



June 7, 2024

Dear Tribal Leader,

With this letter the Bonneville Power Administration, Western Area Power Administration, Southwestern Power Administration, and the Tennessee Valley Authority would like to formally initiate consultation for a proposed nationwide programmatic agreement (PA) pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR 800.14) that would address the operations and maintenance (O&M) of transmission facilities. Prior to initiating consultation the four agencies have been coordinating with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers. The proposed PA would address O&M projects for each agency's respective existing federally owned and operated transmission systems and facilities. Transmission O&M projects are conducted to ensure the reliable and safe operations of existing transmission infrastructure including transmission lines, substations, communication sites, and access roads. Please note that the proposed PA would not address new construction or permitting of new transmission lines or transmission related infrastructure. Such projects would be addressed through the regular Section 106 process or other agency-specific program alternative, if applicable.

Together, the four agencies are responsible for operating and maintaining over 50,000 circuit miles of transmission lines and over 1000 substations and switchyards. Thousands of miles of access roads and many communication sites are also utilized in order for each agency to reliably and safely operate and maintain transmission lines in their respective service areas. Timely maintenance of this infrastructure is critical to maintaining the reliable and safe flow of electricity in the 28 states in which the four agencies operate (Attachment 1). Although the individual undertakings are often small in scale, they are nonetheless important for ensuring public safety and power grid resilience.

The four agencies are proposing initial consultation meetings with Tribes, to occur virtually. However, additional consultation meetings may be held. During each initial consultation meeting the agencies will review the purpose and need for the proposed agreement, present a proposed draft outline from which a draft agreement would be developed, and solicit feedback prior to a 60 day consultation period on the draft outline. Once consultation on the draft outline has been conducted, and comments addressed, the four agencies plan to consult on a draft PA. The eventual goal would be the execution of a final PA once consultation has been completed and comments addressed. Additional information regarding the

proposed PA can be found at <https://www.bpa.gov/environmental-initiatives/efw/cultural-resources-bpa/nationwide-programmatic-agreement>. We look forward to consulting with your Tribe to develop the PA. The four agencies anticipate the PA to focus on the management of significant cultural resources while being able to operate and maintain transmission systems effectively. Such an agreement could result in the agencies dedicating more attention to complex transmission undertakings including new construction and rebuilds. Please use the links below to register for one of the four consultation meetings:

[Tuesday, July 9, 12 PM Eastern](#)

[Thursday, July 11, 2 PM Eastern](#)

[Tuesday, July 16, 12 PM Eastern](#)

[Wednesday, July 17, 3 PM Eastern](#)

Sincerely,

**SUNSHINE  
SCHMIDT** Digitally signed by  
SUNSHINE SCHMIDT  
Date: 2024.06.07  
09:24:32 -0700

Sunshine R. Clark Schmidt  
Director - Federal Preservation Officer  
Historic Preservation, Cultural Resource Compliance  
Bonneville Power Administration

**CRAIG  
DENGEL** Digitally signed by  
CRAIG DENGEL  
Date: 2024.06.07  
08:30:17 -0700

Craig Dengel  
Federal Preservation Officer  
Western Area Power Administration

**CYNTHIA  
SHORT** Digitally signed by  
CYNTHIA SHORT  
Date: 2024.06.07  
09:29:46 -0500

Karim Williams  
Division Director  
Environmental, Health, Safety, and Security (EHSS)  
Southwestern Power Administration

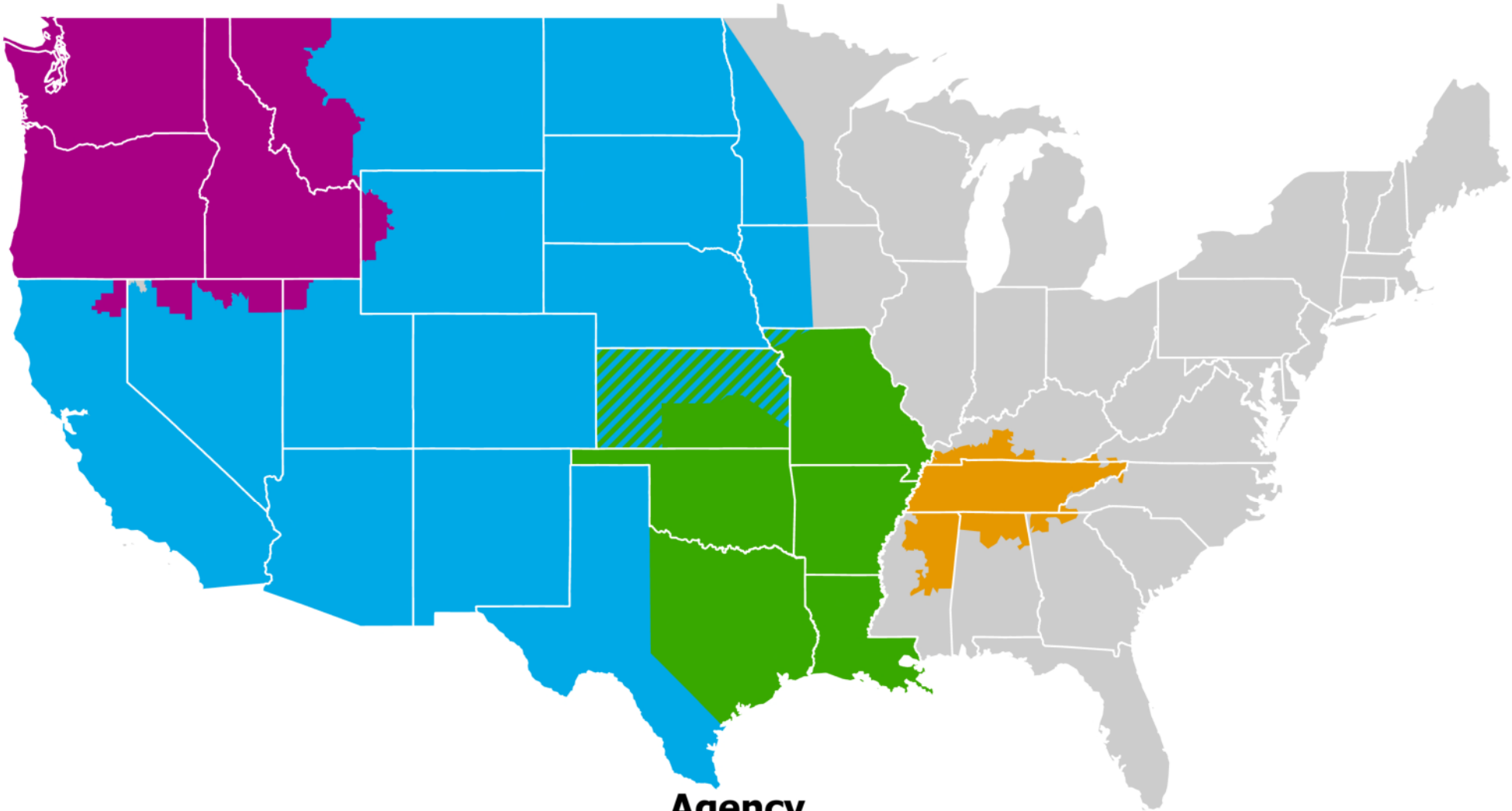


Meg Cook  
Senior Specialist, Archaeologist, and Interim  
Tribal Liaison  
Tennessee Valley Authority

Enclosure:  
Attachment 1 (map of four agencies service areas)

ecc: Christopher Daniel, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
Valerie Grussing, Executive Director, National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers  
Erik Hein, Executive Director, National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers

# Nationwide PA for Transmission O&M



## Agency

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|---|---|
|  Southwestern Power Administration |  Tennessee Valley Authority        |
|  Bonneville Power Administration   |  Western Area Power Administration |