

# memorandum

DATE: December 21, 2010

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Chad Hamel  
Project Manager – TEP-TPP-3

**Proposed Action:** Marion to Santiam Fiber Installation

**Budget Information:** Work order 00244240, Tasks 03

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B4.7 Adding fiber optic cable to transmission structures or burying fiber optic cable in existing transmission line right-of-way.

**Location:** Marion and Linn counties, Oregon

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to upgrade its operational telecommunications system from BPA's Marion Substation in Marion County, Oregon to BPA's Santiam Substation in Linn County, Oregon. The fiber optics along this route would provide additional support of BPA's internal operational needs and would replace and reinforce the existing telecommunication system, currently operated with microwave radios.

The upgrade would involve attaching connector brackets and 72 strand fiber optic cable onto existing transmission structures along the 2.5 mile route. Two new 4 x 4 foot splice boxes would be placed just outside the yards at Marion and Santiam substations. Other fiber optics equipment needed as part of the communications network would be installed within existing substation yards or within existing rights-of-way.

The construction for this project would use existing access roads to access tower sites. Any vegetation clearing along the rights-of-way would conform to accepted transmission line maintenance practices. Equipment used along the route would consist primarily of standard utility equipment such as bucket trucks, light duty trucks, cranes, four-wheel drive pickup trucks, pulling and tensioning machines, a helicopter and all-terrain vehicles. Use of a helicopter and other loud equipment would be minimized before 8:00 a.m. or after dusk to avoid noise disturbance to landowners. Dust retardant measures would be used where necessary to reduce dust to residences along the line. All waste/trash generated during installation would be removed from all sites. Areas disturbed during the installation would be graded and reseeded.

**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 would 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 contract archaeologists conducted a literature search in spring 2010 and no prehistoric or historic-period archaeological sites were recorded within one-mile radius of either substation. The archaeologists also conducted a pedestrian survey on September 3, 2010 that included shovel testing and no prehistoric cultural resources were found. Based on results of subsurface testing, BPA made a determination of No Adverse Effect to the sites. The Oregon State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with this determination on November 19, 2010.

A review of the Federally-listed species recorded by the National Marine Fisheries Service indicated Upper Willamette River Chinook and Upper Willamette River steelhead may be present. The project is also within critical habitat for Upper Willamette River Chinook and Upper Willamette River steelhead and essential fish habitat for Upper Willamette River Chinook. However, because no ground disturbing activities would occur in the vicinity of the North Santiam River crossing, the proposed action would not affect listed species or their habitat.

No wetland sites in the project area have been identified. Floodplains along the route would not be impacted as the existing transmission lines span floodplain areas and no new roads would need to be built along the proposed fiber optics route.

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.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jennifer Stolz

Jennifer Stolz

Environmental Project Manager

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: December 22, 2010

Attachments:

Provisions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

## **PROVISIONS**

### **Marion to Santiam Fiber Optic Project CX**

This categorical exclusion will meet the following provisions:

1. If archaeological material is encountered during the construction of the project, an Inadvertent Discovery Form will be filled out, an archaeologist will immediately be notified and work will be halted in the vicinity of the finds until they can be inspected and assessed.
2. No environmentally sensitive areas were identified in the project area. If such areas (e.g. wetland) are discovered during construction, ground disturbing activity in these areas would be avoided.
3. Vehicle movement would be confined to existing access roads and rights-of-way.
4. Any ground disturbance that occurs will be seeded in accordance with standard best management practices to safeguard against erosion.

## Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Marion to Santiam Fiber Optic Project

Work Order #: 00243409

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"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: Jennifer Stolz

Date: December 21, 2010