

**BANNACK STATE PARK**  
**Dillon Salmon/Bannack**  
**69 kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project**  
**DECISION NOTICE**

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
1400 S. 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Bozeman, MT 59718

June 5, 2006

Description of the Proposed Action:

North Western Energy proposes a project which is classified as development and maintenance, and consists of (1) new construction of approximately 355.2 feet of 69 kV transmission line, and (2) removing approximately 2,240.0 feet of existing 69 kV transmission line. Both project areas are located within Bannack State Park, Montana. Project activities within the new construction portion of the project area will include the installation of a single circuit 69 kV transmission line, four single wood pole structures, and 13 guy wires attached to seven anchors. The proposed new construction and removal project is intended to improve transmission reliability to customers in the local areas and extend the useful life of the power line.

There will be 10 structures removed from the Bannack State Park land. The 10 structures consist of eight single poles and two H-frames, which total 12 wooden poles. One of the structures (a single pole) to be removed is in the vicinity of the Vigilante REA Bannack Substation and the new construction project area; the single pole structure will be replaced with another single pole structure. The replacement of this single-pole structure is included in the total number of poles, guy wires, and anchors to be installed as a result of new construction provided above.

One of the guy wires and one of the anchors listed above is to down guy one static wire of a double static wire configuration on the existing Vigilante REA 69 kV line. This will also be in the vicinity of the Vigilante REA Bannack Substation and within Bannack State Park land.

Public Comment:

Public notification of the availability of an Environmental Assessment (EA) evaluating this proposed action was published in the Helena Independent Record, the Butte Montana Standard and the Dillon Tribune newspapers and on the FWP website. In addition, neighbors to Bannack State Park and other known interested individuals, agencies and organizations were sent copies of the EA.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) received no comments on this proposal.

Decision:

Based on analyses in the Draft EA, my decision is to adopt the preferred alternative. The preferred alternative would include the construction of 355.2 feet of single circuit 69 kV transmission line, four single wooden pole structures, 13 guy wires, and seven anchors. The preferred alternative would also include the removal of 2,240.0 feet of existing 69 kV transmission line and the subsequent removal of 10 transmission line structures. The 12 wooden poles comprising the 10 structures would be cut-off at the soil surface level and removed from the park if feasible and can be accomplished with a minimum of ground disturbing impacts. Any poles that are difficult to retrieve will be left on site to decompose. North Western Energy and/or their contractors will perform all work. I have evaluated the draft document and applicable laws, regulations, and policies, and have determined that this action will not have a significant effect on the human or natural environment. The completed environmental assessment is an appropriate level of analysis to identify and address all significant issues associated with this project. For this reason, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

There are no modifications to the Draft Environmental Assessment with the exception of the requirement to remove the cut-off wooden poles by North Western Energy. The Draft Environmental Assessment, together with the Decision Notice, will serve as the final document for this proposal.

The Final EA and the Decision Notice for this project is available from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region Three Headquarters, 1400 S. 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Bozeman, MT 59718, or online at: <http://www.fwp.mt.gov/publicnotices>.

Please direct all inquiries to FWP Region Three Headquarters c/o Bannack State Park Dillon Salmon/Bannack 69 kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project EA, at the address provided above.

Patrick J. Flowers  
Region Three Supervisor