

**KING COUNTY CRITICAL AREAS
DELINEATION REPORT**

**Puget Sound Energy – Energize
Eastside Project**

Prepared for:

Jens Nedrud
Puget Sound Energy
355 10th Avenue NE
Mail Stop: EST03W48
Bellevue, WA 98004

Prepared by:



750 Sixth Street South
Kirkland . WA 98033

p 425.822.5242
f 425.827.8136
watershedco.com

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The Watershed Company

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The Watershed Company Contact Person:

Jennifer Creveling, Senior Biologist
or Katy Crandall, Ecologist

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KING COUNTY DELINEATION REPORT

PUGET SOUND ENERGY – ENERGIZE EASTSIDE PROJECT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to identify and document critical areas associated with Puget Sound Energy's (PSE's) Energize Eastside project. The Energize Eastside project proposes to build a new electric substation and higher capacity transmission lines to serve homes and businesses on the Eastside. Current route options include 'Oak' and 'Willow' routes that will extend from Redmond to Renton (Figure 1). Each route option includes a set of PSE-labeled segments. The Oak route comprises Segments A, C, E, G2, I, K2, M, and N. The Willow route comprises Segments A, C, E, J, M, and N. This report addresses critical areas located along the proposed routes in unincorporated King County which includes a small portion of PSE-labeled Segment M, which is located within Phase 2 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Segment 3 (Figure 2).

The length of the study area corridor in unincorporated King County is approximately 1,700 feet beginning at SE 95th Way and ending between 126th Avenue SE and 125th Avenue SE (Figure 2). The study area corridor includes two existing 115 kV transmission lines spaced approximately 50 feet apart on center. Each line has three conductors (wires) connected to H-frame pole structures. The study area corridor is approximately 100 feet wide.

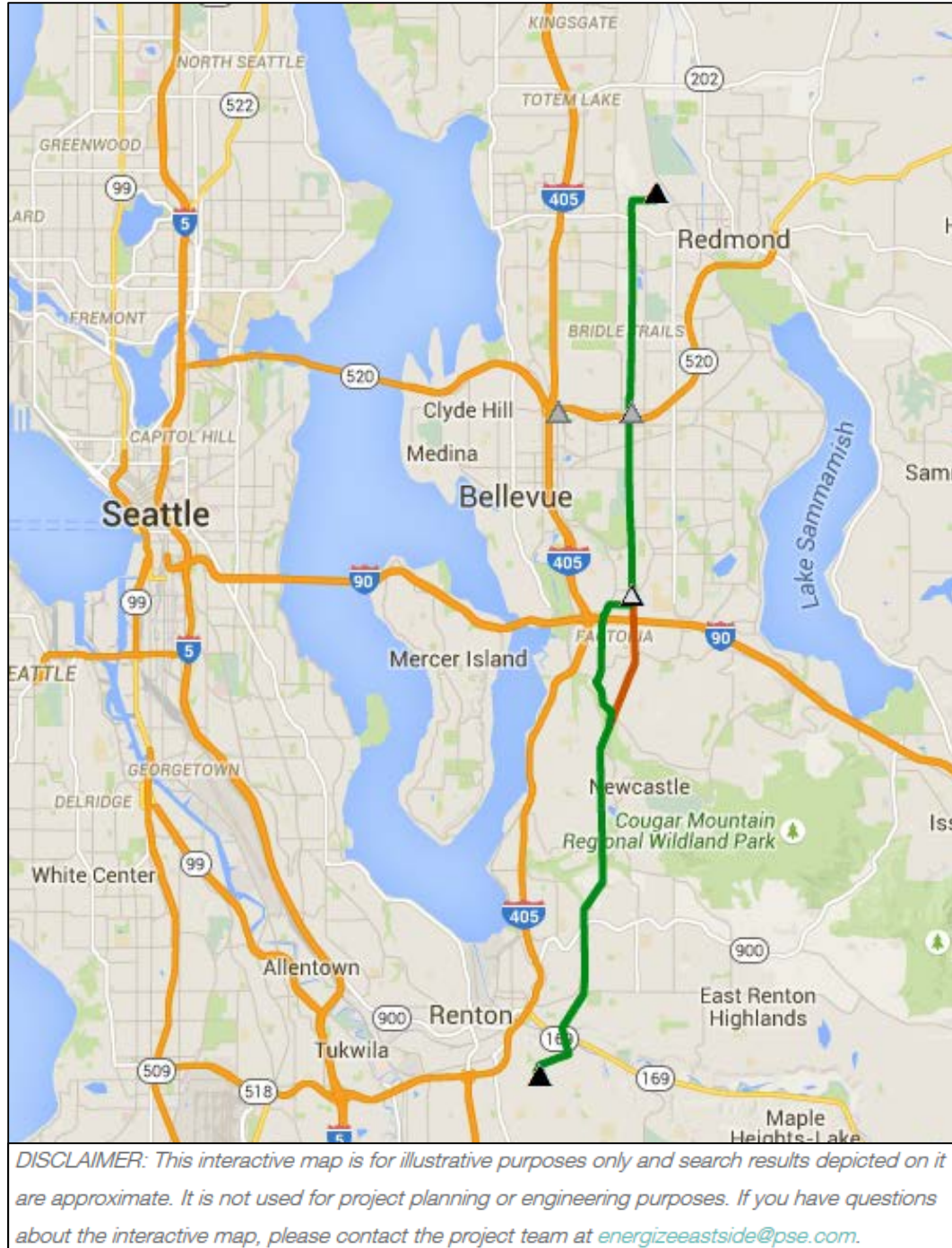


Figure 1. Map of proposed Oak and Willow routes from the Energize Eastside website. The Oak route is depicted in green while the Willow route variation is shown in orange.

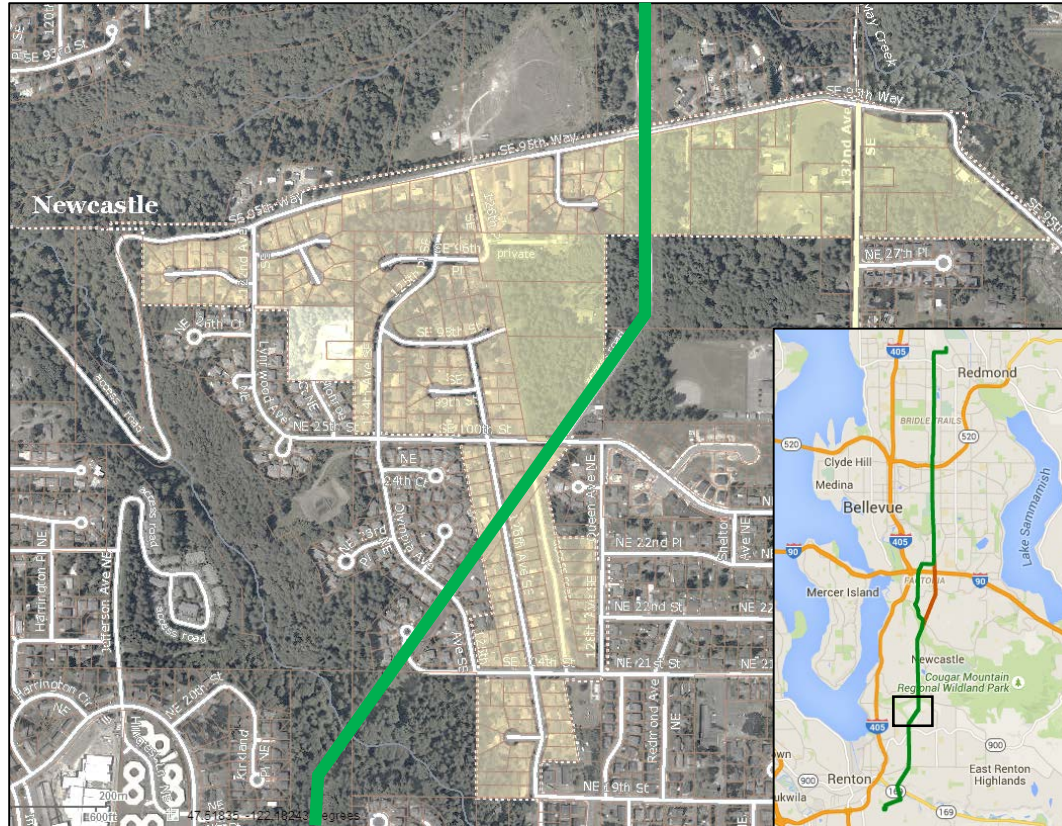


Figure 2. Overview of the Segment M study area corridor (green line) in unincorporated King County jurisdiction (highlighted in yellow).

1.2 Methods

Limits of the study area were determined in the field using aerial maps, GPS, and by measuring 25 feet out from the center of each pole set.

Public-domain information on the study area corridor was reviewed for this delineation study. These sources include USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil maps, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife interactive mapping programs (PHS on the Web and SalmonScape), the mapping tool associated with Washington Department of Natural Resources Forest Practices Application Review System (FPARS), and King County's GIS mapping website (iMAP).

The study area corridor was evaluated for wetlands using methodology from the Regional Supplement (Corps 2010). Presence or absence of wetlands was determined on the basis of an examination of vegetation, soils, and hydrology.

The study area corridor was also evaluated for the presence of streams. Watercourses were determined to be streams if they met the definition provided by the King County Code.

Incidental wildlife observations and detections were recorded during field studies and summarized in Section 3.2 of this report.

Possible mitigation opportunities were noted during field studies. The approximate extent of these areas is described in Section 5 of this report.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The corridor in unincorporated King County comprises a total of three parcels zoned residential (R-4 and R-6). The northern-most parcel contains a single-family residence (parcel number 3345100450) and is located in Township 24N, Range 05E, and Section 33. The two southerly parcels are made up of Sierra Heights Park (parcel numbers 0423059313 and 0428000290) and are located in Township 23N, Range 05E, and Section 4. The study area corridor in King County is situated in the May Creek drainage basin of the Cedar-Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8).

Vegetation under the powerlines through the study area corridor is generally made up of mowed herbaceous vegetation or Himalayan blackberry thickets. Vegetation immediately adjacent to the corridor includes some forested patches, described in Section 3.2 below.

3 CRITICAL AREAS

3.1 Wetlands and Streams

Online interactive mapping applications (NRCS, NWI, PHS, iMAP, SalmonScape, and FPARS) were reviewed for the study area corridor. The online review does not indicate the presence of any wetland or stream critical areas in the King County study area. Field observations support the online review. No wetland or stream critical areas are present in the unincorporated King County study area corridor.

3.2 Wildlife and Habitat

Washington State Priority Habitat and Species (PHS) maps were reviewed for the project vicinity. No PHS features are mapped in or near the study area corridor in unincorporated King County.

Wildlife observations were recorded during field investigations. King County regulates active breeding sites of any federal or state listed endangered, threatened, sensitive, and candidate species as well as habitat/wildlife designated as Habitat or Species of Local Importance. No significant wildlife detections were noted during field work in the King County study area corridor.

Habitat located in the study area, within the existing powerline easement, is generally poor. Vegetation is regularly managed (mowed) and invasive species are often dominant. However, suitable wildlife habitat does exist immediately adjacent to the corridor that may have the potential to provide breeding, resting, and foraging opportunities for urban wildlife species.

4 MITIGATION OPPORTUNITIES

Mitigation opportunities located in the study area were noted during field investigations. Sites discussed in this section are limited to parcels owned by public entities or PSE. These areas would generally include degraded/disturbed wetland and stream critical areas and their buffers. As no wetland or stream critical areas are present in the study area, there are no wetland/stream critical area mitigation opportunities present.

Upland restoration opportunities are present at the Sierra Heights Park parcels (Figure 3) which may be suitable for mitigating for habitat impacts, if necessary. The Sierra Heights Park parcels in the study area are currently dominated by invasive plants including Himalayan blackberry and Scotch broom. Any proposed revegetation would need to adhere to vegetation height limits prescribed by PSE standards.



Figure 3. Potential upland mitigation opportunities in unincorporated King County along Segment M (highlighted in yellow).

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