

memorandum

DATE: March 11, 2011

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Joyce Vaughn – TELP-TPP-3

Proposed Action: Ohop Underbuild Project

Budget Information: Work Order # 266249 Task 03

Categorical Exclusions Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021:

B4.6 “Additions or modifications to electric power transmission facilities... including the replacement of poles...”

B4.12 “Construction of electric powerlines approximately 10 miles in length or less...”

Location: Pierce County, WA – Sections 20, 21, and 22, Township 16 North, Range 4 East of the Eatonville Quadrangle

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund approximately 1 mile of Ohop Mutual Light Company’s (Ohop) 12.5-kV distribution line upgrade project located in Pierce County, Washington. This project is required in order to meet increasing load within the surrounding community. Between structures 2/14 and 3/13 of BPA’s Lynch Creek Tap to Cowlitz-LaGrande No.1 115-kV transmission line, Ohop would suspend two additional phases of conductor onto BPA’s transmission structures. The two new phases of conductor would be in addition to Ohop’s existing single phase underbuild on structures 2/14 to 3/13 of BPA’s Lynch Creek tap to Cowlitz-LaGrande No.1 115-kV transmission line. To comply with BPA’s safety and reliability standards, modifications to BPA’s Lynch Creek Tap to Cowlitz-LaGrande No.1 115-kV transmission line would be required to maintain a minimum distance of 23 feet between BPA’s existing 115-kV transmission line and Ohop’s new 12.5-kV distribution line. Modifications would include replacement of approximately 5 poles and associated guy wires as well as the installation of 1 new structure. All construction activities would occur within the previously disturbed and maintained BPA transmission line rights-of-way.

Construction activities would occur as early as the spring of 2011.

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.

Based on a site survey and a detailed cultural resource report produced by a BPA in-house archaeologist covering the proposed area of potential effect, it was determined that no adverse effects to cultural resources would occur as a result of this project. The cultural resource report and a summary letter were mailed on February 9, 2011 to the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), the Nisqually Tribe, the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis, and the Puyallup Tribe. Concurrence letters, both of which were dated February 15, 2011, were received regarding this cultural resource report from the DAHP and the Puyallup Tribe. No written reply was received from the other tribes.

The project area is absent of water features, unique wildlife habitat, or other environmentally sensitive resources. Because of the previous disturbance and lack of habitat, no ESA species listed or proposed for listing are likely to be present. There would also be no effect to floodplains or wetlands. It was therefore determined that no adverse environmental effects would occur from construction of the project.

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

/s/ Michael B. Henjum

Michael B. Henjum

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: March 11, 2011

Attachments:

Provisions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Provisions

This categorical exclusion would meet the following provisions:

Cultural Resources:

1. Should archaeological materials be unexpectedly encountered during project activities, the following actions should be taken:
 - Stop work and immediately notify the COTR and a qualified 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.

Vegetation Protection and Noxious Weeds:

2. Restrict construction activities to the area needed to work effectively. Construction crews would be instructed to restrict vehicles to designated areas and existing roads as much as possible.
3. Designated areas would be used to store equipment and supplies. The contractor would follow applicable state and federal regulations to protect plant communities.
4. After construction, disturbed areas not needed for ongoing access or maintenance would be promptly reseeded with native species where possible.
5. If requested by the landowner, seed mix for revegetation would contain a mixture of the common native bunchgrasses and dryland species present in the Project area.
6. Use only weed-free materials, or inert materials for mulching and for erosion control.

Erosion Control and Land Use:

7. Require dust abatement on road and construction site, if necessary.
8. Appropriate erosion and sediment control best management practices would be utilized for the protection of water resources.
9. Provide a schedule of construction activities to all landowners/agencies along the corridor that could be affected by construction.
10. Keep gates in as found condition (opened or closed). Coordinate construction sequence with landowner so that livestock may be moved if necessary.

Public Health and Safety:

11. Limit construction to daytime hours for noise abatement.
12. No equipment with un-muffled exhaust is allowed. Fit all equipment with sound-control devices that are as effective as the original equipment.
13. Excess concrete, soil and other material originating from within the substation fence must be properly characterized and disposed of in accordance with all applicable laws.
14. Should contaminated media be unexpectedly encountered during construction of the project, stop work and notify the COTR. Contaminated media include materials that are potentially harmful to the environment or human health and safety. Work would proceed only after measures approved by the appropriate state regulatory agency are put in place to prevent the spread of contaminated materials and protect the health and safety of workers.
15. Equip vehicles with fire suppression equipment, including a shovel, fire extinguisher, and bladder or water supply.
16. Equip construction vehicles with spill containment kits able to respond to construction related spills.

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Ohop Underbuild Project

Work Order #: 266249

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.

Signed: /s/ Michael Henjum

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