

# Liberty Utilities' N. Shore system inadequate

By Kathryn Reed

Liberty Utilities' plans to upgrade the power supply to the North Shore are not moving forward as quickly as the company had hoped.

The U.S. Forest Service wants more detail than what the company had originally provided. Much of the land that would be affected belongs to the USFS.

Originally the power company thought it would be in the permitting phase by now, with construction starting this year. Now the company hopes all the paperwork will be in place by the end of the year.

"In general the two existing lines we are upgrading are following a similar path to what exists today, with minor variations," Sam Rohn, the environmental, health, safety and security manager for Liberty in California, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

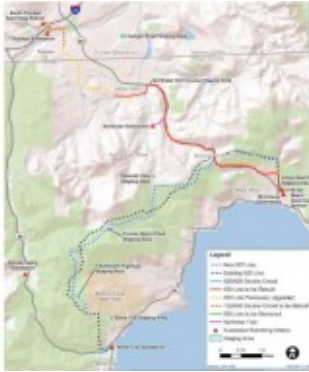
One issue the Forest Service wants more clarity on is how many trees the company plans to fell.

"Presently, the north Lake Tahoe transmission system does not have adequate single contingency reliability, meaning, if one of several critical lines is lost as a result of an intense storm event, fire, or downed trees, a severe and sustained power outage could occur in the system service area," the scoping document says.

The project calls for lines going from the Kings Beach generation site to Tahoe City and one to Truckee. The plan is to upgrade the substations from 60 kilovolt (kV) to 120kV to

allow the entire transmission loop to operate at 120 kV.

“We are strengthening the reliability on the North Shore. We will increase what the voltage lines are able to carry, handle additional load build-out at Martis Camp, Squaw Valley and Northstar, and other infrastructure that is going in on the North Shore,” Rohn said.



Proposed route changes to Liberty Utilities' North Shore lines.

All of the areas Rohn mentioned are either building now or have plans in the works. And they will all need more power in the future than they do today.

Plans call for replacing existing wood poles with steel, which are more reliable and apt to survive a wildfire.

Liberty on Jan. 1, 2011, took over NV Energy customers on the California side of the Lake Tahoe Basin, Truckee and Alpine County.

And while rate increase took effect Jan. 1, 2013, it wasn't to pay for the North Shore project. Once that's in the ground and online, Liberty can go back to the California Public Utility Commission and ask ratepayers to write bigger monthly checks.

Every three years public utility companies must file a rate increase or decrease with the CPUC.