



Summary of the FERC- NARUC Vegetation Management Workgroup

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Key Observations

- Wide range of vegetation management practices and procedures
- Very little uniformity in right of way width, vertical line clearance, inspection frequency and standards used





Key Observations Cont'd

- There are explainable reasons why ROW width and inspection frequency are not uniformed as transmission owners must sculpt their vegetation management around local terrain, climate, vegetation species and local laws and regulations
- However minimum line clearance should be similar



Key Observations Cont'd

- From a grid reliability perspective, the elimination of preventable transmission line outages is the ultimate goal and the effectiveness of the management program should be judged by the end result
- Many transmission owners reported that they faced obstacles in getting local permits to maintain the right of way



Right of Way Width

500 kV		345 kV		230 kV		Less than 230 kV	
Minimum width (ft)	# of Companies						
0-125	4	0-75	6	0-75	40	0-50	51
126-175	21	76-125	36	76-125	36	51-125	41
>176	13	>126	30	> 126	30	>126	7



Air Inspection

Frequency	# of Companies
More than twice a year	25
Semi-annual	34
Annual	46
Biennial	6
Every 3 years	1
> than 3 Years	3
As Needed	8
Did Not Report	38



Ground Inspection

Frequency	# of Companies
More than twice a year	7
Semi-annual	22
Annual	76
Biennial	6
Every 3 years	6
> than 3 Years	25
As Needed	12
Did Not Report	7



Vertical Clearance

500 kV		345 kV		230 kV		Less than 230 kV	
Clearance (ft)	# of Companies	Clearance (ft)	# of Companies	Clearance (ft)	# of Companies	Clearance (ft)	# of Companies
0-15	11	0-15	17	0-10	23	0-10	16
16-20	11	16-20	17	11-15	17	11-15	20
21-25	9	21-25	12	16-20	24	16-20	14
>26	9	>26	14	21-25	16	21-25	3
				>26	13	26 >	5



Trimming Cycle

Frequency	# of Companies
0-2 years	11
3-4 years	35
5 or More years	24





Best Practices for existing ROW

- Application of wire zone-border zone concepts
- Proper consideration of line sag and sway
- Frequent field inspection of vegetation conditions
- Comprehensive public education programs



Obstacles to an Effective Vegetation Management program

Obstacles	Responses
U.S. Forest Service	22
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	12
National Parks	6
Department of Transportation	6
Federal/State/Local Governments	35
Private Landowners	20
Easement/Tree Ordinances/Tribal Land/Media	10



Recommendations

- The United States Congress should enact electric reliability provisions to make reliability standards mandatory and enforceable under federal oversight.
- Effective transmission vegetation management requires clear, unambiguous, enforceable standards that adequately describe actions necessary by each responsible party.
- Current jurisdictional responsibility and authority for transmission vegetation management are unclear, so federal and state regulators must cooperate for better reliability.



Recommendations Cont'd

- Federal and state regulators should allow recovery for the costs of vegetation management expenses.
- While permitting and environmental requirements properly protect public lands, the procedures implementing those protections are often inconsistent and time-consuming and can significantly hinder transmission vegetation management; FERC should work with the Council on Environmental Quality and land management agencies to streamline and better coordinate these requirements.



Recommendations Cont'd

- Federal, state and local land managers should develop "rush" procedures to allow utilities to correct "danger" trees that threaten transmission lines.
- Five-year vegetation management cycles should be shortened, and the Commission and states should look at the cost-effectiveness of more aggressive vegetation management practices.
- Transmission owners should fully exercise their easement rights for vegetation management and better anticipate and manage the permitting process for scheduled vegetation management.



Recommendations Cont'd

- All transmission owners should adopt the Integrated Vegetation Management approach to increase grid reliability.
- Because local and state governments create obstacles for vegetation management, state regulators and the utility industry should work through the National Conference of State Legislators, NARUC, and other organizations to help state and local officials better understand and address transmission vegetation management.



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