

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: October 15, 2010

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Joyce Vaughn
Project Engineering – TELP-TPP-3

Proposed Action: L0295 - St. Johns-St. Helens #1 Interconnection Project

Budget Information: Work Order #004866, Task 04

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.6: “Additions or modifications to electric power transmission facilities that would not affect the environment beyond the previously developed facility area...”

Location: Columbia County, Oregon (T4N, R1W, Section 7)

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Columbia River PUD (CRPUD)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to install a new tap and associated disconnect structures on BPA’s St. Johns-St. Helens #1 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line to provide a point of interconnection for CRPUD’s new Columbia River Substation. CRPUD is constructing the new 115-kV substation in Columbia County, Oregon to serve residential load growth in the area.

The installation of the new tap would require the construction of three new disconnect switch structures and two additional wood-pole dead-end transmission line structures located within BPA’s existing transmission line right-of-way (ROW). The two new wood pole transmission line structures would be constructed near tower 21/6 on the St. Johns-St. Helens #1 transmission line. Each structure would require 2-3 wooden poles installed approximately 10 feet below grade. The disturbance area to construct the new wood structures would be less than 100 feet by 100 feet each. Within this area, poles would be staged on the ground, bucket trucks and equipment would be parked, and an auger or backhoe would be used to excavate holes for the new poles. These structures would help support the transmission line at the point of interconnection for the tap line to CRPUD’s substation, as well as support the line above the new disconnect switches.

The steel-lattice disconnect switches would be installed underneath the existing transmission line, located approximately 15 feet back-on-line from 21/6 and 15 feet ahead-on-line from the new wood pole intermediate structure. Construction of each steel-lattice, disconnect switch structure would require four holes 4 to 6 feet deep in a rectangular pattern 12 feet wide (to match the adjacent tower) by 5.5 feet long, and would be located on BPA right-of-way. The St. Johns-St. Helens #1 transmission line would be tied into these structures. BPA would also construct one additional disconnect switch structure under the CRPUD tap line, before the point

of interconnection with BPA's transmission line. BPA would make the final connection from the CRPUD tap line to the BPA tap structure and transmission line. BPA would also install metering and related communications equipment within the new CRPUD substation control house and existing BPA facilities, as needed.

The proposed work would occur within existing BPA transmission line right-of-way, and the site is easily accessed via existing maintained county roads. There will be no tree removal as a result of this project. The proposed project is scheduled to be completed and energized by winter 2012.

Findings: BPA has determined that the proposed action complies with Section 1021.410 and Appendix B of Subpart D of the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations (57 FR 15144, Apr. 24, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 36221-36243, July 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996). The proposed action does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal. The proposal is not connected [40 C.F.R. 1508.25(a)(1)] to other actions with potentially significant impacts, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts [40 C.F.R. 1508.25(a)(2)], and is not precluded by 40 C.F.R. 1506.1 or 10 C.F.R. 1021.211. Moreover, the proposed action will not (i) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, (ii) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities, (iii) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases, or (iv) adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources.

BPA has determined that there will be no effect on any listed or proposed threatened or endangered species, or designated critical habitat, under the Endangered Species Act. There will also be no impact to floodplains or wetlands as a result of the proposed project, and no impact to areas of great visual value.

A background review and field survey of the project area was performed by a BPA contract archaeologist, who determined that the undertaking would have no adverse effect to historic properties per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. On August 26, 2010, BPA sent letters along with a copy of the cultural resources report and its determination to the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde for their review and comment. On September 3, 2010, the Oregon SHPO concurred with BPA's determination that the project will have no adverse effect to historic properties. The Cowlitz Indian Tribe also responded with a recommendation to include inadvertent discovery language, and this language has been incorporated into the attached environmental provisions.

Based on the provisions identified on the attachment, this proposed action meets the requirements for the Categorical Exclusion referenced above. We therefore determine that the proposed action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

/s/ Makary A. Hutson

Makary A. Hutson

Environmental Project Manager –KEC-4

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer – KEC-4

DATE: October 15, 2010

Attachments:

Environmental Provisions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

ENVIRONMENTAL PROVISIONS

This categorical exclusion will meet the following provisions:

1. In the event any archaeological or historic materials are encountered during project activities, the following actions should be taken:
 - Stop work in the immediate vicinity and immediately notify the appropriate BPA project staff and a BPA archaeologist. In addition, all concerned Tribes and appropriate county, state, federal agencies should be notified.
 - Implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering.
 - Take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site.
 - Take reasonable steps to restrict access to the site of discovery.
2. All standard erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs) will be used for any ground disturbances and road improvements to avoid/minimize excessive erosion, soil sloughing, and other surface alterations during the construction phase.
3. Any excess spoils resulting from excavation should be disposed of properly, per BPA's specifications. Also, all waste/trash generated during construction will be collected, removed, and disposed legally off-site.
4. Immediately notify the KEP environmental lead in the event of a spill or release to the environment. Maintain appropriate emergency spill response materials on-site to control unexpected and unanticipated releases of petroleum-based products or other hazardous materials. Have emergency supplies in an easily accessible location and clearly marked. Disposal of any spill material will be in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements.
5. If there are any changes in construction activities that require relocation or change of work parameters, or for sites that have not been previously identified as work sites, construction shall not proceed until the KEP environmental lead can evaluate those changes.

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: L0295 - St. Johns-St. Helens #1 Interconnection Project

Work Order #: 004866

This project has been found to not adversely affect the following environmentally sensitive resources, laws, and regulations:

Environmental Resources	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect With Conditions
1. Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime agricultural lands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Consistency with state and local laws and regulations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Pollution control at Federal facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: Supporting documentation is in the Project file.