess the condition of the transmission line and hardware to determine if repairs or replacement is needed, or if other maintenance or modification is required. Encroachments and safety hazards are noted.

Detail Inspection – This inspection occurs every 1 to 10 years on the ground to assess structures and to determine if repairs or maintenance are required. Minor repairs to structures may be made during this inspection, if necessary. These inspections are intended to be careful visual inspections accomplished by visiting each structure as well as inspecting spans between structures. These precautionary inspections are intended to and will be adequate to identify non-conformance with National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) where applicable, PacifiCorp Construction Standards, infringement by other utilities or individuals, defects, potential hazards, and deterioration of the facilities which need to be corrected to maintain safe and reliable service. Items that are found to be non-conforming are considered out of compliance and will be noted and entered into PacifiCorp's Facility Point Inspection (FPI) system.

Lattice/Steel Structure Inspection – Each structure is inspected for crumbling foundations, rust, bent members, and any equipment issues that do not meet NESC.

Outage Cause Inspection – In the event of an outage or interruption in the distribution, an inspection is conducted by air (i.e., helicopter, airplane, and/or drone) or from the ground to determine the cause and need for repairs. This inspection may take place at any time of the day or night and result in emergency maintenance.

No wetlands would be entered or crossed by vehicles during inspections. Where the ROW crosses wetlands, inspections would be conducted from existing roads, from the air, or from the ground, either on foot or from a distance using binoculars.

Corrective Maintenance

If the inspections described above identify issues, then corrective maintenance activities are scheduled. The typical corrective maintenance work performed is the repair or replacement of individual components (no new ground disturbance). The work is performed by a relatively small crew and is usually conducted within a few hours to a few days. Examples of activities include insulator replacement and cross arm repair or lowering.

Vegetation Management and Noxious Weed Control

Vegetation management facilitates establishment of sustainable, low-growing plant communities that are compatible with transmission lines and discourages undesirable tall vegetation that could pose safety, access,

fuel load, or reliability problems. In addition to vegetation management, noxious weed control is conducted as needed. For vegetation management and noxious weed control, a combination of manual, mechanical, and herbicide control methods may be used. The Best Management Practices (BMPs) in Appendix B would be implemented, including for herbicide use. Over time, the vegetation management activities allow low-growing vegetation to dominate the ROW, inhibit tall-growing vegetation or incompatible species, and reduce the need for future treatments. This also reduces the need to disturb soils.

2.1.3.2 Major Corrective Maintenance Activities

Major corrective maintenance activities have not occurred on the transmission line in the past, and RMP does not anticipate the need for such activities to take place during the proposed 25-year term of the ROW grants. Major corrective maintenance activities, such as replacement or rebuilding, are relatively large-scale efforts that occur infrequently and encompass more work than routine or emergency maintenance. Examples include multiple structure relocation or replacement and guy wire anchor replacement. In the unlikely event major corrective maintenance is required, RMP would notify the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation during the planning phase and prior to initiating any of the work. Work may involve multiple structures, larger work crews, heavy equipment, and may take weeks to months to complete. Most major corrective maintenance would include grading, excavation, disturbing soils, and/or vegetation removal or crushing, and would result in re-disturbing areas in the ROW. New access to or along the ROW could be required. However, if any work is proposed outside the ROW, RMP would contact the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation for approval and conduct any required NEPA analysis prior to initiating the activity.

2.1.3.3 Emergency Maintenance Activities

Emergency maintenance is conducted to repair natural hazard, fire, or man-caused damages. Such work is conducted only when required to eliminate a safety hazard, prevent imminent damage, or to restore service. RMP must respond quickly in emergencies to restore power and may be required to take actions beyond those described above. This may include construction of new access routes or reworking access roads. RMP would put forth good-faith efforts to notify the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation of the emergency and actions taken to respond to the emergency as soon as possible. RMP would implement appropriate and approved restoration or remedial measures. RMP would be responsible for the mutually agreed upon measures. Proper implementation of routine O&M activities by RMP would minimize the need for most emergency repairs.

2.1.4 Best Management Practices

RMP is committed to operating and maintaining its transmission lines in ways that minimize effects to the environment. While conducting O&M activities on the existing transmission line, RMP and its contractors would implement the BMPs that are described in Appendix B. The measures include a commitment to avoid potential effects to Ute ladies'-tresses.

2.2 NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action Alternative, the BIA and Reclamation would not issue the renewal or new ROW grants for the existing transmission line. If the ROW grants are not authorized for the existing transmission line, RMP would no longer be authorized to operate and maintain the transmission line and would abandon and later remove the transmission line, structures, and related equipment in accordance with the requirements of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, Reclamation, and individual landowners as applicable. The No Action Alternative would not satisfy RMP's purpose and need to provide reliable power to its customers.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The scope of this EA is defined by the Proposed Actions described in Chapter 2, as compared with the No Action Alternative. This EA discloses the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Actions, focusing on the issues identified during scoping (see Section 1.7). Per the Indian Affairs NEPA Guidebook (59 IAM 3-H; BIA 2012), only the principal components of the human environment (i.e., resources) that are present or would be affected by the Proposed Actions are analyzed in this EA. Indian Trust Assets, Indian Sacred Sites, Environmental Justice, Cultural Resources, and Threatened and Endangered Species are analyzed because the Reclamation NEPA Handbook (Reclamation 2012) recommends that these critical resources be considered, even if there are no effects or only minor effects. For the remaining resources/principal components of the human environment, a brief statement of why the components would not be affected by the Proposed Actions is provided in Appendix A.

The affected environment considered in this EA is the 624-acre ROW for the portion of the Goshen to Kinport transmission line (37 miles) on the Reservation from the northern Reservation boundary to the Kinport Substation. The ROW is located along the border of the Snake River Plain and Northern Basin and Range ecoregions (USEPA 2013). The southwestern and most northern portion of the ROW in the Snake River Plain is characterized by nearly level river terraces and flood plains along the Snake and Blackfoot rivers, except where the ROW traverses bluffs (including Cedar Butte) above the Fort Hall Bottoms along the Snake River. The northeastern portion of the ROW in the Northern Basin and Range ecoregion is characterized by semiarid hills and low mountains. Land use in and around the ROW is primarily rangeland and wildlife habitat with the remainder being agricultural (includes irrigated crop fields, hay, and pasture) and developed uses. Some rural residential areas are present. Past and present disturbances are primarily gravel and paved roads and highways, railroads, and other utility corridors. Several gravel/borrow pits and industrial uses are present near Interstate Highway 86 (I-86). The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes manage the area under their Woodland Management Plan (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2008) and Range Management Plan (Resource Concepts Inc. 2010).

The analysis of environmental impacts in this chapter is based on the best available data. Knowledge of the area and professional judgment are used to make inferences where data are incomplete or unavailable. Acreages and other measurements used in the analyses are estimates for comparison and analytical purposes only. Readers should not infer that they reflect exact measurements or precise calculations.

When evaluating environmental consequences in this EA, the potential degree of effects that may occur are described using the following terms:

- *Beneficial* – A change that would improve the resource condition, use, or value compared to its current condition, use, or value.
- *No Effect* – No change to a resource condition, use, or value.
- *Negligible Effect* – A localized degradation to a resource condition, use, or value that is not measurable or perceptible.
- *Minor Effect* – A measurable or perceptible and localized degradation of a resource's condition, use, or value that is of little consequence or significance.
- *Moderate Effect* – A localized degradation of a resource condition, use, or value that is measurable and has consequences.
- *High Effect* – A measurable degradation of a resource condition, use, or value that is large and/or widespread and could have permanent consequences for the resource.
- *Short-term Effect* – An effect that would result in the change of a resource condition, use, or value lasting less than one year.
- *Long-term Effect* – An effect that would result in the change of a resource condition, use, or value lasting more than one year and probably much longer.

3.1 CONSIDERATION OF OTHER FEDERAL ACTIONS

There is another Shoshone-Bannock Tribes action planned in the affected environment, which is the Portneuf pump replacement project funded by a Reclamation WaterSmart Grant. A pump would be replaced at the Portneuf pumping plant to allow flexibility in responding to irrigation demands and river conditions. The Portneuf pumping plant is 0.4 miles to the east of the ROW. None of the steel structures for the transmission line are near the pump station, and RMP does not have any maintenance work planned on this section of the transmission line that would occur at the same time as the pump work. Consequently, there would be no overlap in construction noise or disturbance from the two actions. For these reasons, the Portneuf pump replacement project would not interact with the Proposed Actions to cause additional environmental effects, and therefore it is not addressed further in this EA. No other federal actions have been identified for consideration of effects.

The proposed activities involve operating and maintaining an existing transmission line with occasional human presence and vehicle/equipment use in the ROW. Other similar activities occurring within and near the ROW, include driving, agricultural practices, hunting/fishing and other recreational use.

3.2 VEGETATION

The analysis area for potential effects to vegetation is the area within the 624-acre ROW described in Section 1.2. Plant species federally listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA are analyzed in Section 3.5.

3.2.1 Affected Environment

Vegetation communities within the ROW were identified through the Gap Analysis Project (GAP) land cover map data (USGS 2011), and the general types were confirmed using aerial imagery and field photos taken during the cultural resources baseline field survey (Tetra Tech 2022). Based on these sources, sagebrush shrubland/steppe and grassland are the predominant vegetation communities in portions of the ROW that are not in agricultural use (**Table 1**). Juniper woodlands are also present. Willows and other riparian shrubs occur where the ROW crosses perennial streams. Plants that are species of concern on the Reservation as discussed in the Woodland Management Plan (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2008) could occur in riparian and wetland areas in the ROW, including Joe-pye weed (*Eupatorium maculatum* var. *bruneri*), meadow milkvetch (*Astragalus diversifolius*), Idaho sedge (*Carex idahoa*), and giant helleborine (*Epipactis gigantea*). Human development, grazing, agricultural practices, and wildfire have altered the vegetation communities in and surrounding much of the ROW. In addition, the vegetation was previously disturbed during construction of the transmission line.

Weeds are present in areas with higher levels of disturbance, and cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) occurs in areas that have experienced wildfires. No formal survey for noxious weeds and other invasive, non-native species has been completed in the ROW; however, Scotch thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*) and cheatgrass were observed within the ROW during the cultural resources baseline field survey (Tetra Tech 2022). The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes recognize the noxious weeds listed on the State of Idaho's current Noxious Weeds list (Ninth edition; Prather et al. 2018). The State of Idaho lists Scotch thistle in the containment category, where the goal is to reduce or eliminate new or expanding populations. Cheatgrass is a common invasive annual grass on the Reservation and is a primary target for tribal weed management (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2021a).

Table 1. Vegetation and Landcover Types in the ROW

Vegetation/Landcover Type	Acres (Percent (%))
Sagebrush shrubland/steppe	269.3 (43%)
Agriculture (crop lands, hay fields, or pasture)	134.2 (21%)

Vegetation/Landcover Type	Acres (Percent (%))
Developed (mostly roads)	89.0 (14%)
Grassland/Annual grassland/recently burned grassland	64.2 (10%)
Riparian woodland and shrubland	62.7 (10%)
Juniper woodland	5.1 (1%)
Open Water	2.7 (<1%)

3.2.2 Environmental Consequences

Issue: Would native plant communities be affected by continued O&M of the transmission line, such as through changes to composition and vigor of the vegetation in the ROW, and potential spread of noxious weeds and other invasive, non-native species?

3.2.2.1 Proposed Actions

Workers conducting routine inspections and corrective maintenance activities may trample individual plants in the ROW, and re-disturb the ground in localized areas, such as around structures. This could occur up to twice per year over the 25-year term of the ROW grants. Due to the infrequent and localized disturbance, routine activities are unlikely to result in loss of individual plants or changes to the overall vegetation communities. Vegetation management activities may require removal of tall growing vegetation, but as vegetation in the ROW is primarily short-statured shrubs and grasses, this activity would not frequently occur. No major corrective maintenance is planned or expected over the next 25-year term; however, if required in the future, the activities may re-disturb and remove and/or crush vegetation, and compact soils due to use of heavier equipment, in localized areas within the ROW. According to the BMPs outlined in Appendix B, prior to any future O&M activities that involve surface disturbance, RMP and its contractors would coordinate with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation to determine any need for field surveys or conservation measures to be implemented to avoid and minimize effects to plants.

The use of vehicles in the ROW and localized surface disturbance during O&M activities could spread noxious weeds and other invasive, non-native plants, which compete with native vegetation and could change the composition of the vegetation community. Controlling weeds in the ROW is part of the proposed O&M activities (see Section 2.1.3). The Proposed Actions would conform with the Weed Control Plan (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2021a) by implementing BMPs to control the potential spread and introduction of noxious weeds and other invasive, non-native plants in the ROW (see Appendix B) and by adhering to any terms and conditions required by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA or Reclamation.

The O&M activities could affect individual plants but would not alter the overall vegetation communities because the area of ground disturbance would be small and localized, disturbance and vehicle use in the ROW would be infrequent, and vegetation management BMPs (see Appendix B) would be implemented to further reduce effects to vegetation and control weeds. For these reasons, the Proposed Actions are expected to have negligible effects on vegetation.

3.2.2.2 No Action Alternative

Ground disturbance associated with the removal of the existing transmission line and structures could damage vegetation in the ROW and introduce and/or spread noxious weeds and other invasive, non-native plants. The effect would be greater compared to the Proposed Actions, because of the greater amount of ground disturbance and use of heavy equipment that would occur. RMP would coordinate with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, Reclamation, and other owners of fee land on BMPs, and other requirements and authorizations needed to reclaim the ROW. Therefore, over the long-term, effects of the No Action Alternative on vegetation communities in and near the ROW would be negligible.

3.3 AQUATIC RESOURCES

The analysis area for potential effects on aquatic resources is the area within the 624-acre ROW described in Section 1.2.

3.3.1 Affected Environment

Map data from the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) and National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) and information collected during the cultural resources baseline field survey (Tetra Tech 2022) show that streams and wetlands occur in the ROW. Surface waters in the ROW drain into the Blackfoot River and the Snake River. Perennial streams in the ROW are the Blackfoot River (forms the northern boundary of the ROW on the Reservation), Garden Creek, Lincoln Creek, Gibson Drain, Ross Fork, Portneuf River, and three unnamed streams (**Figure 2**). Intermittent streams are also present. Hydrology in portions of the ROW and surrounding area has been altered by a system of canals and associated agricultural irrigation, and creation of the American Falls Reservoir. Named canals in the ROW include Fort Hall Main Canal, Taghee Canal, Gibson Canal, Marlow Lateral, Trego Lateral, and Little Indian Ditch. A summary of the streams and canals/ditches in the ROW is provided in **Table 2**. Where the ROW crosses streams and canals/ditches, the transmission line structures do not occur in the streambed or canals, but rather were constructed on either side with the transmission line spanning the stream overhead.

Table 2. Streams and Canals/Ditches in the ROW

Stream Type	Length in ROW (Feet)
Perennial Stream	2,814
Intermittent Stream	3,420
Canal/Ditch	1,945
Underground Pipeline	212

Source: NHD

Wetland types in the ROW as mapped by the NWI are presented in **Table 3** to provide baseline information for effects analysis. However, there has been no ground-truthing of these features in the field to verify presence, type, or size, and other wetlands could be present that are not mapped by NWI. Floodplain wetlands known as the Fort Hall Bottoms exist along the Snake River to the west of the ROW (**Figure 2**). Most of the ROW is on the bluffs above these bottomlands, except where the ROW crosses streams that flow into the American Falls Reservoir, including Ross Fork and Portneuf River. NWI-mapped wetlands also occur along other perennial and intermittent streams. Some transmission line structures, and access roads are within or immediately adjacent to

NWI-mapped wetlands, including around the Portneuf River, Ross Fork, Gibson Drain, and Lincoln Creek (**Figure 2**).

Table 3. Wetland Types in the ROW

Wetland Type	NWI Code	Acres
Freshwater Emergent Wetland	PEM1/SS1C, PEM1A, PEM1C, PEMCx, PEM1F	8.6
Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland	PSS1B, PSS1C	6.0
Freshwater Pond	PUBF, PUBKx, PAB4/UB4F	1.3
Riverine	R2UBH, R2UBHx, R3UBH, R4SBC, R4SBCx, R5UBFx, R5UBH	4.7

Source: NWI

3.3.2 Environmental Consequences

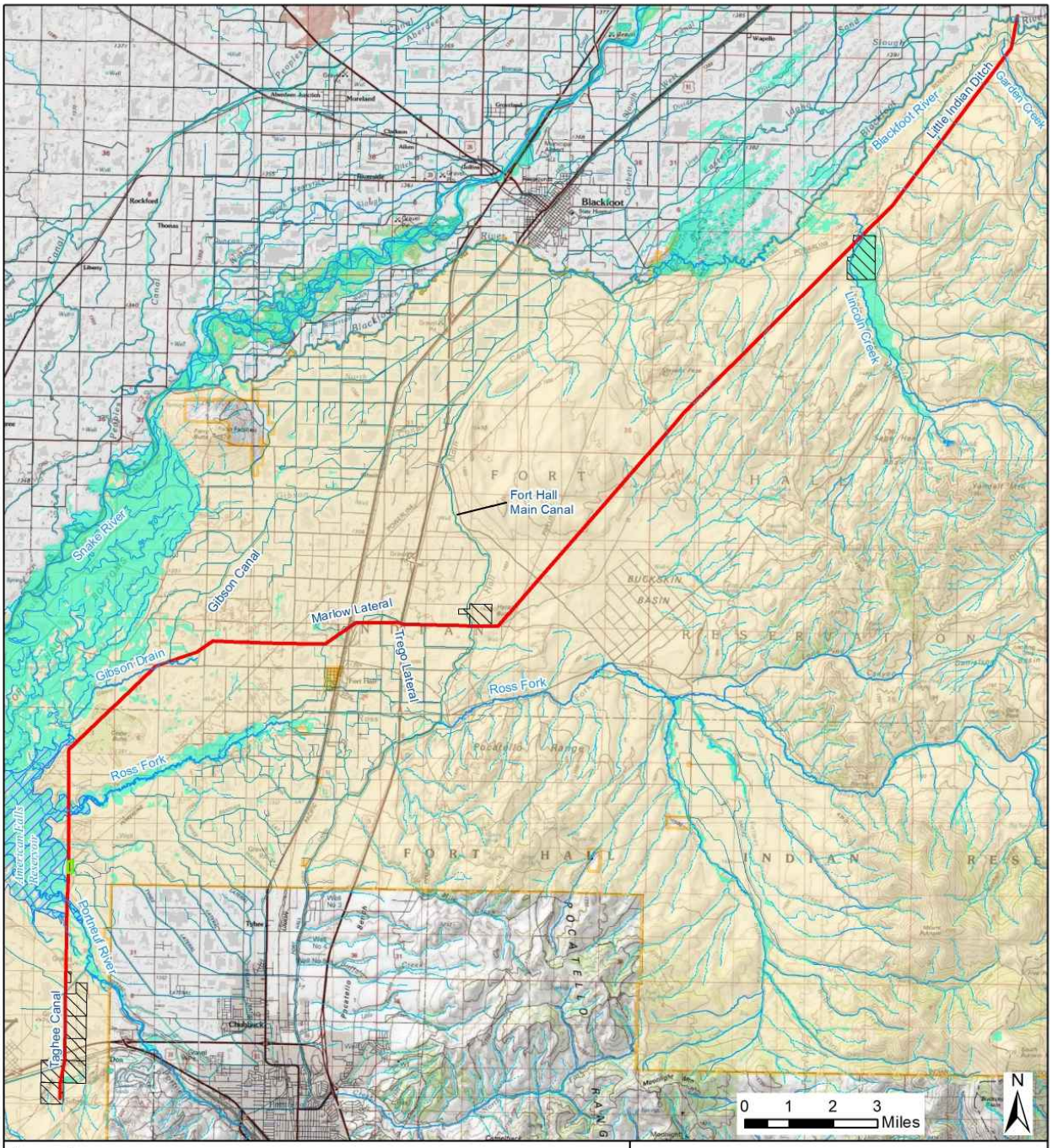
Issue: Would aquatic resources be affected by the continued O&M of the transmission line?

3.3.2.1 Proposed Actions

The Proposed Actions would not affect hydrology or water quantity because no water would be used or released during future O&M activities. Effects to surface or ground water quality from hazardous materials or sedimentation would be negligible because RMP and its contractors would implement the aquatic resources BMPs (Appendix B), including spill containment measures, where applicable, as well as adhering to any terms and conditions required by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA or Reclamation.

There would be no effect on wetlands or other aquatic resources from routine inspections because wetlands, streams, and wet soils would be avoided during ground inspections, and instead, these areas would be inspected from the air, on foot, from existing roads, or from a distance using binoculars. No major corrective maintenance is expected to occur during the 25-year term of the ROW grant and no surface disturbance is proposed in wetlands. In the event that future O&M activities would impact wetlands or other waters of the United States (WUS), RMP would complete a formal wetland delineation in the impact area and would adhere to Clean Water Act Section 404 regulations. Permits would be acquired, as applicable, from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) prior to any ground disturbance, as outlined in the BMPs in Appendix B. With the expected implementation of USACE required avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, the Proposed Actions would have negligible effects on wetlands and other WUS.

Figure 2. Aquatic Resources



3.3.2.2 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not affect the hydrology or quantity of water in the ROW because no water would be used or released during the removal of the transmission line and reclamation of the ROW. Effects to surface or ground water quality from hazardous materials or sedimentation would be negligible because RMP and its contractors would implement the aquatic resources BMPs (Appendix B), including spill containment measures, where applicable, as well as adhering to any terms and conditions required by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, or Reclamation. Removal of the existing transmission line and associated structures and reclamation of the ROW could result in discharge of dredged or fill material into wetlands or other WUS. The effect would be greater compared to the Proposed Actions because of the larger area of ground disturbance. RMP would complete a formal wetland delineation in the impact area and would adhere to Clean Water Act Section 404 regulations. Permits would be acquired, as applicable, from the USACE prior to any removal activities occurring, as outlined in the BMPs in Appendix B. With the expected implementation of USACE required avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, the No Action Alternative would have negligible effects on wetlands and other WUS.

3.4 MIGRATORY BIRDS AND OTHER WILDLIFE

The analysis area for considering effects to migratory birds and other wildlife consists of a 0.5-mile-wide area from the edge of the ROW. The analysis is focused on high-interest species that are either federally protected species or species of management interest or conservation concern on the Reservation, including raptors and other migratory birds, big game, and Idaho Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). Threatened and endangered species are analyzed in Section 3.5.

3.4.1 Affected Environment

The analysis area supports a variety of migratory and non-migratory birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians associated with sagebrush steppe, grassland, juniper woodland, and riparian woodland/shrubland habitat types and agricultural areas (see Section 3.2.1). Game and nongame fish occur in perennial streams and American Falls Reservoir including Yellowstone cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii bouvieri*) (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2008; IDFG 2020).

Raptors

There are small areas in the ROW with juniper trees that provide raptor nesting habitat. Otherwise, raptor nesting substrates are limited in the analysis area due to the lack of trees and rocky cliffs. During the cultural resources baseline field survey in December 2020, 25 stick nests were observed on the transmission line steel structures. These could have been constructed by either raptor species or common raven (*Corvus corax*); the species could not be identified because the nests were observed in the non-breeding season. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' wildlife biologist completed a raptor nest survey in the analysis area in 2021. An osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) nest was found on one of the transmission line structures, which has been occupied for at least 40 years (D. Christopherson, personal communication, June 16, 2021). Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) winter and nest along the Snake River (Sallabanks 2006) and there is also a nest site within 0.25 mile of the ROW near the Portneuf River (IDFG 2020), but its current condition is not known. A variety of other raptor species may forage in the agricultural, sagebrush, and grassland areas, including golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), and various hawks, falcons, and owls.

Other Migratory Birds

The Fort Hall Bottoms are part of the Snake River migration corridor, attracting large numbers of waterfowl and shorebirds that use the American Falls Reservoir and associated mudflats during migration season (Audubon 2022). The analysis area is mostly in uplands above these open waters and wetland areas, except around Ross Fork and the Portneuf River. In the uplands, a variety of songbirds that inhabit sagebrush, grasslands, agricultural

areas, and pinyon-juniper habitat commonly occur throughout the analysis area. Migratory birds that are Idaho SGCN (IDFG 2017) are presented in **Table 4**.

Big Game

Big game species that may be found in the analysis area include bison (*Bison bison*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), white-tailed deer (*O. virginianus*), moose (*Alces alces*), elk (*Cervus canadensis*), and pronghorn antelope (*Antilocapra americana*). There is fawning/calving habitat in the analysis area around the Fort Hall Bottoms area and winter range is present in the sagebrush shrublands at the northern end of the ROW (Shoshone Bannock Tribes 2008).

Idaho Species of Greatest Conservation Need

Table 4 lists the Idaho SGCN (IDFG 2017) that may occur in the analysis area based on the species' geographic range and habitat requirements. Although Idaho SGCN do not have any official tribal regulatory status on the Reservation, the list is used as a guide when considering effects to wildlife from land use projects. The bat species on this list could forage in the analysis area. However, bat roosting is likely uncommon due to the lack of natural roost sites, such as trees, caves, and cliffs, though roosting is possible in human structures.

Table 4. Idaho Species of Greatest Conservation Need with Suitable Habitat in the Analysis Area

Species Name	Habitat
BIRDS	
Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)	Forages in sagebrush and grasslands. Nests on cliffs.
Short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*)	Grasslands and marshes
Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*)	Grasslands and shrub-steppe
Ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*)	Grasslands and sagebrush
Grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*)	Grasslands
Sagebrush sparrow (*Artemisiospiza nevadensis*)	Sagebrush
Sage thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*)	Sagebrush
Common nighthawk (*Cordeiles minor*)	Grasslands, sagebrush, ponds, meadows
American bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*)	Marsh
Trumpeter swan (*Cygnus buccinator*)	Open Water/Riparian
Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*)	Flooded meadows, alfalfa fields
Sandhill crane (*Antigone canadensis*)	Grasslands, marshes
Long-billed curlew (*Numenius americanus*)	Grasslands, pastures/fields
White-faced ibis (*Plegadis chihi*)	Marshes, wet fields
Sharp-tailed grouse (*Tympanuchus phasianellus*)	Grasslands, fields, mountain shrub.

Species Name	Habitat
Greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*)	Sagebrush. The edge of the analysis area borders sage-grouse general habitat in the montane areas west of the northern end of the ROW (ISAC 2006).
MAMMALS	
Pygmy rabbit (*Brachylagus idhoensis*)	Sagebrush
Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus towsendii*)	Forages in arid scrub and pine forests. Distribution tied to caves, which are required for roosting. No roost sites are known on the Reservation.
Western small-footed myotis (*Myotis ciliolabrum*)	Forages in a variety of habitats from arid scrub to coniferous forest. Roosts and hibernates in cliff and rock crevices, lava tubes, and buildings.
Little brown myotis (*Myotis lucifugus*)	Most common in forested areas; also found in shrub steppe, cliffs, and urban areas. Forages over water, meadows, and farmland. Roosts in tree cavities, rock crevices, buildings, attics, or other human structures; sometimes in caves.
AMPHIBIANS	
Boreal toad (aka Western Toad) (*Anaxyrus boreas*)	All habitat types in proximity to aquatic habitat, which is used for breeding.
Northern leopard frog (*Lithobates pipiens*)	Aquatic habitat
FISH	
Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii bouvieri*)	Cool, clear streams and lakes/reservoirs.

Sources: Species List for Fort Hall Reservation (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2021b); Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (2008); Idaho Species of Greatest (IDFG 2017); Western Bat Working Group (2017); Bat Conservation International (2022); Resource Concepts, Inc. (2010)

3.4.2 Environmental Consequences

Issue: Would the continued O&M of the transmission line result in disturbance or injury/mortality of bald eagles, golden eagles, and other migratory birds and other high interest wildlife, or affect their habitat?

3.4.2.1 Proposed Actions

Disturbance

Over the 25-year term of the ROW grants, the use of vehicles/equipment, noise, and human presence during O&M activities could disturb raptors and other migratory birds, big game, and Idaho SGCN when they are present in the analysis area. The disturbance would occur infrequently (about twice per year), would be short in duration, and involve a small number of people and vehicles. The disturbance could change the behavior of individual wildlife by temporarily displacing them from localized areas where O&M activities are occurring.

To avoid or minimize disturbance to big game and Idaho SGCN, RMP and its contractors would contact the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA and Reclamation prior to conducting any O&M activities in the ROW (see Appendix B) to identify any work constraints.

In addition, RMP and its contractors would implement the migratory bird and raptor BMPs (Appendix B), as well as adhere to any terms and conditions required by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA or Reclamation, which would avoid and minimize disturbance to nesting raptors and other migratory birds by conducting maintenance work outside of the migratory bird breeding season, as practicable; or if work is planned during the breeding season, a nest clearance survey would be conducted prior to initiating the activities and nest protection measures implemented where applicable. If nests are located on structures and require removal for operational safety, the removal activities would be coordinated with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation, and permitted with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), as applicable.

Due to the small disturbance area and infrequency of the maintenance activities, and with the implementation of the BMPs (Appendix B), the disturbance from O&M activities is not expected to affect species survival or reproduction. For these reasons, disturbance effects on raptors and other migratory birds, big game, and Idaho SGCN would be negligible.

Injury/Mortality

Although the transmission line pre-dates current Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC) guidelines, since it is a transmission line and the voltage level is high, it was built to the same standards for spacing that prevent electrocutions as the APLIC (2006) standards. Compared to distribution lines, there is a lower risk of bird electrocution from transmission lines because of the greater separation between the energized conductors and between energized conductors/hardware and grounded line components (APLIC 2006). Birds could collide with the transmission line, but the risk is low because the line is not sited within or perpendicular to a major migration corridor (APLIC 2012). RMP's BMPs (Appendix B) include training of employees and contractors that are expected to comply with all components of PacifiCorp's Bird Management Program.

Vehicle collisions could cause injury or mortality of migratory birds, big game, and Idaho SGCN. Vehicle collisions would be rare due to the infrequent presence of vehicles (about twice per year) and because vehicles would be traveling at low speeds, which allows for avoidance maneuvers.

With the implementation of the migratory bird and other BMPs (Appendix B), as well as adherence of any required terms and conditions by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA or Reclamation, electrocutions and collisions with the transmission line and vehicles would have a negligible effect on wildlife.

Habitat Alteration

There would be no new habitat loss from the Proposed Actions because all O&M activities would be within the existing ROW and existing access routes into the ROW would be used. Trampling/crushing of vegetation and re-disturbance/compaction of soils could temporarily reduce plant vigor and noxious and other invasive, non-native plants could be introduced or spread and outcompete native plant species. For inspections and minor corrective maintenance, the effects to habitat would be localized around structures. Vegetation management activities would not remove noticeable amounts of vegetation because the plants in the existing ROW are naturally short and typically do not need to be trimmed or removed. No long-term change to the overall plant community or reduction in wildlife habitat quality is expected due to the infrequent and sporadic nature of the maintenance activities in the ROW and because BMPs (Appendix B) and required terms and conditions by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, or Reclamation would be implemented to reduce the risk of spreading noxious and other invasive, non-native plants and to reclaim the disturbed areas. With implementation of BMPs (Appendix B) and any required terms and conditions when working adjacent to wetlands and streams (e.g., sediment control and herbicide use), there would be no measurable effect to fish or amphibian habitat. No major corrective maintenance is planned to occur over the next 25-year term; however, if that changes, this activity may re-disturb larger areas of the ROW due to the potential need for grading and excavation work. Any major corrective maintenance projects would be planned

in advance with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation to avoid and minimize effects to migratory birds and other high-interest wildlife. For these reasons, the overall effect to habitat for raptors and other migratory birds, big game, and Idaho SGCN would be negligible.

3.4.2.2 No Action Alternative

The removal of the existing transmission line and associated structures would have similar disturbance effects and changes to habitat as the Proposed Actions, but would affect a larger area at one time, and involve a greater amount of equipment and construction crew. The effects would be temporary because the construction disturbance would end once the removal is complete, and the ROW would be reclaimed. To avoid or minimize potential effects to raptors and other migratory birds, big game, and Idaho SGCN, RMP and its contractors would contact the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation prior to any removal activities in the ROW to identify any work constraints and conservation measures. For these reasons, the No Action Alternative would have negligible effects on these species.

3.5 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The analysis areas for analyzing effects to ESA-listed species are as follows:

- For federally listed plant species, the analysis area is the 624-acre ROW described in Section 1.2.
- For federally listed and candidate animal species, the analysis area is a 0.5-mile-wide area from the edge of the ROW.

3.5.1 Affected Environment

An official list of threatened and endangered species to consider for the Project was obtained through the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation System (IPaC) web interface. The list includes two threatened species, Ute ladies'-tresses (*Spriranthes diluvialis*) and the western United States distinct population segment of the yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*). Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) is also listed as a candidate species (Appendix C).

3.5.1.1 Ute Ladies'-tresses

Ute ladies'-tresses is a perennial plant that is listed as a threatened species under the ESA. It is known primarily from moist meadows associated with perennial stream terraces, floodplains, and oxbows at elevations between 4,300 and 6,850 feet. It is also known to occur along seasonally flooded river terraces, sub-irrigated or spring-fed abandoned stream channels and valleys, and lakeshores (Fertig et al. 2005). In addition, populations have been discovered along irrigation canals, berms, levees, irrigated meadows, excavated gravel pits, roadside barrow pits, reservoirs, and other human-modified wetlands (Fertig et al. 2005). No critical habitat has been designated for this species. It flowers from July to early September.

Surveys for Ute ladies'-tresses were conducted on the Reservation in 2009, primarily in the Fort Hall Bottoms (Davis 2009). A total of seven populations (with seven sub-populations) of this species are known on the Reservation, but only a small portion of suitable habitat has been surveyed. The known populations occur in wet meadows, pastures, and hay fields near springs and streams in the Fort Hall Bottoms where the plants are found in the semi-moist ecotone between saturated soils and uplands (Davis 2009). No surveys have been completed in the analysis area; however suitable habitat is likely present along stream sides and other wetland areas. Due to the proximity of the ROW to the populations in the Fort Hall Bottoms and the presence of suitable habitat, Ute ladies'-tresses may occur in the analysis area.

3.5.1.2 Yellow-billed Cuckoo

The yellow-billed cuckoo (western United States distinct population segment) is a migratory bird that is listed as a threatened species under the ESA (USFWS 2014). It migrates to Central and South America for the winter and breeds in North America, often using river corridors as migration routes (USFWS 2021). In the western United States, breeding yellow-billed cuckoos are riparian obligates that nest almost exclusively in low to moderate elevation riparian woodlands with native broadleaf trees and shrubs that cover 20 hectares (50 acres) or more. The species is typically associated with cottonwood-willow-dominated communities; however, the composition of dominant riparian vegetation can vary across its range. Riparian patches used by breeding birds vary in size and shape, ranging from a relatively contiguous stand of mixed native/exotic vegetation to an irregularly shaped mosaic of dense vegetation with open areas (Halterman et al. 2016).

Yellow-billed cuckoos have been found regularly around the northern end of American Falls Reservoir and along the portion of the Snake River flowing into the reservoir (generally within 10 kilometers of the reservoir) (Taylor 2000; Reynolds and Hinckley 2005).

There is designated critical habitat for yellow-billed cuckoo along this section of the Snake River in Bingham County (USFWS 2021). In deference to the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' right to manage their lands and resources, the USFWS excluded 2,527 acres of tribal lands on the Reservation from the critical habitat designation in the final rule under Section 4(b)(2) of the ESA (USFWS 2021). The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes maintain these lands for natural resources through implementation of their Woodland Management Plan (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 2008), including measures to conserve and improve habitat for yellow-billed cuckoo. Reclamation lands associated with the full pool of the American Falls Reservoir were also excluded from critical habitat to avoid conflict with Congressionally authorized purposes of the reservoir. There is no designated critical habitat in the analysis area.

The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes conducted yellow-billed cuckoo surveys in 2020 in suitable habitat on the Reservation. Suitable habitat is found primarily in the cottonwood forests along the banks and islands of the Snake River in the Fort Hall Bottoms area. The species was detected at one location in the Fort Hall Bottoms with a response to the call-back survey (Stone and Christopherson 2020). The detection location is approximately 3 miles from the ROW. The cottonwood forests along the Snake River are 1.75 miles from the ROW at their closest. There is a historic record of yellow-billed cuckoo on the Portneuf River 2.5 miles from ROW (IDFG 2020). However, suitable yellow-billed cuckoo habitat is not present in the analysis area (i.e., 0.5-mile-wide area from the edge of the ROW). The Portneuf River, Ross Fork, and Lincoln Creek support some cottonwood trees but where the ROW crosses these drainages, the trees are isolated and have an open understory with no shrubs and therefore, do not provide suitable breeding habitat for yellow-billed cuckoo. Other drainages in the analysis area are characterized by shrub, grass, and emergent wetland species and lack a tree overstory and do not provide suitable habitat.

3.5.1.3 Monarch Butterfly

Monarch butterfly is a candidate species for ESA listing. Monarchs are found in Idaho from early June through mid-September then migrate, likely wintering in California. Breeding habitat in Idaho is characterized by mesic soils with high-density stands of milkweed within grasslands, wetlands, deciduous forest, and shrub-steppe communities (Waterbury et al. 2019). The most productive breeding sites have co-occurrence of showy milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*) and swamp milkweed (*A. incarnata*). Grassland-wetland habitats support the largest and most dense stands of milkweed, followed by cottonwood (*Populus* spp.) riparian forests and edges of agricultural areas and canals. Nectar plants used by monarchs include milkweeds and other native flowering plants, such as sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) and goldenrod (*Solidago* spp., *Euthania* spp.). Non-native nectar plants are also used, including thistles (*Cirsium* spp.) and purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) (Waterbury et al. 2019). Migratory habitat is generally synonymous with breeding habitat in being tied to milkweed, except that monarch butterflies

may nectar on abundant late-flowering native species, such as rabbitbrush (*Ericameria* spp. and *Chrysothamnus* spp.) and sunflowers where milkweeds are lacking (Xerces Society 2018).

Although no monarch butterfly survey has been completed in the analysis area, showy milkweed and swamp milkweed and monarch butterflies are known to occur in areas adjacent to the analysis area, near the Snake River, America Falls Reservoir, Portneuf River, and Blackfoot River (Kinter 2019; Waterbury et al. 2019; IDFG 2020). Therefore, monarchs are likely to occur in the analysis area in the breeding season if and where milkweeds are present, and elsewhere during migration where other nectar plants occur.

3.5.2 Environmental Consequences

Issue: Would the continued O&M of the transmission line affect Ute ladies'-tresses (threatened species), yellow-billed cuckoo (threatened species), monarch butterfly (candidate species) or their habitat?

3.5.2.1 Proposed Actions

Effects determinations for federally threatened and candidate species are summarized in Table 5.

Ute Ladies'-tresses

Routine and minor O&M activities would avoid wetlands and other waterbodies, which is where suitable habitat for Ute ladies'-tresses may be found. Major O&M activities are not expected during the 25-year term of the ROW grants. Therefore, as the Proposed Actions are administrative in nature and no ground disturbance is proposed in suitable habitat, the Proposed Actions would have no effect on Ute ladies'-tresses. In the unlikely event that any future O&M activities involve surface disturbance in wetland habitat, RMP and its contractors would coordinate with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation prior to initiating any work (see Appendix B). As a condition of the ROW grants, pre-disturbance clearance surveys would be conducted prior to ground disturbance in suitable Ute ladies'-tresses habitat and during the plant's flowering period to determine if this species is present. If detected, RMP would implement conservation measures identified in coordination with the USFWS and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation to avoid effects to the plant. As future conditions are unknown, an evaluation of effects to Ute ladies'-tresses would be made at that time.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo (Western United States Distinct Population Segment)

No surface disturbance, tree removal, or other habitat modifications would occur in the cottonwood forests in the Fort Hall Bottoms where yellow-billed cuckoo is known to occur. Cuckoos occupying these areas would not be disturbed by noise or human presence during O&M activities because the ROW is more than 0.5 mile from occupied habitat. Vegetation management activities could remove trees within the ROW around perennial drainages, but these areas do not provide suitable breeding habitat for yellow-billed cuckoos due to the isolated nature of the trees and lack of a dense shrub understory. Furthermore, during future O&M activities, RMP and its contractors would implement the BMPs outlined in Appendix B, including scheduling the activities to occur outside the migratory bird breeding season where practicable, and would coordinate with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation prior to initiating any activities. There is no yellow-billed cuckoo designated critical habitat on the Reservation and no suitable habitat would be affected by future O&M activities. Therefore, with implementation of the BMPs, there would be no effect to the yellow-billed cuckoo or its critical habitat.

Monarch Butterfly

Routine and minor O&M activities could result in trampling or crushing of milkweeds if they occur in the ROW. According to the BMPs outlined in Appendix B, prior to any future O&M activities that involve surface disturbance in suitable habitat, RMP and its contractors would coordinate with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation and conduct field surveys where required to determine if milkweeds or monarch butterfly occur in the areas of the ROW to be disturbed and if detected, what conservation measures to implement to avoid and

minimize effects to the monarch butterfly and its habitat. Therefore, the Proposed Actions are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of monarch butterfly.

Table 5. Effects Determinations for ESA Threatened and Candidate Species

Species Name	Status	Effects Determination for Species	Effects Determination for Critical Habitat
Ute ladies'-tresses	Threatened	No effect	Not Applicable[1]
Yellow-billed cuckoo	Threatened	No effect	No effect
Monarch butterfly	Candidate	Not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the species	Not Applicable[1]

[1]No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

3.5.2.2 No Action Alternative

The removal of the existing transmission line and associated structures has potential to affect Ute ladies'-tresses, yellow-billed cuckoo, monarch butterfly, and their habitats. As committed in the BMPs (Appendix B), to avoid or minimize potential effects to these species, RMP and its contractors would contact the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation prior to any removal activities in the ROW to identify any work constraints and conservation measures. The ROW would be reclaimed. For these reasons, the No Action Alternative would have negligible effects on these species.

3.6 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Section 106 of the NHPA requires that an Area of Potential Effect (APE) be defined specific to a proposed undertaking. The analysis area or APE for potential effects to cultural resources consists of the 624-acre ROW described in Section 1.2.

3.6.1 Affected Environment

A Class III cultural resources inventory of the APE was completed to identify whether any NRHP-listed or -eligible cultural resources are present that could be affected by the Proposed Actions. The Class III cultural resources inventory report was completed and contains information on the identification and NRHP analysis of cultural resources, as well as a finding of effect from the Proposed Actions on those cultural resources listed or eligible for listing in the NRHP in compliance with the NHPA. The report was submitted to the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) by both the BIA Archaeologist and Reclamation Archaeologist for concurrence with the findings within their respective jurisdictions summarized below.

Background Research

Before the field surveys were conducted, a literature search for previously completed cultural resource inventories and previously recorded cultural resource sites was conducted on December 31, 2019, through the State of Idaho cultural resource records housed and maintained by Idaho SHPO in Boise, Idaho for the APE and an associated 0.5-mile radius (literature search area). The available historic General Land Office (GLO) maps were also reviewed through the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) cadastral survey online database to determine if any unrecorded cultural resources could be present within the APE. In addition, the cultural history in the region surrounding the APE was reviewed. The prehistoric and historic record, in conjunction with the data from

previously conducted cultural resource inventories, assisted the cultural resource specialist in evaluating the encountered resources in the field for their potential contributions to the current knowledge of these periods and themes (Tetra Tech 2022).

Thirty-nine cultural resource inventories have been previously completed within the literature search area. Most of the previous inventories were completed over 10 years ago or did not encompass a significant portion of the APE; therefore, these areas of the APE were re-inventoried during the field work. The previously completed inventories identified 27 previously recorded cultural resource sites within the literature search area. Nine of the 27 previously recorded cultural resource sites are located within the APE. The sites within the APE include sections of five historic trails/roads (10BK306 – Lander Road; 10BM715 – Oregon Trail, California Trail, and Lander Road; 10BM942 – Graded Road; 11-17818 – Yellowstone Highway; and 77-17112 – Old United States Highway alignment), two historic canals (11-17787 – Fort Hall Main Canal and 11-17856 – Gibson Canal), and two historic railroads (11-17822 – Union Pacific Railroad and 77-17111 – Oregon Short Line Railroad, Union Pacific Railroad) (Tetra Tech 2022).

The GLO map for T. 4 S., R. 34 E. published on October 25, 1894, depicts the “Utah and Northern Railroad” trending southwest to northeast through the southwest and northwest quarter of Section 25 into the southwest quarter of Section 24. The railroad is identified by Idaho SHPO as the “Union Pacific Railroad” and is recorded as a cultural resource, Site 11-17822, that is eligible for the NRHP (Tetra Tech 2022).

Reasonable and good faith efforts were made to revisit the previously recorded sites within the APE during the field work. Relocated sites and other identified cultural resource sites were evaluated for NRHP eligibility based on their NRHP elements of integrity (Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association) and eligibility for inclusion on the NRHP based on four criteria outlined in 36 CFR 60.

Class III Results

Eight previously recorded cultural resource sites were revisited (10BK306 – Lander Road; 10BM942 – Graded Road; 11-17787 – Fort Hall Main Canal; 11-17818 – Yellowstone Highway; 11-17822 – Union Pacific Railroad; 11-17856 – Gibson Canal; 77-17111 – Oregon Short Line Railroad; and 77-17112 – Old United States Highway alignment), three new sites were identified (CH-01, CH-02, and KG-CR001), one site was noted but not recorded (NBNR-1), and two isolated finds (IFs; IF-CH-01 and IF-CH-02) were recorded during the December 1 through 6, 2020 field work. Site 10BM715 – Oregon Trail, California Trail, and Lander Road, was not relocated during the field work. Additional information is summarized in Table 6Table 5.

Table 6. Class III Cultural Resources Results

Site Number	Site Type	Survey Results	NRHP Listing Status
ROW (i.e., APE) on Shoshone-Bannock Tribes’ Tribal and Allotted Trust Lands Administered by the BIA			
10BM715	Oregon Trail, California Trail, Lander Road	Dense vegetation was encountered at the site’s reported location with ground visibility averaging 10 percent open. The dense vegetation prevented the relocation of any physical evidence for the site such as swales or ruts within the APE. Based on prior recordings, it is unknown if physical evidence for this site ever existed at this location.	Idaho SHPO records list the site as undetermined for listing on the NRHP. The site is part of the California Trail and managed by the National Park Service as part of the National Historic Trail system. The trail system is a NRHP listed historic property under Criteria A, B, C, and D. Tetra Tech did not relocate physical evidence for the site at the reported location within the

Site Number	Site Type	Survey Results	NRHP Listing Status
			APE. Therefore, Tetra Tech could not evaluate the site for eligibility and/or potential contribution to the trail system's eligibility for listing on the NRHP.
10BK306	Historic Lander Road	Two mapped sections of the road cross portions of the APE in sections 24 and 25 of T. 5 S., R. 33. E. At the mapped location in Section 25, the site segment was a modern graded road used to access the Portneuf River. No historic features or artifacts were identified within or along the revisited segment and it cannot be confirmed if it is associated with the historic Lander Road. At the mapped location in Section 24, no physical evidence for that segment could not be relocated. No inhibiting conditions were encountered at the mapped segment.	Idaho SHPO records list the site as undetermined for listing on the NRHP. The Lander Road is part of the California Trail and managed by the National Park Service as part of the National Historic Trail system. The trail system is a NRHP listed historic property under Criteria A, B, C, and D. The Lander Road is part of the system; therefore, also a NRHP listed historic property under Criteria A, B, C, and D. Previous documentation of either segment within the APE does not indicate physical evidence of the road existed at either location. Tetra Tech did not locate any evidence during field work; therefore, neither segment retains physical integrity of the original constructed trail. Both segments are non-contributing to the overall site NRHP eligibility under Criteria A, B, C, and D.
10BM942	Historic Graded Road Segment	The revisited road segment is paved. The road runs roughly north to south within the APE and crosses a low bench directly north of Lincoln Creek. The site condition is excellent and is continually used and maintained.	Originally recommended as not eligible for listing on the NRHP.
11-17787	Fort Hall Main Canal	The revisited main canal segment was found to be in a similar condition to prior recordings. Tire tracks in the bottom of the dry main canal channel indicate that it is used as an informal travel corridor when not transporting water down the system to primary laterals for irrigation. The revisited main canal segment is situated in developed agricultural fields	Originally recommended as eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion A.

Site Number	Site Type	Survey Results	NRHP Listing Status
		east of Interstate 15. The site condition is excellent and is still in use, maintained, and updated.	
11-17818	Yellowstone Highway	The revisited highway segment is still a two-lane paved road (United States Highway 91) that is still in use. The segment was found to be in a similar condition to prior recordings.	Originally recommended as eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion A.
11-17822	Union Pacific Railroad – Montana Division	The revisited segment was found to be in a similar condition to prior recordings. The site is in good condition and is still in use.	Originally recommended as eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion A.
11-17856	Gibson Canal	The revisited canal segment was found to be in a similar condition to prior recordings. The lateral canal segment is situated on developed agricultural fields on a bench to the east of American Falls Reservoir. The site is in excellent condition and is still in use, maintained, and updated.	Originally recommended as eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion A.
10BKXXXX (CH-01)	Historic artifact scatter	Historic artifact scatter located on top of a finger ridge which drops steeply to the west toward American Falls Reservoir. The historic artifact assemblage consists of various cans and glass bottles. The site is in fair condition with impacts from natural deterioration of artifacts and modern use displacing some of the artifacts from their original context.	This site is not eligible for listing on the NRHP under any criteria.
10BKXXXX (CH-02)	Historic artifact scatter	Large historic artifact scatter located on the rim of a bench east of American Falls Reservoir. The artifact assemblage consists of cans, glass, and various domestic items including shoes, box springs, cups, barbed wire, tires, concrete fragments, aerosol cans and railroad ties. A large arroyo bisects the site, and many artifacts are within the arroyo. The site is in fair condition with erosion and modern dumping impacting the site.	This site is not eligible for listing on the NRHP under any criteria.

Site Number	Site Type	Survey Results	NRHP Listing Status
NBNR-1	Indian Allotment GLO Marker	An Indian Allotment GLO marker that identifies the shared corner of sections 11, 12, 13, and 14 of T. 5 S., R. 33 E. The marker has a date of 1911 stamped into the metal cap.	NBNRs are not evaluated for inclusion on the NRHP and don't require further management.
IF-CH-01	Hole-in-top Can	A knife-opened hole-in-top can.	Dated to the general prehistoric and historic periods but cannot be associated with known activities or historic themes; therefore, this IF is not eligible for listing on the NRHP under any criteria.[1]
IF-CH-02	Sandstone Metate Fragment	A sandstone metate fragment that exhibits pecking and grinding on one surface and shaping along both lateral margins. The metate is likely in secondary context as it is directly adjacent to a concrete foundation of a transmission line structure.	Dated to the general prehistoric and historic periods but cannot be associated with known activities or historic themes; therefore, this IF is not eligible for listing on the NRHP under any criteria.[1]
ROW (i.e., APE) on Fee Lands Not Administered by Reclamation			
77-17111	Oregon Short Line Railroad, Union Pacific Railroad	The railroad currently consists of three pairs of tracks spaced two meters apart. The grade was found to be in a similar condition to prior recordings. The site segment is in good condition and still in use.	Originally recommended as eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion A.
77-17112	Old United States Highway 30 alignment	The revisited segment has been destroyed by a four-lane highway (Interstate 86) with a median separating west and eastbound lanes. Interstate 86 was built in 1968. Previous recordings of the United States Highway 30 segment also note it has been destroyed with no physical evidence remaining within the area.	Originally recommended as eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion A.
ROW (i.e., APE) on Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' Tribal and Allotted Trust Lands Administered by the BIA, Lands Administered by Reclamation, and Fee Lands Not Administered by Reclamation			
XX-XXXX (KG-CR001)	Goshen to Kinport 345-kV	Goshen to Kinport 345-kV Transmission Line was constructed in 1972. The transmission line is made of steel lattice	This site is not eligible for listing on the NRHP under any criteria.

Site Number	Site Type	Survey Results	NRHP Listing Status
	Transmission Line	towers on concrete footings with galvanized steel strands. The transmission line has been continuously operated and maintained since its construction. It was altered in 2020 with the replacement of a damaged insulator on Structure 22.	

[1]IFs are typically considered to be cultural manifestations of limited information potential beyond recordation. As such, they are usually determined not eligible for the NRHP and require no further management after recordation and reporting.

3.6.2 Environmental Consequences

Issue: Would the continued O&M of the transmission line affect historic properties, specifically sites listed on or eligible for listing on the NRHP?

The cultural resources analysis was based on the Class III cultural resources inventory and anticipated effects of the Proposed Actions. Adverse effects result when an action would diminish the characteristics that make a historic property eligible for the NRHP, or that would physically destroy or damage an archaeological site.

3.6.2.1 Proposed Actions

BIA-administered and Other Fee Lands

The Class III cultural resources inventory conducted for the portion of the ROW on Shoshone-Bannock Tribe's tribal and allotted trust lands administered by the BIA, encountered five NRHP undetermined or eligible sites within the ROW:

- 10BK306 – Historic Lander Road
- 11-17787 – Historic Fort Hall Main Canal
- 11-17818 – Historic Yellowstone Highway
- 11-17822 – Historic Union Pacific Railroad
- 11-17856 – Historic Gibson Canal

In addition, two sites (77-17111 – Historic Oregon Short Line Railroad, Union Pacific Railroad and 77-17112 – Historic Old United States Highway 30 alignment) were encountered on the fee lands portion of the ROW.

RMP would implement the cultural resources BMP included in Appendix B, which states that no intrusive or mechanical O&M activities would take place within any of the site's footprints. In addition, RMP would implement the cultural resources inadvertent discoveries BMP (Appendix B). Therefore, with the implementation of these BMPs, the BIA Proposed Action would have no adverse effect to historic properties. The Idaho SHPO has concurred with this determination (see Appendix D).

Reclamation-administered Lands

The Class III cultural resources inventory conducted for the portion of the ROW on Reclamation-administered lands (includes withdrawn and fee lands), encountered no NRHP undetermined or eligible sites within the ROW. RMP would implement the cultural resources inadvertent discoveries BMP (Appendix B) and any additional required terms and conditions by Reclamation. Therefore, the Reclamation Proposed Action would have no adverse effect to historic properties. The Idaho SHPO has concurred with this determination (see Appendix D).

3.6.2.2 No Action Alternative

Removal of the existing transmission line and associated structures, and reclamation of the ROW could affect cultural resources in the ROW, including NRHP undetermined and eligible sites. However, given the location of the transmission line structures relative to the sites, the effects can likely be avoided through construction methods. With the implementation of BMPs (Appendix B), including coordinating with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation prior to any work, and the cultural resources inadvertent discoveries BMP, the No Action Alternative would have no adverse effect to historic properties.

3.7 INDIAN SACRED SITES

Indian Sacred Sites are defined by the place, in that there is usually no ability to engage in the particular cultural practice elsewhere. Important areas may be specific site locations as well as geographically broader places and landscapes. The analysis area or APE for potential effects to Indian Sacred Sites consists of the 624-acre ROW described in Section 1.2.

3.7.1 Affected Environment

The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes were contacted to determine if there are Indian Sacred Sites or other areas important to the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes within the APE. According to the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, the transmission line ROW runs through a portion of the Reservation that was selected by Shoshone-Bannock Tribes ancestral leaders at the signing of the Fort Bridger Treaty as a place for their people to be placed. It is the inherent ancestral lands of the Shoshone and Bannock people within a larger landscape encompassing much of the western United States. This area continues to be important for cultural and traditional practices, hunting, fishing, and gathering, which are still practiced today by members of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes in and around the transmission line ROW. The ROW traverses several areas, including water sources and hills, that are held in high regard by the Tribes for religious and other traditional practices, and for the subsistence resources that are present (C. Smith, personal communication, October 20, 2021).

3.7.2 Environmental Consequences

Issue: Would the continued O&M of the transmission line affect Indian Sacred Sites?

3.7.2.1 Proposed Actions

Indian Sacred Sites occur in the APE (i.e., ROW) and therefore, there is potential for future O&M activities in the ROW to disturb or alter the sites. However, these effects would be avoided or minimized because RMP and its contractors would contact the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation prior to conducting any O&M activities in the ROW (see BMPs in Appendix B) to discuss specific conservation measures that would be implemented in these areas. For this reason, the Proposed Actions would have a negligible effect on Indian Sacred Sites.

3.7.2.2 No Action Alternative

The removal of the existing transmission line and structures and reclamation of the ROW could disturb or alter Indian Sacred Sites in and around the ROW. Removing the transmission line would result in a larger area of disturbance compared to the Proposed Actions. These effects would be minimized because RMP and its contractors would contact the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation prior to conducting any removal and reclamation activities in the ROW (see BMPs in Appendix B) to discuss specific conservation measures that would be implemented. For this reason, there would be a negligible effect on Indian Sacred Sites.

3.8 INDIAN TRUST ASSETS

ITAs are legal interests in property held in trust by the United States for federally-recognized Indian tribes or individual Indians. Examples of ITAs are lands, minerals, grazing, hunting, fishing, and water rights. The United States has a responsibility to protect and maintain rights reserved by or granted to Indian tribes or individuals by treaties, statutes, and executive orders and further court decisions and regulations. This responsibility requires that officials from federal agencies, including the BIA and Reclamation, take all actions reasonably necessary to protect ITAs when administering lands under their control.

The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have trust assets both on and off the Reservation. The ROW is wholly within the Reservation. The Fort Bridger Treaty states that the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes "…shall have the right to hunt on unoccupied Federal lands of the United States…", which includes Reclamation-administered withdrawn lands in the ROW (see Section 1.2.2). The Act of 1924 under which Reclamation acquired lands within the Reservation, granted an easement to the Fort Hall Indians to use Reclamation-administered fee lands in the ROW for grazing, hunting, fishing, and gathering of wood, and so forth, the same way as obtained prior to the enactment.

The analysis area for potential effects to ITAs consists of the 624-acre ROW described in Section 1.2.

3.8.1 Affected Environment

ITAs in the ROW include trust lands, grazing, hunting, fishing, and water rights on the Reservation, including on the Reclamation-administered land.

3.8.2 Environmental Consequences

Issue: Would the continued O&M of the transmission line affect Indian Trust Assets?

3.8.2.1 Proposed Actions

Renewal and issuance/approval of the new ROW grants and the associated future O&M activities would not affect the ability of tribal members to use the ROW for hunting, fishing, grazing, and gathering activities because there would be no change in access or land ownership/administration. There would be no measurable effect to wildlife and fish populations or their habitats, grazing lands, or gathering areas because ground disturbance from future O&M activities would be limited and localized, and noise and human presence would be infrequent. Water rights would not be affected because no water would be used and no change in flow or quality of surface water or ground water would occur (see Section 3.3.2). For these reasons, the renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities would have negligible effects on ITAs.

3.8.2.2 No Action Alternative

The surface disturbance and noise associated with the removal of the existing transmission line and associated structures could affect ITAs by altering habitat, displacing wildlife, and limiting tribal access to the ROW during the removal period. These effects would be temporary and negligible because the ROW would be reclaimed.

3.9 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The analysis area for potential effects to minority and low-income populations consists of the Reservation and off-reservation trust lands.

3.9.1 Affected Environment

Minorities are individuals who are members of the following population groups: American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian or Pacific Islander; Black, not of Hispanic origin; or Hispanic. Minority populations are identified

where either: (1) the minority population of the affected area exceeds 50 percent or (2) the minority population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis (CEQ 1997). Table 7 summarizes the racial characteristics of the Reservation and off-reservation trust lands compared to Bingham, Bannock, and Power counties and the State of Idaho. Most of the people (60 percent) on the Reservation and off-Reservation trust lands identify as American Indian. Furthermore, American Indians make up a meaningfully greater percentage of the population in the affected area compared to the percentage of American Indians living in the surrounding three counties (3.8 percent to 7.3 percent) and in the State of Idaho (1.7 percent). Therefore, the American Indian population on the Reservation and off-reservation trust lands is considered a minority population.

Table 7. Summary of Racial Populations in Fort Hall Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Lands, Bingham, Bannock, and Power Counties, and the State of Idaho

United States Census Bureau 2019 Statistics	Fort Hall Reservation and Off Reservation Trust Lands[1]	Bingham County[2]	Bannock County[2]	Power County[2]	State of Idaho[2]
2019 Total Population Estimate	5,850	46,811	87,808	7,681	1,787,065
White alone, percent	36.6%	89%	90.6%	92.2%	93%
Black or African American alone, percent	0.24%	0.6%	1.1%	1.1%	0.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	59.5%	7.3%	3.8%	3.8%	1.7%
Asian alone, percent	0.41%	1.0%	1.6%	0.5%	1.6%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander alone, percent	0.07%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%
Two or more races, percent	2.12%	1.9%	2.6%	2.2%	2.6%

[1]United States Census Bureau 2021a
[2]United States Census Bureau 2019

Low-income populations are identified by several socioeconomic characteristics. Specific characteristics used for Environmental Justice analysis are income (per capita income, median household income) and percentage of the population below poverty, as categorized by the United States Census Bureau. Table 8 shows income and poverty rate data for the Reservation and off-reservation trust lands compared to Bingham, Bannock, and Power counties and the State of Idaho. The number in poverty constitute a 'low-income population' because the difference in income and poverty level on Reservation and off-Reservation trust lands (15.7 percent) compared to the rate in the surrounding three counties (11.1 to 13.5 percent) or State of Idaho (11.2 percent) is substantial (i.e., 25 percent difference or greater).

Table 8. Income and Poverty Data for Bingham, Bannock, and Power Counties and the State of Idaho

Geographic Area	Per Capita Income In Past 12 Months (in 2019 dollars)	Median Household Income (in 2019 dollars)	Persons in Poverty (percent %)
Fort Hall Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Lands[1]	Not Available	$40,718	15.7%
Bingham County[2]	$23,059	$55,472	11.1%
Bannock County[2]	$25,076	$51,734	13.5%
Power County[2]	$23,343	$48,823	13.1%
State of Idaho[2]	$27,970	$55,785	11.2%

[1]United States Census Bureau 2021b
[2]United States Census Bureau 2019

3.9.2 Environmental Consequences

Issue: Would the renewed and new ROW grants and associated continued O&M of the transmission line cause disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations?

3.9.2.1 Proposed Actions

The United States Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA's) EJSCREEN Technical Documentation lists the environmental indicators that result in high and adverse effects on minority and low-income populations (USEPA 2019), which are as follows:

- National Air Toxics Assessment Air Toxics
- NATA Diesel Particulate Matter (PM)
- $PM_{2.5}$
- Ozone
- Lead Paint
- Traffic Proximity
- Wastewater Discharge Indicator (Stream Proximity) and Toxicity-Weighted Concentration
- Proximity to National Priorities List (a key subset of all "Superfund" sites) Sites
- Proximity to Treatment, Storage or Disposal Facilities
- Proximity to RMP Sites (facilities required by the Clean Air Act to file risk management plans)

Future O&M activities associated with the renewed and new ROW grants would not result in occurrences or increases in these indicators. Therefore, the Proposed Actions would not cause disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on the minority and low-income population living on the Reservation and off-Reservation trust lands.

3.9.2.2 No Action Alternative

The removal of the existing transmission line and structures and reclamation of the ROW would not cause disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority or low-income populations because there would be no measurable increase in any of the USEPA indicators.

4.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

This EA was prepared at the direction of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA Fort Hall Agency, and Reclamation USFO by Tetra Tech, Inc. under contract with RMP. Following is a list of agencies, organizations, and individuals consulted, and a list of individuals responsible for the preparation and/or review of this EA.

4.1 LIST OF CONSULTATIONS

Table 9 lists the agencies, organizations, and individuals consulted with in preparing this EA.

Table 9. List of Agencies, Organizations, and Individuals Consulted

Agency/Organization/Individual Name	Title/Role
Idaho State Historic Preservation Office	Christopher L. Shaver, State Historic Preservation Office Compliance Archaeologist

4.2 LIST OF PREPARERS/REVIEWERS

Table 10 lists the individuals who prepared and/or reviewed this EA.

Table 10. List of EA Preparers and/or Reviewers

Name	Title/Role
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes	
Christina Cutler	Environmental Coordinator for the Fish and Wildlife Department
Travis Stone	Land Use Director
Carolyn Smith	Cultural Resources Coordinator
Bureau of Indian Affairs	
Randy Thompson	Superintendent
Preston Smith	Prior Acting Superintendent
Sarah Jack	Realty Officer
Janalisa Johnnie	Realty Specialist
Brian Haug	Regional Environment Specialist
Eirik Thorsgard	Regional Archaeologist
Bureau of Reclamation	
Tara Hagen	Realty Specialist
Richard Jackson	Natural Resource Specialist

Name	Title/Role
Nikki Polson	Archaeologist
Tetra Tech, Inc. (Third Party Contractor)	
Jill Reid	Project Manager/NEPA and General Resource Specialist
Michele Weidner	NEPA Specialist/Senior Vegetation Ecologist
Wendy Rieth	NEPA Specialist/Senior Wildlife Biologist/GIS Analyst
Mark Karpinski	Principal Investigator/Senior Archaeologist

5.0 REFERENCES

Audubon. 2022. Important Bird Area: American Falls Reservoir, Idaho. https://www.audubon.org/important-bird-areas/american-falls-reservoir Accessed February 2022.

Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC). 2006. Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines: The State of the Art in 2006. Edison Electric Institute, APLIC, and the California Energy Commission, Washington, D.C. and Sacramento, California.

Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC). 2012. Reducing Avian Collisions with Power Lines: The State of the Art in 2012. Edison Electric Institute and APLIC, Washington, D.C.

Bat Conservation International. 2022.Bat Profiles. https://www.batcon.org/about-bats/bat-profiles/

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). 2012. Indian Affairs National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Guidebook 59 IAM 3-H. August 2012.

Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). 1995. American Falls Resource Management Plan. Bureau of Reclamation, Pacific Northwest Region, Boise, Idaho. April 1995.

Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). 2012. Reclamation's NEPA Handbook. February 2012.

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). 1997. Environmental Justice Guidance Under the National Environmental Policy Act. December 10, 1997

Davis C. 2009. Ute Ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes diluvialis*) Baseline Inventory and Status on the Fort Hall Reservation. Prepared for Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. Bannock Ecological. November 8, 2009.

Fertig, W., R. Black, and P. Wolken. 2005. Rangewide Status Review of Ute Ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes diluvialis*). Prepared for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and Central Utah Water Conservancy District. September 30, 2005.

Fire Logistics, Inc. 2000. Fire Management Plan for the Fort Hall Reservation. May 2000.

Halterman, M.D., M.J. Johnson, J.A. Holmes, and S.A. Laymon. 2016. A Natural History Summary and Survey Protocol for the Western Distinct Population Segment of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo: United States Fish and Wildlife Techniques and Methods. May 2016.

Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG). 2017. Idaho State Wildlife Action Plan, 2015. Boise, Idaho. Species List available: https://idfg.idaho.gov/species/taxa/list/sgcn?category=35&sgcn_value=All

Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG). 2020. Idaho Fish and Wildlife Information System, Species Diversity Database, Idaho Natural Heritage Data. Accessed November 2020.

Idaho Sage-grouse Advisory Committee (ISAC). 2006. Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho.

Kinter, C.L. 2019. A Guide to the Native Milkweeds of Idaho. Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Boise, Idaho.

Prather T., S Robins, and D. Morishita. 2018. Idaho's Noxious Weeds, 9th Edition. University of Idaho Extension, Moscow, Idaho.

Resource Concepts, Inc. 2010. Shoshone Bannock Tribes Fort Hall Indian Reservation Rangeland Assessment and Range Management Plan. February 15, 2010.

Reynolds, T.D. and C.I, Hinckley. 2005. A Survey for Yellow-billed Cuckoo in Recorded Historic and Other Likely Locations in Idaho. Final Report. Idaho Bureau of Land Management Technical Bulletin 2005-05.

Rocky Mountain Power (RMP). 2011. Overview of Operation & Maintenance Activities for Electric Transmission and Distribution Power Lines. December 2011.

Sallabanks, R. 2006. Idaho Bald Eagle Nest Monitoring, 2006 Annual Report. Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Boise, Idaho.

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. 2002. Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Livestock Ordinance for the Fort Hall Reservation. May 6, 2002.

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. 2008. Woodland Management Plan for the Fort Hall Reservation. March 2008.

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. 2009. Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Waste Management Act. Amendments November 24, 2009. ENVR-0958.

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. 2010. Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Land Use Policy Ordinance. 2010.

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. 2017. Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Public Review Draft, June 2017.

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. 2021a. Noxious and Invasive Plant Management Plan. Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Agricultural Resource Management Program. 2021.

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. 2021b. Wildlife Species Found on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation (undated). Received from Carolyn Smith on November 16, 2021.

Stone, D. and D. Christopherson. 2020. Endangered Species Act – Yellow Billed Cuckoo Project, Final Report 2020. Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, Fish and Wildlife Department.

Taylor, D.M. 2000. Status of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo in Idaho. Western Birds 31: 252-254.

Tetra Tech, Inc. 2022. Class III Cultural Resource Inventory for the Rocky Mountain Power 345-kV Goshen to Kinport Transmission Line Right-of-Way Grants Project, Bingham, Bannock, and Power Counties, Idaho. May 2022.

United States Census Bureau. 2019. QuickFacts Bingham, Bannock, and Power Counties and State of Idaho. Available: https://www.census.gov.

United States Census Bureau. 2021a. 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates – Race. Available: https://www.census.gov.

United States Census Bureau. 2021b. 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates – Income and Benefits. Available: https://www.census.gov.

United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2013. Level III Ecoregions of the Continental United States, map scale 1:7,500,000. United States EPA – National Health an Environmental Effects Research Laboratory, Corvallis, Oregon. Available: https://www.epa.gov/eco-research/level-iii-and-iv-ecoregions-continental-united-states.

United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2019. EJSCREEN Environmental Justice Mapping and Screening Tool, EJSCREEN Technical Documentation. September 2019.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2014. Determination of Threatened Status for the Western Distinct Population Segment of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*); Final Rule. Federal Register 79 (192): 59992-60038, October 3, 2014.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2021. Designation of Critical Habitat for the Western Distinct Population Segment of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo; Final Rule. Federal Register 86 (75): 20798- 21005. April 21, 2021.

United States Geological Survey (USGS). 2011. GAP/LANDFIRE National Terrestrial Ecosystems. Version 3. USGS Gap Analysis Program, Boise, Idaho. Available: http://gapanalysis.usgs.gov/gaplandcover

Waterbury, B.A., A. Potter, and L.K. Svancara. 2019. Monarch Butterfly Distribution and Breeding Ecology in Idaho and Washington. Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution 7:172: doi: 10.3389/fevo.2019.00172.

Western Bat Working Group (2017). Western Species Accounts. http://wbwg.org/western-bat-species

Xerces Society. 2018. Managing for Monarchs in the West: Best Management Practices for Conserving the Monarch Butterfly and Its Habitat. The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, Portland, Oregon. Available: www.xerces.org.

APPENDIX A – REVIEW OF PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Table A-1. Review of the Principal Components of the Human Environment for the Goshen to Kinport Transmission Line ROW Grants Project

Principle Components of the Human Environment		Rationale for Elimination
Land Resources	Topography (landforms, drainage, gradients)	The transmission line has been in place within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation (Reservation) for nearly 50 years and Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) would continue to operate and maintain the transmission line in its current location. Surface disturbance could occur during future operations and maintenance (O&M) activities but would be confined to the right-of-way (ROW), which was previously disturbed during construction of the transmission line. In addition, disturbance from O&M activities would occur infrequently and would be localized to the structures (poles) and small in area (e.g., overland access to structures, and digging around structures). Therefore, effects on soils would be negligible. Potential surface disturbances would be shallow and localized and therefore would have no effect on topography, geology, minerals, or paleontological resources.
	Soils (types, characteristics)	
	Geology, Mineral and Paleontological Resources	
Water Resources (surface and ground; quality, quantity, use, rights)		Potential effect to the quality of water (aquatic) resources are analyzed in detail in Section 3.3 of the EA. Future O&M activities would not use surface water or groundwater, and no new water development or water rights would be required. Therefore, there would no effect on quantity or use of surface water or groundwater or any water rights.
Air (quality/achievement, visibility)		The southern seven miles of the ROW in Bannock and Power counties is in the Fort Hall Non-Attainment Area for particulate matter with a diameter of 10 micrometers or less (PM_{10}) (USEPA 2021). Future O&M activities could generate fugitive dust, but the amount is expected to be negligible due to the infrequency of the activities (approximately twice per year) and small number of vehicles used. Vehicles would operate at slow speeds, minimizing the amount of fugitive dust and vehicle emissions produced. In addition, RMP would implement their fugitive dust Best Management Practices (BMPs) (see Appendix B) and adhere to any terms and conditions required by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (Tribes), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) or Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). Aerial surveys would not generate a large amount of fugitive dust because of the height these surveys are flown. Based on the size, frequency, and

Principle Components of the Human Environment		Rationale for Elimination
		nature of the future O&M activities as just described, the Proposed Actions would contribute a negligible amount of pollutants to the air. Therefore, air quality or visibility in or near the Reservation would not be affected to a measurable degree, and no Class I airsheds would be affected.
Living Resources	Wildlife (terrestrial, aquatic, threatened/endangered)	Wildlife, including migratory birds and federally listed animal species, are analyzed in detail in the EA in Sections 3.4 and 3.5, respectively.
	Vegetation (terrestrial, aquatic, riparian, threatened/endangered)	Terrestrial vegetation, aquatic/riparian vegetation, and federally listed plant are analyzed in the EA in Sections 3.2, 3.3, and 3.5, respectively.
	Ecosystems and Biological Communities	The transmission line has been a component of the local landscape for nearly 50 years. The renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities would not alter the vegetation community or the associated animal community, soils, hydrology, or other aspects of the ecosystem. Based on the expected size and frequency of future O&M activities, the potential effects from ground disturbance, driving, noise, and human presence would be negligible and confined to the existing roads and ROW; therefore, there would be no measurable effect to biological communities or the larger ecosystem.
	Agriculture (livestock, crops, prime and unique farmland)	The ROW crosses land that is in agricultural use, including cropland, hay fields/pastures, and rangeland used for livestock grazing. Soils through the majority of the ROW are mapped as various classes of prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance (NRCS 2021). The renewed and new ROW grants would have negligible effects on farming because there would be no new surface disturbance, and all areas re-disturbed from future O&M activities on the existing transmission line would be so small and localized in area that the effect on the surrounding cropland, rangeland, and soils would not be measurable. The renewed and new ROW grants would not affect grazing practices because there would be no measurable change to the amount of livestock forage available in the ROW, and access to range units and pastures would not change.

Principle Components of the Human Environment		Rationale for Elimination
		Overall effects to agriculture would be negligible. Agricultural activities can continue where they co-occur with the ROW.
Socioeconomic Conditions (Employment and Income, Demographic Trends, Lifestyle and Cultural Values [rural, urban], Community Infrastructure [public services, utilities])		Environmental Justice is analyzed in the EA in Section 3.9. The renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities would not affect socioeconomic conditions to a measurable degree, because there would be no change in the number of jobs provided, income, population, education level, and rural character of the Reservation. There would be no change to the existing utilities and other infrastructure or demand for public services. Terms of the renewed and new ROW grants are being conducted internally with the Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation, and may include royalties. The amounts would be speculative and therefore, are not analyzed in detail in this EA. If the renewed and new ROW grants are not approved, RMP would abandon and later remove all of the transmission line and associated structures and equipment in accordance with the requirements of the Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation. The transmission line moves power within the regional power grid and has various end users. The transmission line does not provide power directly to the Reservation. Therefore, regardless of whether the ROW grants are renewed and authorized or not (i.e., Propose Action versus No Action Alternative), there would be no effect to power or other utilities within the Reservation.
Resource Use Patterns	Hunting, Fishing, Gathering	Hunting, fishing, and gathering activities occur on the Reservation. The transmission line has been in existence for nearly 50 years. Based on the size and frequency of the future O&M activities expected to occur in the ROW, the renewal and authorization of the ROW grants would not affect hunting, fishing, or gathering activities to a measurable degree. Hunting, fishing, and gathering can continue in and around the ROW, and there would be no interference with or change in access to fishing, gathering, and hunting areas. Indian Trust Assets are analyzed in Section 3.8 of the EA.
	Timber Harvesting	According to the Fire Management Plan, there is no timber harvest program on the Reservation. Rangeland

Principle Components of the Human Environment		Rationale for Elimination
		and woodland communities (juniper and shrub riparian types) are present in and around the ROW but there are no forested areas. Therefore, the renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities would have no effect on timber.
	Agriculture	See agriculture under Living Resources above. There would be no change to existing agricultural land use.
	Mineral Extraction	Gravel pits are present in the ROW. The renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities would not affect access to the gravel pits or the amount of material extracted, as the gravel operations can continue underneath the transmission line.
	Recreation	The renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities are unlikely to result in changes that would affect local recreational resources or their use patterns because there would no change in recreational development or access to recreational areas.
	Transportation Networks	The transmission line and its access roads have been components of the local transportation network for nearly 50 years. The renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities are unlikely to result in changes that would affect transportation networks or their use patterns because no new roads are proposed, access to existing roads would not change, and no increase in traffic would occur. RMP would continue to gain entry to the ROW from existing access routes approved by the Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation.
	Land Use Plans	The Proposed Actions would be in conformance with the following Tribes' plans, ordinances, and laws for the Fort Hall Reservation: • Land Use Policy Ordinance [LAND-2010-S1] • Waste Management Act [ENVR-09-S8] • Livestock Ordinance [LWOR-02-S2] • Draft Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2017-2022 • Rangeland Assessment and Range Management Plan (2010) • Woodland Management Plan (2008) • Weed Management Plan • Fire Management Plan

Principle Components of the Human Environment		Rationale for Elimination
Other Values	Wilderness	There are no designated wilderness areas in the ROW or the surrounding area. The transmission line has been in place for nearly 50 years and RMP would continue to maintain and operate the line and associated ROW in its current location. Areas surrounding the ROW do not have wilderness characteristics due to the primary land use being agriculture and rangeland. Therefore, the renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities would have no effect on wilderness values. There are Indian Sacred Sites in the ROW (see Section 3.7 of the EA).
	Noise and Light	The existing transmission line does not generate detectable noise or light. The renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities would continue to have temporary increases in noise from aerial surveys and vehicle traffic (expected frequency is twice per year at the most); however, this would be similar to what has been occurring for nearly 50 years. No changes in light levels are expected. Therefore, there would be no measurable change in noise and light from the renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities.
	Visual	The existing transmission line has been visible for nearly 50 years. There would be no measurable change in visual resources from the renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities.
	Public Health and Safety	No threats to public health or safety have been identified from the existing transmission line and associated ROW. The renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities would not result in changes that would affect public health and safety to a measurable degree. The future O&M activities would ensure safe and reliable operation of the transmission line.
	Climate Change (Greenhouse gases)	The renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities would result in negligible increases in greenhouse gases from helicopters/airplanes and vehicles (expected frequency is twice per year at the most). Due to the small number of vehicles and infrequency of O&M activities, the Proposed Action would have no measurable effect on climate change.
	Hazardous Materials	The renewed and new ROW grants and associated future O&M activities would not result in the production of

Principle Components of the Human Environment		Rationale for Elimination
		hazardous materials. Gasoline, diesel fuel, and lubricants are generally the only hazardous materials used during O&M activities. These hazardous materials would be transported to and from the ROW in appropriate containers. In the event of a spill, RMP would implement their hazardous materials BMP (see Appendix B). Therefore, the resource values in or near the ROW would not be affected to a measurable degree by hazardous materials.

References:

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). 2021. Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Database for Fort Hall Area, Idaho, Parts of Bannock, Bingham, Caribou, and Power Counties (ID710). Available online: https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm. Accessed January 12, 2022.

United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). 2021. Green Book, Idaho Nonattainment/Maintenance Status for Each County by Year for All Criteria Pollutants. November 30,2021. Available: https://www3.epa.gov/airquality/greenbook/anayo_id.html.

APPENDIX B – ROCKY MOUNTAIN POWER'S BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Rocky Mountain Power's Best Management Practices for the Rocky Mountain Power 345 Kilovolt Goshen to Kinport Transmission Line Right-of-Way Grants Project

General Operations and Maintenance Best Management Practices (BMPs)

All operations and maintenance (O&M) activities would be conducted with due regard to preventing damage to sensitive vegetation, timber, soil, agricultural lands (crops), roads, and improvements, while preventing soil erosion and pollution of habitat and water. Current methods and up-to-date products applicable to O&M activities would be used, including utility vegetation management.

Notifications – Prior to conducting future O&M activities, Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) would notify the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and individual owners of fee lands as follows:

- Emergency Situations (i.e., when there is a public health and safety hazard or imminent damage to environment is expected, or if service needs to be restored):
    - In emergency situations, RMP may conduct repair work without first notifying the land administrator and landowner. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, Reclamation, and other owners of fee lands would be notified as soon as possible and at least within 72 hours of any emergency O&M activities occurring.
- Non-Emergency Notifications:
    - Shoshone-Bannock Tribes and BIA – At least 30 days and no more than 90 days prior.
    - Owners of other fee lands (non-Reclamation) – At least 30 days and no more than 90 days prior.
    - Reclamation – At least 7 days and no more than 30 days prior.

Air Quality (Fugitive Dust) – RMP would ensure that the opacity is 20 percent or less during O&M activities. Any materials deposited on paved roads that may create fugitive dust would be promptly cleaned up.

Cultural and Paleontological Resources – Cultural and historic properties would always be respected. The identified cultural resource sites within the area of potential effect (APE, i.e., right-of-way (ROW)) are on Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' tribal and allotted trust lands administered by the BIA and on fee lands. The properties do not face either direct or indirect effects from the associated future O&M activities. No intrusive or mechanical O&M activities would take place within any of the site's footprints.

If any previously undetected or unreported cultural or archaeological features or deposits are encountered during future O&M activities, these activities would be discontinued within 100 feet of the features, and a reasonable effort would be made to protect the features. The BIA Regional Archaeologist, Reclamation Upper Snake Field Office (USFO) Archaeologist, and Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) would be notified orally and via email immediately to evaluate their nature and significance. RMP would then submit a written report on the findings to BIA, Reclamation, and Idaho SHPO archaeologists within 48 hours.

If any human remains or burial objects are discovered during ground-disturbing activities, all activities would be stopped, a reasonable effort would be made to protect the discoveries, and the discoveries would be reported orally and via email to the BIA Regional Archaeologist, Reclamation USFO Archaeologist, and Idaho SHPO immediately. Work would not resume until written approval is received from the BIA Regional Archaeologist, Reclamation USFO Archaeologist, and Idaho SHPO. RMP would follow-up with a written report of their finding(s) to the BIA Regional Archaeologist, Reclamation USFO Archaeologist, and Idaho SHPO within 48 hours. Any protective and mitigation measures specified by the BIA Regional Archaeologist, Reclamation USFO Archaeologist, and Idaho SHPO would be the responsibility of RMP.

Indian Sacred Sites –RMP would coordinate with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation prior to conducting future O&M activities in the ROW to determine any avoidance, monitoring, or other requirements for working in or near any Indian Sacred Sites.

Water Resources – During routine ground inspections, wet soils or flooded areas would be avoided. Instead, another method would be used to inspect these areas, such as via air, or the structure would be inspected from a distance. Soil, debris or slash generated through management activities would not be placed in any waterbody. O&M activities would avoid wetlands and other aquatic habitat, and existing access roads would be used to cross them. The activities would also be conducted in a manner to minimize ground disturbance adjacent to drainages, and erosion control measures would be used where needed to minimize sediment from entering drainages. In the event that maintenance activities are needed in wetlands or other waters of the United States, RMP would coordinate with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, Reclamation, and United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) prior to conducting the activities to determine any field survey and permitting requirements, construction measures (such as use of matting and steel plates), and reclamation standards.

Migratory Birds/Raptors – Intrusive O&M activities would be performed outside of the breeding season for most raptors and migratory birds, where practicable. However, if activities are needed during the breeding season, RMP or their designated contractor would contact the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation to solicit input on conducting a nest survey. Areas with occupied/active nests would be avoided, as practicable, until later in the season. Any work performed around active nests would be conducted in a manner, which minimizes disturbance by providing an appropriate seasonal and spatial buffer (distance from the nest) according to United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) recommendations. O&M activities would proceed in areas around nests that have been identified as unoccupied/inactive for the season. If nests on trees or structures require removal for safe operation of the transmission line, RMP Environmental Services would be notified and the removal of the nest or tree would be coordinated with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation, and permitted with the USFWS, as applicable.

PacifiCorp's Bird Management Program operates within all the terms and conditions in its state and federal permits and new lines are constructed to meet or exceed the recommendations contained in current Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC) guidelines (APLIC 2006; APLIC 2012). Its employees and contractors receive training and are expected to comply with all components of PacifiCorp's Bird Management Program.

Threatened/Endangered/Candidate Species – Prior to surface disturbing activities, RMP would coordinate with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation to identify any field survey requirements or conservation measures for Ute ladies'-tresses, yellow-billed cuckoo, and monarch butterfly and determine the need to coordinate with the USFWS. No wetlands or waterbodies would be directly impacted (see Water Resources BMP above for additional details) without first assessing habitat suitability for Ute ladies'-tresses. Pre-disturbance clearance surveys, if warranted, would follow protocol approved by Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation. The survey would be conducted during the appropriate survey window (i.e., flowering period for Ute ladies'-tresses and breeding period for yellow-billed cuckoo and monarch butterfly). If a species is detected, conservation measures would be designed and implemented in coordination with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation to avoid effects to the species, with appropriate review and approval from USFWS.

Invasive and Noxious Weeds – As practicable, before beginning O&M activities in the ROW, RMP or their designated contractors would, at an off-site location, clean vehicles and equipment that would operate off-road or disturb the ground. To limit the spread and establishment of invasive and noxious weed species in disturbed areas, reclamation activities on significantly disturbed areas would take place as soon as possible after ground-disturbing activities and during the optimal period for vegetative re-establishment.

Soils – Wet soils and areas would be avoided as practicable to minimize disturbance and no work would be conducted when equipment creates ruts more than four inches deep (except in an emergency).

Reclamation – Soil disturbed by O&M activities would be restored to as near as possible to its original condition. Disturbed areas would be revegetated with an approved "noxious weed free" seed mix, as needed, per Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation requirements. Mulch material would also be "noxious weed free".

Waste Material – Generation of waste materials (e.g., human waste, trash/garbage, refuse, oil drums, petroleum products) would be minimized. Any waste generated during O&M activities would be removed and properly disposed of in an approved manner.

Hazardous Materials – Appropriate measures to prevent and contain accidental discharge of hazardous materials (i.e., any substance, pollutant, or contaminant listed as hazardous under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, as amended, 42 United States Code 9601, et seq., and the regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act) would be implemented. Gasoline, diesel fuel, and lubricants are generally the only hazardous materials used during O&M activities. In the event of a spill, the crew is expected to act immediately to safely contain the spill, contact appropriate authorities, and remove and properly dispose of contaminated materials, including soils unless otherwise directed. Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation would be notified of any contamination or pollution within 24 hours of the discovery if it is an emergency, or by the first working day in a non-emergency.

Fire Prevention – Vehicles would be equipped with a mobile radio and a fire extinguisher and have heat-shielded catalytic converters.

Vegetation Management BMPs and Management Methods

The following BMPs and management methods specifically address vegetation management and are in addition to the General O&M BMPs.

International Society of Arboriculture – RMP and its designated contractors would adhere to the International Society of Arboriculture BMPs as found in *Best Management Practices: Utility Pruning of Trees*, 2004; and the International Society of Arboriculture's *Integrated Vegetation Management – Best Management Practices*, 2007 (or more recent editions of these manuals).

Integrated Vegetation Management – Integrated vegetation management is conducted during routine maintenance activities. Integrated vegetation management is a management system that identifies undesirable vegetation, considers threshold actions and environmental factors, and evaluates possible control options or combinations of control options. With proper integrated vegetation management, low-growing vegetation should dominate the ROW, limiting undesirable, incompatible, and potentially hazardous tall vegetation. This ultimately reduces the need for future vegetation management activities, and it minimizes soil disturbance and reduces fire risk. The following BMPs apply to manual, mechanical, and herbicide control methods, which are commonly implemented as part of the integrated vegetation management:

Manual Methods BMPs – When conducting manual vegetation management, all applicable general O&M BMPs would be followed, in addition to the following procedural BMPs:

- Tree Removal (Procedural) – Tree removal BMPs pertain only to transmission lines where the ROW is wide enough to accommodate the wire-border-zone methodology as follows:
    - Region A – Areas where transmission lines are less than 50 feet off the ground. Vegetation management of the ROW in this region follows the wire-border-zone recommendations of Bramble and Byrnes.
    - Region B – Areas where transmission lines are between 50 and 100 feet off the ground. A border zone is established in this zone throughout the ROW. Trees with a potential mature height that provide less than 50 feet of clearance to the conductor would be removed within this region.

  - Region C – Areas where transmission lines are 100 feet or more off the ground. Trees with less than 50 feet of clearance would be removed within this region.
  - Hazard trees would be removed if there is a high probability of interfering with distribution facilities.
  - Stumps would be cut to within six inches of the ground or as low as practicable.
- Debris/Slash Management – Methods of slash dispersal (i.e., stacking, chipping, and spreading) would be in accordance with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes', BIA's, and Reclamation's guidelines and/or recommendations. Management of slash could result in enhanced wildlife habitat, reduced wildfire hazard, and reduced soil erosion where clearing is conducted.

Mechanical Methods BMPs – When conducting mechanical vegetation management, all applicable general O&M BMPs would be followed, in addition to the following procedural BMPs:

- Ground Disturbance would be minimized through implementation of the following BMPs:
  - Mechanical equipment that causes ground disturbance would not be used on areas that exceed slope thresholds recommended by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, Reclamation or as a general guideline and as practicable, on slopes in excess of 20 percent where recommendations are not given.
  - To prevent rutting, use of ground disturbing or heavy mechanical clearing activities would be conducted when the ground is sufficiently dry.
  - Highly compactable soils would be worked on during the dry season for the area when using ground disturbing mechanical equipment.
  - Highly-erosive soils are to be avoided, as practicable, when using ground disturbing mechanical equipment.
- Tree Removal – See Tree Removal (Procedural) under Manual Methods above.
- Debris/Slash Management – See Debris/Slash Management under Manual Methods above.

Herbicide BMPs – Herbicide use is part of the integrated vegetation management and intended to select against tall growing, ROW incompatible species. Herbicides would be used only in approved areas. To ensure proper use of approved herbicides, RMP and its designated contractors would adhere to all applicable general O&M BMPs in addition to the following procedural BMPs:

- *Approved Herbicides* – Only herbicides approved by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation and that have been reviewed by RMP for effectiveness and environmental considerations would be used.
- *Procedural BMPs*:
  - Crews would follow product label mandatory provisions such as registered uses, maximum use rates, application restrictions, worker safety standards, restricted entry intervals, environmental hazards, weather restrictions, and equipment cleaning.
  - Crews would follow all product label advisory statements such as mixing instructions, recommendations for protective clothing and other matters.
  - A copy of the herbicide label and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) would be retained onsite during use of herbicides.
  - Herbicide applications would be conducted in the presence of a licensed applicator valid for Idaho and in accordance with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation stipulations.
  - All herbicide applications would be documented (in a Daily Report), detailing active ingredient(s), rate, date, location, etc. and made available for inspection and review by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation.
- *Waterbodies* – Appropriate buffer zones would be established and adhered to when applying herbicides near any waterbody. To decrease the risk of migration to a waterbody, climate, geology, and soil types would be considered when formulating the herbicide mix.

- *Threatened/Endangered/Candidate Species* – Appropriate buffer zones would be established and adhered to when applying herbicides near any suitable habitat for Ute ladies'-tresses or monarch butterfly.
- *Application Methods* – The appropriate application method(s) would be used to ensure effectiveness and reduce the possibility of drift and leaching. Drift reduction agents would be used when necessary. Herbicide would not be sprayed when the wind velocity exceeds recommended limits for general application and application near open water. Spray detection cards would be used to monitor drift when deemed necessary.
- *Migratory Birds and Other Wildlife* – The broadcast application method of herbicides would not be used within established distances (determined in cooperation with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, Reclamation, and USFWS) from known migratory bird nests and other wildlife breeding zones, such as aquatic habitats.
- *Spills and Misapplications* – To reduce the risk of accidental spills of herbicides, all associated equipment would be well maintained and operated by trained personnel. Absorptive material would always be available during use of herbicides. In the event of a spill or misapplication, the applicator and crew would:
    1) Contain the spill or halt the misapplication
    2) Isolate the area
    3) Call the Spill Hotline: 800.94.SPILL; report to Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, BIA, and Reclamation
    4) Request the help of and notify the supervisor and RMP
    5) Clean-up the spill
    6) Wash the affected equipment and vehicles
    7) Properly dispose of cleanup materials
    8) Follow-up with the appropriate documentation

APPENDIX C – USFWS THREATENED/ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST FOR THE PROJECT

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Idaho Fish And Wildlife Office
1387 South Vinnell Way, Suite 368
Boise, ID 83709-1657
Phone: (208) 378-5243 Fax: (208) 378-5262

In Reply Refer To: January 21, 2022
Consultation Code: 01EIFW00-2022-SLI-0674
Event Code: 01EIFW00-2022-E-01873
Project Name: Goshen to Kinport Transmission Line ROW Renewal

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the ECOS-IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the ECOS-IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)

(c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at:

http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/TOC-GLOS.PDF

Please be aware that bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668 *et seq.*), and projects affecting these species may require development of an eagle conservation plan (https://ww.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/management/eagleconservtionplanguidance.pdf). Additionally, wind energy projects should follow the wind energy guidelines (https://www.fws.gov/ecologica-servces/energy-develpment/wind/html) for minimizing impacts to migratory birds and bats.

Guidance for minimizing impacts to migratory birds for projects including communications towers (e.g., cellular, digital television, radio, and emergency broadcast) can be found at: https://www.fws.ov/bidsbird-enthusiasts/threats-to-birds/collisions/communication-towers.php.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Tracking Number in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- USFWS National Wildlife Refuges and Fish Hatcheries
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

Official Species List

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Idaho Fish And Wildlife Office
1387 South Vinnell Way, Suite 368
Boise, ID 83709-1657
(208) 378-5243

Project Summary

Consultation Code: 01EIFW00-2022-SLI-0674
Event Code: Some(01EIFW00-2022-E-01873)
Project Name: Goshen to Kinport Transmission Line ROW Renewal
Project Type: TRANSMISSION LINE
Project Description: Rocky Mountain Power proposes to renew the ROW grant for a 37-mile-long portion of its existing 345 kV transmission line located on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation in Idaho. The 70-foot ROW would be renewed on Shoshone-Bannock Tribes tribal and allotted trust lands administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and other fee lands. Portions of the transmission line (0.7 mile in total) traverse lands administered by the Bureau of Reclamation land, and would require a new ROW grant because no grant could be located these lands. The renewed and new ROW grants would allow RMP to continue to operate and maintain the transmission line for a term of 25 years. No new ground disturbance is proposed. All future operation and maintenance activities would be confined to the ROW.

Project Location:

Approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: https://www.google.com/maps/@43.07364785,-112.3389386392553,14z

Counties: Bannock, Bingham, and Power counties, Idaho

Endangered Species Act Species

There is a total of 3 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries[1], as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

---

1. NOAA Fisheries, also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

Birds

NAME	STATUS
Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus* Population: Western U.S. DPS There is **final** critical habitat for this species. The location of the critical habitat is not available. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3911	Threatened

Insects

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Candidate

Flowering Plants

NAME	STATUS
Ute Ladies'-tresses *Spiranthes diluvialis* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/2159	Threatened

Critical habitats

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

USFWS National Wildlife Refuge Lands And Fish Hatcheries

Any activity proposed on lands managed by the National Wildlife Refuge system must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. Please contact the individual Refuges to discuss any questions or concerns.

THERE ARE NO REFUGE LANDS OR FISH HATCHERIES WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA.

Migratory Birds

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act[1] and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act[2].

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described below.

---

1. The Migratory Birds Treaty Act of 1918.
2. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940.
3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

THERE ARE NO FWS MIGRATORY BIRDS OF CONCERN WITHIN THE VICINITY OF YOUR PROJECT AREA.

Migratory Birds FAQ

Tell me more about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds.

Nationwide Conservation Measures describes measures that can help avoid and minimize impacts to all birds at any location year round. Implementation of these measures is particularly important when birds are most likely to occur in the project area. When birds may be breeding in the area, identifying the locations of any active nests and avoiding their destruction is a very helpful impact minimization measure. To see when birds are most likely to occur and be breeding in your project area, view the Probability of Presence Summary. Additional measures or permits may be advisable depending on the type of activity you are conducting and the type of infrastructure or bird species present on your project site.

What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?

The Migratory Bird Resource List is comprised of USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC) and other species that may warrant special attention in your project location.

The migratory bird list generated for your project is derived from data provided by the Avian Knowledge Network (AKN). The AKN data is based on a growing collection of survey, banding, and citizen science datasets and is queried and filtered to return a list of those birds reported as occurring in the 10km grid cell(s) which your project intersects, and that have been identified as warranting special attention because they are a BCC species in that area, an eagle (Eagle Act requirements may apply), or a species that has a particular vulnerability to offshore activities or development.

Again, the Migratory Bird Resource list includes only a subset of birds that may occur in your project area. It is not representative of all birds that may occur in your project area. To get a list of all birds potentially present in your project area, please visit the AKN Phenology Tool.

What does IPaC use to generate the probability of presence graphs for the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?
The probability of presence graphs associated with your migratory bird list are based on data provided by the Avian Knowledge Network (AKN). This data is derived from a growing collection of survey, banding, and citizen science datasets .

Probability of presence data is continuously being updated as new and better information becomes available. To learn more about how the probability of presence graphs are produced and how to interpret them, go the Probability of Presence Summary and then click on the "Tell me about these graphs" link.

How do I know if a bird is breeding, wintering, migrating or present year-round in my project area?
To see what part of a particular bird's range your project area falls within (i.e. breeding, wintering, migrating or year-round), you may refer to the following resources: The Cornell Lab of Ornithology All About Birds Bird Guide, or (if you are unsuccessful in locating the bird of interest there), the Cornell Lab of Ornithology Neotropical Birds guide. If a bird on your migratory bird species list has a breeding season associated with it, if that bird does occur in your project area, there may be nests present at some point within the timeframe specified. If "Breeds elsewhere" is indicated, then the bird likely does not breed in your project area.

What are the levels of concern for migratory birds?
Migratory birds delivered through IPaC fall into the following distinct categories of concern:

1. "BCC Rangewide" birds are Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC) that are of concern throughout their range anywhere within the USA (including Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands);
2. "BCC - BCR" birds are BCCs that are of concern only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA; and
3. "Non-BCC - Vulnerable" birds are not BCC species in your project area, but appear on your list either because of the Eagle Act requirements (for eagles) or (for non-eagles) potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities (e.g. offshore energy development or longline fishing).

Although it is important to try to avoid and minimize impacts to all birds, efforts should be made, in particular, to avoid and minimize impacts to the birds on this list, especially eagles and BCC species of rangewide concern. For more information on conservation measures you can implement to help avoid and minimize migratory bird impacts and requirements for eagles, please see the FAQs for these topics.

Details about birds that are potentially affected by offshore projects
For additional details about the relative occurrence and abundance of both individual bird species and groups of bird species within your project area off the Atlantic Coast, please visit the Northeast Ocean Data Portal. The Portal also offers data and information about other taxa besides birds that may be helpful to you in your project review. Alternately, you may download the bird model results files underlying the portal maps through the NOAA NCCOS Integrative Statistical

Modeling and Predictive Mapping of Marine Bird Distributions and Abundance on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf project webpage.

Bird tracking data can also provide additional details about occurrence and habitat use throughout the year, including migration. Models relying on survey data may not include this information. For additional information on marine bird tracking data, see the Diving Bird Study and the nanotag studies or contact Caleb Spiegel or Pam Loring.

What if I have eagles on my list?
If your project has the potential to disturb or kill eagles, you may need to obtain a permit to avoid violating the Eagle Act should such impacts occur.

Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report
The migratory bird list generated is not a list of all birds in your project area, only a subset of birds of priority concern. To learn more about how your list is generated, and see options for identifying what other birds may be in your project area, please see the FAQ "What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location". Please be aware this report provides the "probability of presence" of birds within the 10 km grid cell(s) that overlap your project; not your exact project footprint. On the graphs provided, please also look carefully at the survey effort (indicated by the black vertical bar) and for the existence of the "no data" indicator (a red horizontal bar). A high survey effort is the key component. If the survey effort is high, then the probability of presence score can be viewed as more dependable. In contrast, a low survey effort bar or no data bar means a lack of data and, therefore, a lack of certainty about presence of the species. This list is not perfect; it is simply a starting point for identifying what birds of concern have the potential to be in your project area, when they might be there, and if they might be breeding (which means nests might be present). The list helps you know what to look for to confirm presence, and helps guide you in knowing when to implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize potential impacts from your project activities, should presence be confirmed. To learn more about conservation measures, visit the FAQ "Tell me about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds" at the bottom of your migratory bird trust resources page.

Wetlands

Impacts to NWI wetlands and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District.

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

WETLAND INFORMATION WAS NOT AVAILABLE WHEN THIS SPECIES LIST WAS GENERATED. PLEASE VISIT HTTPS://WWW.FWS.GOV/WETLANDS/DATA/MAPPER.HTML OR CONTACT THE FIELD OFFICE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

APPENDIX D – IDAHO SHPO CONCURRENCE LETTERS

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

23 June 2022

Brad Little
Governor of Idaho

Janet Gallimore
Executive Director
State Historic
Preservation Officer

Administration:
2205 Old Penitentiary Rd.
Boise, Idaho 83712
208.334.2682
Fax: 208.334.2774

Idaho State Museum:
610 Julia Davis Dr.
Boise, Idaho 83702
208.334.2120

Idaho State Archives and State Records Center:
2205 Old Penitentiary Rd.
Boise, Idaho 83712
208.334.2620

State Historic Preservation Office:
210 Main St.
Boise, Idaho 83702
208.334.3861

Old Idaho Penitentiary and Historic Sites:
2445 Old Penitentiary Rd.
Boise, Idaho 83712
208.334.2844

HISTORY.IDAHO.GOV

Bryan Mercier
Northwest Regional Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs
911 Northwest 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232

Re: 345-kV Goshen to Kinport Transmission Line Right-of-Way Grants Project, Bingham, Bannock, and Power Counties, Idaho.
SHPO Review No.: 2022-295

Dear Mr. Mercier:

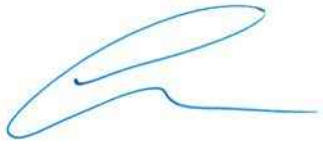
Thank you for consulting with our office on the above referenced project. We understand the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is proposing to renew the Right-of-Way (ROW) grant for the existing 345-kilovolt (kV) Goshen to Kinport steel structure transmission line segment on Reservation tribal and allotted trust lands administered by the BIA, and fee lands owned by the Tribes, individual Indian, or individual non-Indian-administered fee lands. The ROW grants would allow Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) to continue to access, operate, and maintain its existing transmission line. The ROW for the current undertaking is approximately 37 miles in length and 140 feet in width encompassing 561.5 acres on tribal and allotted trust lands administered by the BIA (33.2 miles), 50.3 acres on fee lands (2.8 miles) (i.e., non-BOR fee lands), and 12.0 acres on BOR-administered lands (withdrawn lands and fee lands) (0.7 miles) within the Reservation in Bingham, Bannock, and Power counties, Idaho. No new construction, modifications, or other ground disturbing activities are planned at this time within the proposed area of potential effect (APE)

On 26 May 2022, our office received an updated inventory report and accompanying site records prepared by Tetra Tech, Inc. The report documented the presence of seven previously identified resources (11-17111, 77-17112, 11-17787, 11-17818, 11-17822, 11-17856, and 10BM942) and three newly identified (Temporary No.: CH-01, CH-02, and KG-CR001) within the APE. Tetra Tech evaluated and recommended 11-17111, 77-17112, 11-17787, 11-17818, 11-17822, and 11-17856 eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criteria A. In addition, Tetra Tech evaluated and recommended 10BM942, CH-01, CH-02, and KG-CR001 not eligible to the NRHP under any criteria. In accordance with the recommendations of the inventory report, BIA has determined that the proposed work would not adversely affect the character defining attributes that make the historic property eligible to the NRHP. After careful consideration, our office concurs with these findings as presented.

Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.5, we have applied the criteria of effect to the proposed undertaking. Based on the information received 26 May 2022, we find the proposed project actions will have **no adverse effect** to historic properties.

In the event that cultural material is inadvertently encountered during the implementation of this project, work shall be halted in the vicinity of the finds until they can be inspected and assessed by the appropriate consulting parties. If you have any questions, or the scope of the work changes, please contact me at chris.shaver@ishs.idaho.gov or (208) 488-7467.

Sincerely,



Christopher L. Shaver
Compliance Archaeologist
Idaho State Historic Preservation Office

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2 May 2022

Brad Little
Governor of Idaho

Janet Gallimore
Executive Director
State Historic
Preservation Officer

Administration:
2205 Old Penitentiary Rd.
Boise, Idaho 83712
208.334.2682
Fax: 208.334.2774

Idaho State Museum:
610 Julia Davis Dr.
Boise, Idaho 83702
208.334.2120

Idaho State Archives and State Records Center:
2205 Old Penitentiary Rd.
Boise, Idaho 83712
208.334.2620

State Historic Preservation Office:
210 Main St.
Boise, Idaho 83702
208.334.3861

Old Idaho Penitentiary and Historic Sites:
2445 Old Penitentiary Rd.
Boise, Idaho 83712
208.334.2844

HISTORY.IDAHO.GOV

Melanie Paquin
Bureau of Reclamation
230 Collins Road
Boise, ID 83702-4520
jrilk@usbr.gov

Via Email

RE: Invitation to Consult on the Proposed Authorization of an Existing Powerline across Reclamation Lands in Power and Bannock Counties, Minidoka Project, Idaho/ SRA-1219 / 2.1.1.04 / SHPO Rev. No. 2022-366

Dear Ms. Paquin:

Thank you for consulting with our office on the above-referenced project. The State Historic Preservation Office is providing comments to the Bureau of Reclamation pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR § 800. Consultation with the SHPO is not a substitution for consultation with Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, other Native American tribes, local governments, or the public.

It is our understanding that the scope of the undertaking will include authorization of an existing powerline that crosses through the Fort Hall Indian Reservation and four small portions of Reclamation lands at American Falls Reservoir. This review is limited to Reclamation lands in T5S, R33E Sections 13, 14, 24, 25 and 26.

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.5, we have applied the criteria of effect to the proposed undertaking. Based on the information received 18, we concur the proposed project actions will have **no effect to historic properties.**

If cultural material is inadvertently encountered during the implementation of this project, work shall be halted in the vicinity of the finds until they can be inspected and assessed by the appropriate consulting parties.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please note that our response does not affect the review timelines afforded to other consulting parties. Additionally, the information provided by other consulting parties may

cause us to revise our comments. If you have any questions or the scope of work changes, please contact me via phone or email at 208.488.7463 or ashley.molloy@ishs.idaho.gov.

Sincerely,

Ashley L. Molloy, M.A.
Historical Review Officer
Idaho State Historic Preservation Office