Appendix L—Framework Traffic and Transportation Management Plan

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Traffic and Transportation Management Plan addresses regulatory compliance, traffic management practices, levels of right-of-way access, and protection measures to help reduce impacts related to transportation and the construction of temporary and long-term access within the vicinity of the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project (Project).

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to provide the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and other public agencies and the Construction Contractor with a description of the type of access associated with the construction, operation, and maintenance of this Project, and make evident the potential impacts which could be created by construction and operation of the Project. The goal of this plan is to ensure that impacts from construction of the transmission line and any associated access are kept to a minimum through the use of management practices and mitigation measures described throughout this appendix. These practices and measures are intended to mitigate the effects of transportation on environmental resources, roads, traffic, travel, and road safety.

3.0 REGULATORY

A number of agencies have jurisdiction over the transportation-related components of the Project. These include the BLM, the Oregon Department of Transportation, Idaho Transportation Department, Federal Highway Administration, local law enforcement and road departments and local highway districts in the counties crossed by the Project. Encroachment permit applications will need to be filed with appropriate road agencies for those areas where the transmission line crosses public roads prior to construction.

Other permits and approvals not directly related to transportation could affect the construction, use, and/or maintenance of roads in certain areas. Persons responsible for Project transportation activities must be familiar with all relevant sections of Project's Plan of Development (POD).

4.0 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Ground travel will be the primary means of transporting construction and maintenance crews and equipment during Project construction. Helicopters will be used as deemed necessary. All vehicles will obey jurisdictional traffic speed regulations and the posted speed limit. Speeds along access roads and spur roads within the right-of-way may be limited to 15 mph in some areas to prevent excessive amounts of construction related dust, as necessary.

Before construction, authorized access routes will be clearly marked in the field with signs or flagging. The Construction Contractor will review the location of permitted access and will be responsible for ensuring construction travel is limited to designated areas that clearly identify the limits of disturbance.

All field personnel will attend an environmental training program. Through this program, field personnel will be instructed to use only approved access roads, drive within the delineated road limits, and obey jurisdictional and posted speed limits to minimize potential impacts to biological, paleontological, and cultural resources.

Every effort will be made to minimize the effects of the Project construction activities on public transportation and to provide for public safety. The Construction Contractor, and all environmental monitors will maintain a communications network that consists of one or both of the following devices: two-way radios or cellular phones. This will allow for coordination of equipment traffic along existing access roads so public safety, traffic impacts, and resource impacts are minimized. In addition, any necessary permits for the movement of equipment and materials will be obtained and complied with.

In general, the number of construction vehicles needed for the Project is not expected to substantially increase traffic volumes. Similarly, road and land closures are anticipated to be minimal, and will most likely occur during conductor stringing activities or during blasting. If road and lane closures are needed, the appropriate regulatory agencies, affected parties, and emergency service providers will be notified in advance.

Although construction traffic is not expected to disrupt access to residences along the right-of-way, adjacent landowners will be notified of the construction schedule (where appropriate). Signs will be posted in the Project area to notify landowners and others of the construction activity. Flagging will be maintained until final cleanup and/or reclamation is completed, after which they will be removed.

A flagging scheme will be included in the final plan covering:

- Project access road;
- Temporary work areas (pulling sites, material yards, etc.);
- Protected animals/plants or sensitive environmental areas;
- Invasive weed cleaning stations;
- Proposed structure locations;
- Structure offsets;
- Outside edge of permitted right-of-way or centerline; and
- Cadastral survey monument

Construction crews will park only in designated areas and will be shuttled to the appropriate work sites if necessary.

5.0 LEVELS OF RIGHT-OF-WAY ACCESS

Access to the Project right-of-way and other areas (e.g., staging areas), will be needed for Project construction, operation, and maintenance activities. Listed below are five types of roadways that will be used for this transmission line.

5.1 Paved Roads

These roads are typically highways and state routes and will be used for travel to existing and new dirt roads to access the right-of-way. No staking will be required for this type of access.

5.2 Existing Unpaved Roads Not Requiring Improvements

These are existing dirt or gravel roads that generally will not require any improvements to support construction vehicles to access the right-of-way. Regular maintenance for construction (regarding wash-out areas, graveling, and installation of gravel pads for controlling trackout) is allowed in these areas. The outer edge of existing dirt access roads that have been approved for the Project will be staked. If it is determined that one of these roads does need improvement, IPC must be notified in writing and the necessary environmental inspections (biological, cultural, paleontological) conducted before any improvements can be initiated.

5.3 Existing Unpaved Roads Requiring Improvements

These are existing dirt or gravel roads that may require improvements to support construction vehicles to access the right-of-way, and may be widened to a minimum of 14 feet wide travel way. Improvements to these existing roads may include road widening, road straightening/realignment, mowing, blading, tree removal, and bridge/culvert construction. These new roads will require reclamation to pre-construction condition if they are not identified as service roads for future operation and maintenance of the transmission line. Approved access roads that require improvement will be staked to a maximum width of 27 feet. In rough terrain conditions, improved roads may require increased grading for access along steep slopes (side-hill roads) and could likely exceed a 27-foot width, depending on the amount of displaced soil.

5.4 New Access Roads

These roads are generally a minimum of 14 feet wide and a maximum of 27 feet wide depending on slope. Construction of these new access roads may include mowing, blading, tree removal, and bridge/culvert construction. These new roads will require reclamation to pre-construction condition if they are not identified as service roads for future operation and maintenance of the transmission line. Approved new access roads will be staked to a standard width of 14 feet; however, due to rough terrain conditions, new roads that must be graded for access along steep slopes (side-hill roads) will most likely exceed a 27-foot width, depending on the amount of displaced soil.

5.5 Overland Access

In areas where no grading will be needed to access work areas, the Construction Contractor will use overland access to the greatest extent possible. Overland access will consist of drive-and-crush and/or clear-and-cut travel. Drive-and-crush is vehicular travel to access a site without significantly modifying the landscape. Vegetation is crushed but not cropped. Soil is compacted, but no surface soil is removed. Clear-and-cut is considered as brushing off (removal) of all vegetation in order to improve or provide suitable access for equipment. All vegetation is removed using above ground cutting methods that leave the root crown intact. Soils are compacted, but no surface soil is removed. Prior to work beginning, overland access routes will be staked to a minimum width of 14 feet and as specified in the POD.

6.0 MITIGATION MEASURES

Protection measures to avoid or reduce impacts associated with access to and from the transmission line are listed in Appendix E.