

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY
SOUTH PITTSBURG 161-KV DELIVERY POINT
MARION COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Sequatchie Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC), a local power company and distributor of Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) power, currently serves the South Pittsburg, Tennessee area through a series of 69-kV substations. These substations are fed power from TVA's existing Jasper 161-kV Substation via SVEC's Jasper-South Pittsburg 69-kV Transmission Line. Lodge Manufacturing, a local industry in the South Pittsburg area, is planning on a major expansion which will triple SVEC's industrial load in the area. This addition would result in the overloading of the existing 69-kV substations and SVEC's existing transmission lines. As a result, SVEC has requested a new delivery point.

SVEC plans to construct a new 161-kilovolt (kV) substation in South Pittsburg near existing 69-kV substations and has requested TVA to supply power to that substation. TVA proposes to supply electric power to SVEC's new substation by constructing and operating approximately 4 miles of new 161-kV transmission line that would connect the planned substation to TVA's existing Nickajack-Jasper-Raccoon Mountain (tap to Tennol section) 161-kV Transmission Line. The proposed transmission line would be completed by June 2015 or as soon as possible after that date.

The proposed action is the subject of an environmental assessment (EA) prepared by Tennessee Valley Authority-TVA. The EA is incorporated by reference.

Two alternatives (i.e., the No Action Alternative and the Action Alternative) were addressed in the EA. Under the No Action Alternative, TVA would not undertake the proposed action. Under the Action Alternative, TVA would serve SVEC's planned South Pittsburg 161-kV Substation by building a 4-mile long 161-kV transmission line. TVA would install two switch structures – one within the right-of-way of the Nickajack-Jasper-Raccoon Mountain (tap to Tennol section) 161-kV Transmission Line and one within the new tap line right-of-way. Additionally, TVA would provide metering equipment to SVEC for installation at the new South Pittsburg 161-kV Substation and modify the TVA system's map board at the System Operations Center and Regional Operations Center in Chattanooga to include the names and numbers of the new transmission line and the SVEC substation.

The proposed transmission line would be built on a 100-foot-wide ROW and would occupy approximately 50 acres. Temporary access roads would be required for construction and maintenance of the proposed transmission line. TVA would also construct a new permanent access road to facilitate access to the switches. The Action Alternative is TVA's preferred alternative.

Potential effects related to air quality, hazardous and nonhazardous wastes, and health and safety were considered. Because of the nature of the action, any potential effects to these resources would be minor and insignificant and were therefore not analyzed in detail. No land considered prime farmland would be converted or committed to non-agricultural use. Implementation of the proposed action would result in minor effects to groundwater and local

geological characteristics, surface water quality, aquatic life, local wildlife, and local aesthetic character.

Construction of the proposed transmission line would require the clearing of approximately 14 acres of forest. Because Marion County contains approximately 1.3 million acres of forest land, this loss would be minor and insignificant. The balance of the approximately 50 acres necessary for the proposed line would likely remain available for agricultural uses. Because cleared areas would be revegetated with noninvasive species, construction is not expected to facilitate the spread of invasive plants.

Effects to floodplain functions are expected to be minor and insignificant; thus, the proposed action is consistent with Executive Order 11988. TVA considered all feasible and practicable alternatives to avoid and minimize adverse effects to wetlands. Nevertheless, approximately 0.91 acre of forested wetlands would be converted to emergent wetlands. The cumulative loss of local wetlands would be minor and insignificant.

The provision of a new power source in the South Pittsburg area would help maintain local economic stability and ensure the potential for industrial expansion in the area. No disproportionate effects to any economically disadvantaged or minority populations are anticipated.

The proposed transmission line construction would remove approximately 2.1 acres of suitable summer roosting habitat for the Indiana bat and the northern long-eared bat. Because clearing would occur during the winter and early spring, when these bats are hibernating in caves (see Mitigation section below), TVA determined that the proposed action may effect, but would not likely adversely affect Indiana bats nor would the actions jeopardize the existence of the northern long-eared bat. Informal consultation with USFWS was initiated on July 2, 2014. This led to a Memorandum of Agreement between TVA and USFWS wherein TVA contributed \$7,980 to Tennessee's Indiana Bat Conservation Fund for the removal of 2.1 acres of suitable Indiana bat summer roosting habitat. This fulfills TVA's obligations under the Endangered Species Act.

Based on the analyses in the EA, there would be no effects to archaeological or architectural resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic. TVA redesigned the proposed transmission line route to avoid adverse effects to archaeological resources. TVA determined that the proposed action would not affect archaeological resources within the defined Area of Potential Effect or to the South Pittsburg Historic District. The Tennessee State Historic Preservation Office concurred with this determination.

Mitigation

TVA will implement the routine environmental protection measures listed in Section 2.6 of the EA. Additionally, as stated in Section 2.6 of the EA, TVA will implement the following non-routine measures in accordance with the stipulations of the Memorandum of Agreement between TVA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

- TVA will remove the suitable roost trees between the dates of November 15, 2014 and March 31, 2015 (i.e., when this habitat is unoccupied because the bats are hibernating elsewhere).
- TVA contributed \$7,980 to Tennessee's Indiana Bat Conservation Fund to promote the conservation and recovery of Indiana bat.

Conclusion and Findings

Based on the findings listed above and the analyses in the EA, TVA concludes that the proposed action of providing a 161-kV delivery point to the planned SVEC substation in South Pittsburg, Tennessee would not be a major federal action significantly affecting the environment. This finding of no significance is contingent upon adherence to the mitigation measures described above. Accordingly, an environmental impact statement is not required.



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Date Signed