

Winslow – Murden Cove Transmission Line

Route Segment Feedback

Introduction

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) hosted a feedback period from January 21 through February 12, 2021 to provide a forum for the Bainbridge Island community to share feedback on route segments under consideration that can be assembled to create a new transmission line route that connects Murden Cove and Winslow substations.

This new “missing link” transmission line is a critical component of PSE’s plan to improve electric service reliability, reducing the frequency and duration of power outages for customers on Bainbridge Island. It’s PSE’s goal to understand community values and interests around the new transmission line and this three-week feedback period was part of a larger community engagement process to gather input from the community on the route segments under consideration. This document contains a high-level summary of feedback received.

Community members were invited to provide feedback through multiple venues:

- **Segment Explorer (30 submissions):** Using this online interactive tool, community members could review the route segments under consideration for the new transmission line, explore the routing criteria PSE is using to evaluate route segments, compare route segments using available data and metrics and submit their feedback in response to a brief questionnaire and free-form comment field.
- **Emails (27)** to info@psebainbridge.com, the project inbox.
- **Comment forms (30)** submitted via psebainbridge.participate.online (the project’s public participation website) and/or pse.com/bainbridge (PSE’s community website for Bainbridge Island).
- **Voice messages (3)** left at 1-888-878-8632, the project voicemail inbox.
- **Letters (2)** attached and emailed to the project inbox, info@psebainbridge.com.

A total of 92 total responses were submitted by 88 individual contacts.¹

¹ A few commenters provided multiple comments (e.g., one person may have submitted both a voicemail and an email, or a comment form and an email.)

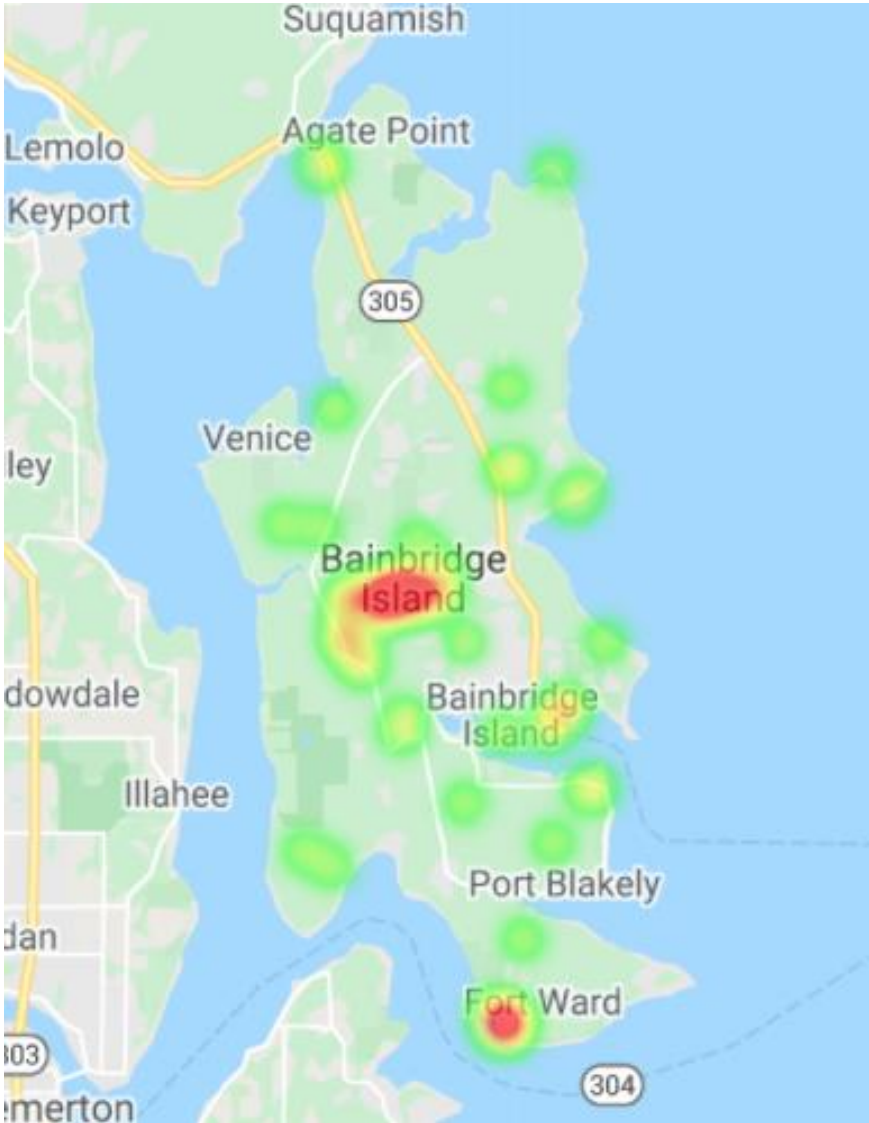
Summary of Feedback

Comments submitted to PSE generally provided the following feedback:

- Many respondents are in favor of building this new transmission line and improving overall electric reliability on Bainbridge Island; many respondents commented that this new transmission line is needed and long overdue.
- Some commenters noted that prolonged power outages are incredibly challenging for island residents who have medical challenges and rely on electricity for life-saving devices.
- Some commenters feel that living in a rural area should not mean having unreliable infrastructure.
- Some commenters expressed support for the Winslow Tap upgrade, as well as the transmission line loop.
- Some commenters shared concern about the challenges posed by Category II wetlands along some of the route segments.
- Several commenters encouraged PSE to use the shortest, most direct route.
- Some commenters suggested PSE identify opportunities to create new or enhance existing non-motorized trails as part of this project.
- Some commenters shared concerns about the transmission line being located near schools and other areas where children play and gather.
- Some commenters urged PSE to minimize project costs.
- Several commenters expressed support for undergrounding portions of the new transmission line, despite the higher construction cost, and some respondents noted that they are willing to pay to build the transmission line underground; several others were concerned about the higher cost of undergrounding and did not support undergrounding as an option for the new transmission line.
- Some commenters who support undergrounding are concerned new overhead lines will negatively affect residential property, the island's habitat/forests, and property values. Others believe overhead lines are less reliable than underground lines.
- Some respondents don't agree with the need for a new transmission line and suggested rebuilding the Winslow Tap line first, and/or completing maintenance on existing transmission lines and distribution.
- Some commenters feel that the electric system should stay as-is, even if that means continued power outages.
- Some commenters suggested that PSE should add batteries to Bainbridge Island to improve reliability.
- Some commenters expressed that PSE should not cut trees or take property for utility easements to build this transmission line.
- Some commenters are concerned that transmission line construction will be intrusive and frustrating.

Commenter Heat Map

Map generated from addresses of commenters for whom location data was available; not all commenters may be represented, though most are. Segment Explorer respondents provided nearest cross streets, meaning addresses for those commenters are approximated (closest address to intersection used).



Comments on Routing Criteria by Segment (1-22)

The below is a matrix representing the comments PSE received that relate to both route criteria and route segments. The 92 comments received were reviewed to determine whether they included feedback on the routing criteria listed in the first column below; if a comment included feedback on a criterion and referenced a specific segment the criterion comment was associated with, it was noted in the table below. Not all comments included feedback on routing criteria and/or specific segments.

Routing Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Undeveloped areas		1	1		1	1	1		1	1				1	1	1	1					
Vegetation	1	11	4		1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Commercial zones																						
Parks and trails		1	2	1		1																
Fish-bearing streams	1	2	1																			
Public rights of way	5	4	4	1	1	1	1			1	1				1	1	1					
Wetlands	2	4	4	2																		
Conservation properties																						
Currently developed areas	1		2	1		1			2					2	1	1	1					
Historic and/or Cultural sites																						
Industrial zones																						
Scenic byways																						
Shorelines																						
Designated wildlife habitats																						
Community spaces									1					1	1	1	1					
Residential zones	1	2	1	1		2	1		1		2			1	1	1	1					
Private property		10	2	1	1	2																
Other	12	14	9	4	6	4	1			1	2							1				3

Comments on Routing Criteria – not Segment-Specific

The below question was posed on our online Segment Explorer tool for the community to answer regarding the routing criteria. The Segment Explorer received a total of 30 individual responses to the questions asked; not all questions received complete responses or comments explaining the choice. For the question below, a tally of the number of times a criterion was chosen is included in column 2. A high-level synthesis of the key themes from the comments, when provided, that shared the reasoning behind the choice are included in column 3.

Question: *Which three of the following are of greatest importance to you to avoid or minimize impacts to when routing the new transmission line? The list of factors below is directly related to the project’s routing criteria. PSE will use this feedback to better understand the community’s priorities —this is important because routing power lines often requires PSE to decide on tradeoffs between different elements and impacts. PSE is not asking for feedback on project elements that are necessary for operational safety, constructability, or are required by regulatory agencies—these are assumed requirements.*

Note: 30 individuals responded to this question; not all respondents selected three criteria from the listed options as requested (some only selected one or two). Additionally, not all respondents provided comments addressing “why” for their selection.

Routing Criteria	Number of times criteria chosen	Key themes from comments
Currently undeveloped areas	3	Effects on visual aesthetics/community character, disruption of habitat, tree and clearing.
Trees/tree canopy/mature vegetation	13	Effects on ecosystem/tree canopy, rural environment, homeowner views/privacy, protection from storms, visual aesthetics, and sound buffer from traffic.
Commercial zones	0	N/a
Parks and trails	3	Effects on wildlife, use of parks/trails by future generations, and aesthetics.
Fish-bearing streams	4	Interest in mitigation for endangered/threatened native species, concern for delicate ecosystems, concern for construction impact.
Public rights of way	1	N/a
Wetlands	10	Preserve wildlife habitat, reduce impact on endangered/threatened species, preserve flood control effect of wetlands/watershed, utilize existing ROWs, concern for construction impact.
Conservation properties	1	Impact to conservation properties.
Currently developed areas	4	Concern for property values, interest in locating in low density areas, concern for traffic disruption.
Historic and/or Cultural sites	2	Preserve indigenous sites, concern for aesthetics of overhead lines in historic places.
Industrial zones	0	N/a
Shorelines	4	Minimize impact to shoreline and scenic areas, concern for flood/storm risk and weather exposure
Designated wildlife habitats	0	N/a
Community gathering spaces	1	Effect on visual aesthetics
Residential zones	9	Concern for negative impacts on residential property, property values, aesthetics, community character.
Private property	12	Concern for use of condemnation, property values, cost of project, property rights, tree removal on private property, and privacy.
Scenic byways	4	Effect on visual aesthetics, traffic impact, community character, tree removal.