



Department Source: City Utilities - Water and Light

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: March 6, 2017

Re: Water & Light Vegetation Management CM Tracker 4133

Executive Summary

In response to a request for formal policies addressing the clear cutting of trees, Water & Light has documented its procedures and practices in the attached Vegetation Management Plan. This plan was approved by the Water & Light Advisory Board as prudent utility practice when used to control vegetation in electric rights-of-way. Staff has also worked with members of the Rock Quarry Road Scenic Roadway Area Overlay Group to develop a pilot project to establish a pollinator habitat in the area where vegetation management occurred last fall. Work on the pollinator habitat has already been started and is expected to be completed this spring. If the pilot is successful, Water & Light will incorporate these practices into its Vegetation Management Plan.

Discussion

The goal of Columbia Water & Light's vegetation management program is to provide safe and reliable electric service, through responsible forestry and customer service focused practices. The attached Vegetation Management Plan encompasses the collection of procedures and practices that comprise this program.

The Vegetation Management Program establishes a dependable plan that is accomplished through a complete 3 year cycle. Columbia Water & Light manages vegetation based on line voltages to prioritize its resources. Columbia Water & Light does a yearly assessment on its transmission and sub-transmission lines. 3-phase, single-phase, secondary, service drops, and fiber optic cables are assessed in 3 different sections of the city every 3 years. Columbia Water & Light manages one third of the city yearly (one section per year) during the dormant season with some exceptions for hazards and reliability issues. This reduces stress and regrowth in trees allowing for healthier trees and more reliability. 3-phase distribution circuits are re-assessed every other year for increased reliability.

Columbia Water & Light utilizes a system of vegetation management in which compatible and incompatible vegetation are identified, action thresholds are considered, control methods are evaluated, and selected controls are implemented to achieve a specific objective. Choice of control methods will be based on safety, environmental impact, effectiveness, and site characteristics. These procedures promote sustainable plant communities that are compatible with the intended use of the site and discourage incompatible plants that may pose concerns, including safety, security, access, fire hazards, electric service reliability, emergency restoration, visibility, line-of-site requirements, regulatory compliance, environmental, or specific concerns.



Columbia Water & Light maintains compliance with ANSI A300 trimming standards (part 1) and Tree Line USA standards. This plan was discussed at the December 2016 Water & Light Advisory Board Meeting. After the Vegetation Management Plan was reviewed, it was approved and recommended to be sent to City Council.

In an effort to address concerns in the area of Rock Quarry Road, staff has been working with with members of the Rock Quarry Road Scenic Roadway Area Overlay Group to develop a pilot project to establish a pollinator habitat in the area where vegetation management occurred last fall. Work on the pollinator habitat has already been started and is expected to be completed this spring. If the pilot is successful, Water & Light will incorporate these practices into its Vegetation Management Plan.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: None
Long-Term Impact: None

Vision & Strategic Plan Impact

[Vision Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Environment, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

[Strategic Plan:](#)

Primary Impact: Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Public Safety, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

[Comprehensive Plan Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Environmental Management, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Legislative History

Date	Action

Suggested Council Action

Informational Only.