

EIS Phase 2 - General comment areas about trees

Location	Excerpt and Comment
P. 3.4-13	<p>Tree removal is discussed in the North Bellevue Segment</p> <p>The EIS does not take into account the risks for wind damage to large trees (including blow-down) when only some trees are removed and leave remaining trees vulnerable.</p> <p>The EIS does not take into account the loss in habitat due to tree removal.</p>
P. 3.4-14	<p><i>The lowest percentage of tree removal by segment and option (66 percent) occurs in the Bellevue North Segment. The number of trees removed could be lower than the estimates noted above because PSE could choose to trim or prune rather than completely remove trees in a manner that ensures compliance with NERC standards. Therefore, the estimate represents a worst-case assessment.</i></p> <p>The EIS is inconsistent about the trees that will be removed according to its standard set forth in section 3.4.1.3 and the fact that trees above 70 feet that are outside of the managed right-of-way would be removed (p.3.4-6). In many places along the Bellevue North Segment there are many trees over 70 feet tall along this route that would be just outside of the managed right-of-way. It also seems inconsistent with the graphic (map) shown in section 3.4.5.4, where much of the area with very tall trees just outside of the managed right-of-way area is depicted in blue (indicating “no clearing”).</p> <p>What does trimming or pruning trees “in a manner that ensures compliance with NERC standards” mean? It will result in unacceptable aesthetic damage if these standards imply “topping” the trees rather than removing them.</p> <p>PSE’s description of tree removal for this segment does not seem honest or realistic.</p>
P 3.4-33, section 3.4.6.1	<p><i>During Operation</i></p> <p>-- <i>Trees removed from critical areas in Bellevue and Renton may require mitigation monitoring</i></p> <p>This statement makes no sense. How can trees that have been removed from critical areas be “monitored?” This glosses over the fact that critical areas will be permanently damaged.</p>
P 3.4-33, section 3.4.6.2	<p>Regarding potential mitigation for tree removal during construction:</p> <p><i>In the Bridle Trails Subarea in the City of Bellevue, plant replacement trees as required under the City’s Tree Retention and Replacement Code.</i></p> <p>What are the specifics around replanting – where will replanting be done?</p>
P 3.2-44 to 45, section 3.2.5.4	<p>The long term impacts to visual quality of the project along the Bellevue North Segment have been total mischaracterized in this EIS as “less-than-significant.” They should be characterized as “significant.” There are actually many homes situated within view of the powerlines, and many more nearby with residents who frequently walk and ride along the equestrian trails in this area. The destruction of existing trees, higher poles and probable noise from crackling power lines will in fact do serious aesthetic damage to the area. The current Hframe poles are wooden, while the new poles will be twice as high, metallic, and will have an industrial appearance. This report is not honest about the visual impact to this segment.</p>