



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

Order No. 202-25-2C

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Secretary of Energy by section 202(c) of the Federal Power Act (FPA),¹ and section 301(b) of the Department of Energy Organization Act,² and for the reasons set forth below, I hereby determine that an emergency continues to exist in Puerto Rico due to a shortage of electric energy, a shortage of facilities for the transmission of electric energy, and other causes, and that issuance of this Order will meet the emergency and serve the public interest.

BACKGROUND

Order No. 202-25-2, issued pursuant to FPA section 202(c) on May 16, 2025, required vegetation management to be performed on the Specified Transmission Facilities, as described in the attachment “Order No. 202-25-2 Specified Transmission Resources,” to ensure their operational availability. I determined that an emergency existed in Puerto Rico and that Order No. 202-25-2 was necessary to best meet the emergency and serve the public interest given the emergency nature of the expected load stress, the responsibility of Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA) to ensure maximum reliability on its system, and the ability of PREPA to ensure the operational availability of transmission facilities to meet load requirements.³ I noted, among other risks, the threat posed to system reliability by overgrown vegetation, recognizing that transmission lines were being operated with up to 70% derating to avoid failures from sagging due to vegetation.⁴ I also pointed out that vegetation control on the transmission and distribution system right-of-way is one of the main causes of power failures.⁵ Order No. 202-25-2 expired on August 14, 2025; that same day, I issued Order No. 202-25-2A, pursuant to FPA section 202(c).

¹ 16 U.S.C. § 824a(c).

² 42 U.S.C. § 7151(b).

³ *Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority*, Order No. 202-25-2, at 3 (May 16, 2025).

⁴ *Id.* at 1.

⁵ *Id.*

In Order No. 202-25-2A, I determined that the emergency conditions described in Order No. 202-25-2 were still present. Between May 16, 2025, and July 28, 2025, only 38 miles of transmission lines were cleared of vegetation.⁶ In Order No. 202-25-2A, I directed PREPA and its agents to perform vegetation management and asset management to ensure operational availability of the Specified Transmission Facilities.⁷ I also increased the number of Specified Transmission Facilities to include 38 kV transmission lines as described in the attachment “Order No. 202-25-2A Additional Specified Transmission Resources.”⁸ Order No. 202-25-2A expired on November 12, 2025; that same day, I issued Order No. 202-25-2B, pursuant to FPA section 202(c).

In Order No. 202-25-2B, I determined that the emergency conditions described in Order Nos. 202-25-2 and 202-25-2A were still present.⁹ Between July 28, 2025, through October 21, 2025, only 82 miles of transmission lines were cleared of vegetation. Additionally, I directed PREPA and its agents to perform vegetation management consistent with good utility practice for a total of at least 400 total miles by February 10, 2026, consisting of 38 kV, 115 kV, and 230 kV right of ways and on the covered lines, with 130 total miles to be completed by December 29, 2025.¹⁰

CONTINUING EMERGENCY CONDITIONS

The emergency conditions that necessitated the issuance of Order Nos. 202-25-2, 202-25-2A, and 202-25-2B continue. Puerto Rico’s electrical grid is facing an energy crisis, unstable reserve capacity and widespread blackouts. Events contributing to the emergency conditions include decades of deferred maintenance, the bankruptcy of the system owner and operator, as well as devastating hurricanes and earthquakes. These factors have combined to significantly deteriorate the Puerto Rican electrical grid, resulting in repair times that take years rather than months. Given the extended nature of the emergency, I will continue to assess the state of the Puerto Rican electrical grid for the potential of additional emergency orders for successive periods until such time as the emergency conditions are no longer present.

The risk of adverse events remains high due to slow progress in clearing overgrown vegetation. It was reported to the Department that, as of January 28, 2026, only 139 miles of transmission line had been cleared of vegetation. Vegetation management efforts are subject to numerous delays caused by funding authorizations, contract disputes, weather, and environmental permitting review requirements. As such, Puerto Rico continues to experience severely inadequate transmission line ratings and a high number of transmission disruptions.

⁶ *Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority*, Order No. 202-25-2A, at 1 (Aug. 14, 2025).

⁷ *Id.* at 1-2.

⁸ *Id.* at 3.

⁹ *Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority*, Order No. 202-25-2B, at 1 (Nov. 12, 2025).

¹⁰ *Id.* at 4, Ordering Paragraphs B & C.

Estimates indicate that the full vegetation clearing of the 115 kV and 230 kV transmission right of way could lead to a total reduction of over 80% of adverse events. This would translate to over 1.76 million customer interruptions avoided and over 1.2 billion customer minutes of interruption avoided. The totality of these benefits would be realized only after the vegetation management is completed.¹¹

In Order No. 202-25-2B, the Department required PREPA and its agents to clear 130 miles of transmission line by December 29, 2025, or explain why this directive could not be completed.¹² PREPA's agent reported that it could not comply due to environmental permitting and review requirements, funding questions, and the inaccuracy of mapping. Addressing these challenges further supports the issuance of this Order and the need for consistent vegetation management.

While vegetation management is a key first step for improving operational availability of Specified Transmission Resources, the repair or replacement of degraded transmission assets is also necessary. Delays in the vegetation management program have accelerated the need to perform other emergency improvements necessary to address the poor-quality metrics of voltage and frequency regulation,¹³ which threaten public safety, healthcare, residential customers, industry, commerce, telecommunications, and other essential critical services. Accelerated asset management is therefore needed to increase transmission facility availability, address derating and oscillations of the lines, and decrease the likelihood of unplanned failures to electricity transmission.

As outlined in this Order, I have imposed operational limitations to ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, adherence to applicable environmental laws and regulations. I have also imposed reporting requirements to ensure transparency and timely implementation of the directives contained within this Order. The reporting required under my prior Orders (Order Nos. 202-25-2, 202-25-2A, and 202-25-2B) reflects continued delay that threatens the operational availability of the Specified Transmission Facilities. As the emergency conditions continue to exist, I hereby issue Order No. 202-25-2C to permit vegetation management at the Specified Transmission Facilities, as described in Order Nos. 202-25-2, 202-25-2A, and 202-25-2B, and asset management to ensure operational availability of the Specified Transmission Facilities, for an additional 90-day period to expire at 11:59 PM EST on May 11, 2026.

¹¹ Technical information provided by LUMA to the Department via email on May 14, 2025.

¹² See Order No. 202-25-2B, at 4, Ordering Paragraphs C & D.

¹³ A. Nassif, "Managing distribution resources: the LUMA perspective" (23PESGM4426), IEEE PES General Meeting 2023.

Pursuant to FPA section 202(c)(4)(B),¹⁴ the Department has consulted with the primary Federal agencies with expertise in the environmental interests protected by laws or regulations that may conflict with this Order. These agencies did not submit conditions for inclusion in this Order. To the extent that any permitting, procedures, inspections or other requirements would further delay the vegetation management necessary to ensure operational availability of the Specified Transmission Facilities identified in this Order, I hereby determine that such requirements would prevent this Order from adequately addressing the emergency necessitating its issuance.¹⁵

ORDER

FPA section 202(c)(1) provides that, whenever the Secretary of the Department of Energy determines “that an emergency exists by reason of a sudden increase in the demand for electric energy, or a shortage of electric energy or of facilities for the generation or transmission of electric energy . . . or other causes,” the Secretary has the authority “to require by order . . . such generation, delivery, interchange, or transmission of electric energy as in its judgment will best meet the emergency and serve the public interest.”¹⁶ This statutory language constitutes a specific grant of authority to the Secretary to require vegetation management and asset management to ensure operational availability of the Specified Transmission Facilities when the Secretary has determined that such operation will best meet an emergency.

¹⁴ 16 U.S.C. § 824a(c)(4)(B).

¹⁵ 16 U.S.C. § 824a(c)(4)(B). *See also id.* § 824a(c)(3) (“To the extent any omission or action taken by a party, that is necessary to comply with an order issued under this subsection, including any omission or action taken to voluntarily comply with such order, results in noncompliance with, or causes such party to not comply with, any Federal, State, or local environmental law or regulation, such omission or action shall not be considered a violation of such environmental law or regulation, or subject such party to any requirement, civil or criminal liability, or a citizen suit under such environmental law or regulation.”).

¹⁶ 16 U.S.C. § 824a(c)(1). Although the text of FPA section 202(c) grants this authority to “the Commission,” section 301(b) of the Department of Energy Organization Act transferred this authority to the Secretary of the Department of Energy. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 7151(b).

As described above, the emergency conditions supporting the issuance of Order Nos. 202–25–2, 202–25–2A, and 202–25–2B continue. If vegetation management and asset management is not performed at the Specified Transmission Facilities, this could result in the loss of power, affecting public safety, healthcare, residential customers, industry, commerce, telecommunications, and other essential critical services. Given the emergency nature of the expected load stress, the responsibility of PREPA and its agents to ensure maximum reliability on the system, and the ability of PREPA and its agents to ensure the operational availability of transmission facilities to meet load requirements, I have determined that, under the conditions specified below, the operational availability of the Specified Transmission Facilities, as described in Order Nos. 202–25–2, 202–25–2A, and 202–25–2B, is necessary to best meet the emergency and serve the public interest for the purposes of FPA section 202(c). This determination is based on the expected electricity demand, the shortage of electric energy, the shortage of facilities for the transmission of electric energy, and other causes.

Based on my determination that an emergency continues to exist in Puerto Rico, I hereby order PREPA and its agents to perform vegetation management and asset management to ensure operational availability of the Specified Transmission Facilities under the specified circumstances:

- A. Beginning 11:59 PM EST on February 10, 2026, and continuing to 11:59 PM EST on May 11, 2026, PREPA and its agents are directed to perform vegetation management, including vegetation clearing to re-establish a right of way, and asset management, including component refurbishment and replacement, to ensure operational availability of the Specified Transmission Facilities. Covered resources are limited to only the facilities necessary to meet the emergency and serve the public interest, and, to the maximum extent practicable, are consistent with any applicable Federal, State, or local environmental law or regulation and minimize any adverse environmental impacts.
- B. By May 11, 2026, PREPA and its agents are directed to perform vegetation management consistent with good utility practice for at least an additional 400 total miles, consisting of 38 kV, 115 kV, and 230 kV right of ways and on the covered lines.
- C. By March 27, 2026, PREPA and its agents are directed to perform vegetation management consistent with good utility practice for at least an additional 130 of the 400 total miles specified above, consisting of 38 kV, 115 kV, and 230 kV right of ways and to include lines, towers and any supporting facilities of 38 kV, 115 kV, and 230 kV transmission systems.
- D. If PREPA and its agents are unable to comply with the request to clear at least an additional 130 miles by March 27, 2026, PREPA is directed to provide the Department of Energy (via AskCR@hq.doe.gov) with a report concerning the measures it has taken and is planning to take to ensure that at least an additional 130 miles are cleared as soon as possible. PREPA shall also provide such additional information regarding its compliance with the conditions of this Order, in each case as requested by the Department from time to time.

- E. Every two weeks, PREPA and its agents shall report all dates between February 11, 2026, and May 11, 2026, on which vegetation management has been performed at the Specified Transmission Facilities to the Department (via AskCR@hq.doe.gov). Each biweekly report shall continue to provide complete information using the Department of Energy 202(c) Reporting Templates submitted to PREPA and its agents on July 8, 2025.

Issued in Washington, D.C. at 5:30 PM Eastern Standard Time on this 10th day of February 2026.

Chris Wright

Chris Wright
Secretary of Energy