



# Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) Transmission Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement



*These Slides Are Intended for Illustrative Purposes Only and Do Not Represent the Official Position of EFSEC on Any Individual Project*



# EFSEC Overview

- EFSEC formed in 1970 to provide centralized siting and permitting for energy facilities.
- For siting and permitting of large-scale thermal power plants, nuclear facilities, natural gas and oil pipelines, oil refineries, and underground natural gas storage fields are only facilities requiring certification.\*
- Council consists of members from state agencies and local government.
- EFSEC develops recommendation to the Governor and Governor's office makes final decision.
- The final decision preempts other state and local government decisions.



# Legislation (RCW 43.21C.405)

- SSB 5165 passed in 2023, directing EFSEC to prepare a nonproject environmental review of electrical transmission facilities of 230 kilovolts (kV) or greater
- A Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) is a type of nonproject environmental review used for planning under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).
- A PEIS:
  - Provides information for project applicants, SEPA lead agencies, permitting agencies, Tribes, interested parties, and the public.
  - Helps developers understand potential impacts and make siting and design choices that could avoid or minimize impacts at an early phase of project consideration.
    - *A PEIS does NOT replace the requirement for a project-specific environmental review.*
  - Identifies effective, relevant, and available mitigation that may be used to reduce adverse environmental impacts.



# Current work

- EFSEC is seeking scoping comments from June 28 through July 28
- The scoping phase of the PEIS considers transmission statewide.
  - Based on input received during scoping, EFSEC will consider the broad geographic areas where transmission facilities are likely to be built.
  - After scoping, EFSEC will determine the geographic area of study and use it as the basis of the analysis that will be performed in the Draft PEIS.
- The Transmission Corridors Work Group report will also be considered.
- Resources under consideration include:
  - Earth resources (including seismic hazards)
  - Air quality
  - Water resources
  - Vegetation
  - Wildlife and Habitat
  - Energy and natural resources
  - Land and shoreline use
  - Historic and cultural resources
  - Visual aspects
  - Noise and vibration
  - Recreation
  - Public health and safety
  - Transportation
  - Public services and utilities
  - Socioeconomics
  - Cumulative impacts



# Next Steps

- Comments received during scoping will be used to develop a Draft PEIS.
- EFSEC will seek public comment on the Draft PEIS, planned for release in late 2024.
- Comments on the Draft PEIS will inform the development of the Final PEIS



# Other PEISs in progress

- SSB 5165 also contained direction for WA Department of Ecology to prepare nonproject environmental reviews
  - Wind
  - Solar
  - Green Hydrogen
- Project status for these can be found at <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/clean-energy/programmatic-eis>.



# Public Input

- **Online (during comment periods only)**

<https://comments.efsec.wa.gov>

- **Mail**

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- **Project updates and Mailing list sign up**

<https://www.efsec.wa.gov/energy-facilities/programmatic-eis>

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