

memorandum

DATE: July 7, 2011

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

to: Glen Van Bergen – TEP-TPP-3

Proposed Action: Central Ferry Fiber Project

Budget Information: Work Order # 00223131, Task 03

Categorical Exclusions Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021: B1.7 “Acquisition, installation, operation, and removal of communication systems, data processing equipment, and similar electronic equipment.”

B4.7 “Adding fiber optic cable to transmission structures...”

Location: Walla Walla, Columbia, and Garfield counties, WA

- Township 12 North, Range 34 East, Section 3
- Township 13 North, Range 38 East, Sections 28, 33-36
- Township 13 North, Range 39 East, Sections 25-29, 31-33
- Township 13 North, Range 40 East, Sections 11, 12, 14-16, 20, 21, 29, 30
- Township 13 North, Range 41 East, Sections 7-12
- Township 13 North, Range 42 East, Sections 3-5, 7-9
- Township 14 North, Range 42 East, Sections 25, 34-36
- Township 14 North, Range 43 East, Sections 31, 32

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to install a fiber optic communication system to support the proposed Central Ferry Substation located in Southeastern Washington. This project is part of a system wide upgrade that would digitize BPA’s communication network in accordance with WECC service Class I communication requirements. This project involves two phases, however due to project planning details and resource limitations only the first phase is considered at this time. It is likely the second phase will be considered and reviewed by 2013. The first phase would include the installation of five primary fiber optic cable segments. Each proposed segment is listed and described below from west to east.

- The first segment of Phase I would connect Lower Monumental Powerhouse to Lower Monumental Substation with a single 72 strand fiber optic cable. The distance between these two facilities is approximately one mile. One existing fiber optic cable is suspended on the Lower Monumental Powerhouse Substation Service No. 1 line and currently connects these two facilities. The new fiber optic cable would complete the fiber optic loop between these two facilities and would be suspended from the Lower Monumental Powerhouse-Lower Monumental No. 1 500 kilovolt (kV) transmission line.
- The second segment of Phase I would consist of two new 72 strand fiber optic cables connecting Little Goose Powerhouse to Little Goose Substation to form a redundant loop between these two facilities. The distance between these two facilities is approximately one mile. The new fiber optic cables would either be suspended from the existing Little Goose Powerhouse-Little Goose No. 1 500-kV transmission line or pulled through an existing conduit that connects these two facilities.

- The third segment of Phase I would consist of one new 72 strand single mode fiber optic cable connecting the Little Goose Substation to the proposed Central Ferry Substation. This segment would be located on the existing Little Goose-Lower Granite No. 1 500-kV transmission line and would be almost 13 miles in length.
- The fourth segment of phase I would consist of one new 72 strand single mode fiber optic cable connecting the proposed Central Ferry Substation to the Lower Granite Substation. This segment would also be located on the existing Little Goose-Lower Granite No. 1 500-kV transmission line and would be slightly more than 20 miles in length.
- The fifth and final segment of Phase I would consist of two new fiber optic cables connecting the Lower Granite Powerhouse and the Lower Granite Substation to form a redundant loop between these two facilities. The distance between these two facilities is approximately one mile. The fiber optic cables would either be suspended from the Lower Granite Powerhouse-Lower Granite No. 1 500-kV transmission line or pulled through an existing conduit that connects these two facilities.

Fiber optic cable spool length limitations would require intermittent BPA vaults (BVs) for both the third and fourth segment in order to splice and link fiber optic spools. In addition, intermittent fiber optic wood poles (FOWPs) would be required. In total, approximately 8 new BVs and 20 FOWPs would be required to complete this project. To minimize environmental impacts the intermittent BVs would be located within previously disturbed transmission tower footprints. Each BV would impact approximately a 16 square foot surface area and approximately a 4 foot depth. Lastly, fiber termination equipment would be installed within the control house at each substation and powerhouse. All proposed construction activities would be located within existing BPA rights-of-way and no new access roads would be required.

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 by this project. Site conditions prohibited access to the areas around FOWPs 8/4a and 8/4b at the time of the cultural resource survey. Consequently, BPA determined that an archaeological monitor should be present while ground disturbing activities are occurring near the unsurveyed areas. The cultural resource report and a summary letter were sent on June 7, 2011 to the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (the Corps), the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Reservation, the Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Wanapum Tribe, the Coeur D-Alene Tribe of the Coeur D'Alene Reservation, and the Spokane Tribe of the Spokane Reservation. A concurrence letter was received on June 23, 2011 from the DAHP regarding this cultural resource report. A concurrence letter was also received on June 16, 2011 from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. Ongoing

coordination with the Corps occurred via both phone conversations and email throughout the environmental review process and the Corps concurred with BPA's determination. No response was received from the DNR or other tribes.

Two historic golden eagle nests are known to be located within 0.5 miles of the proposed project area. A field survey performed on May 18, 2011 by BPA biologists determined that both nests are currently active. In accordance with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and to meet BPA's obligations under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, construction activities are to be limited within 0.5 miles of active golden eagles nests until either all fledglings have left the nest or until July 15. Therefore, to prevent nest abandonment and harm to the golden eagle fledglings, no heavy machinery or helicopters will be operated between towers 21/4 and 23/1 as well as between towers 9/2 and 10/4 of the Little Goose-Lower Granite transmission lines until either it is visually confirmed by a BPA biologist that the fledglings have vacated the nest or until July 15. Assuming the above mentioned provision is followed, this project will have no effect upon golden eagles.

The project area is absent of other unique wildlife habitat, water features, 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/ Gene Lynard, for:

Michael B. Henjum
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: July 7, 2011

Attachments:

Provisions
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Provisions

This categorical exclusion will meet the following provisions:

Cultural Resources:

1. An archaeological monitor shall be present during all ground disturbing activities that occur near fiber optic wood poles 8/4a and 8/4b. Contact Mike Henjum – KEC-4, Liz Oliver – KEC-4, or Sunshine Clark-Schmidt – KEC-4 at least two weeks prior to disturbing the ground around poles 8/4a and 8/4b to arrange for the monitor.
2. Should archaeological materials be unexpectedly encountered during project activities, the following actions should be taken:
 - Stop work and immediately notify the COTR or site manager and a qualified archaeologist. In addition, all concerned Tribes and appropriate federal, state, and local agencies should be notified.
 - Implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering.
 - Take reasonable steps to restrict access to the site of discovery.
 - Take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site.

Wildlife:

3. To prevent nest abandonment and harm to the Golden eagle fledglings, no heavy machinery or helicopters will be operated between towers 21/4 and 23/1 as well as between towers 9/2 and 10/4 of the Little Goose-Lower Granite transmission lines until either it is visually confirmed by a BPA biologist that the fledglings have vacated the nest or until after July 15.

Vegetation Protection and Noxious Weeds:

4. Restrict construction activities to the area needed to work effectively. Construction crews will be instructed to restrict vehicles to designated areas and existing roads as much as possible.
5. Designated areas will be used to store equipment and supplies. The contractor will follow applicable state and federal regulations to protect plant communities.
6. After construction, disturbed areas not needed for ongoing access or maintenance will be promptly reseeded with native species where possible.
7. Seed mix for revegetation will contain a mixture of the common native bunchgrasses and dryland species present in the project area.
8. Do not spread noxious weed seeds:
 - Certify in writing that all vehicles, equipment, and machinery are free of all weeds including seeds before moving the equipment into the construction area. The COTR or site manager will inspect vehicles prior to bringing them on site.

- When an area contaminated by weeds is encountered on, or off of, the construction site, use caution to prevent the spreading of weeds to other areas. This may include cleaning the equipment with high-pressure water prior to moving from one work site to another, or installing wheel washes. Notify the COTR or site manager as to the location of the noxious weeds.
9. Use only weed-free materials, or inert materials for mulching and for erosion control.

Erosion Control and Land Use:

10. Require dust abatement on road and construction site, if necessary.
11. Appropriate erosion and sediment control best management practices will be utilized for the protection of water resources.
12. Provide a schedule of construction activities to all landowners/agencies along the corridor that could be affected by construction.
13. 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:

14. Limit construction to daytime hours for noise abatement.
15. No equipment with un-muffled exhaust is allowed. Fit all equipment with sound-control devices that are as effective as the original equipment.
16. 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 will proceed only after measures approved by the state and local regulatory agencies are put in place to prevent the spread of contaminated materials and protect the health and safety of workers.
17. Equip vehicles with fire suppression equipment, including a shovel, fire extinguisher, and bladder or water supply.
18. Equip construction vehicles with spill containment kits able to respond to construction related spills.

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Central Ferry Fiber Project

Work Order #: 223131

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 An archaeological monitor shall be present during all ground disturbing activities that occur near fiber optic wood poles 8/4a and 8/4b. Contact Mike Henjum – KEC-4, Liz Oliver – KEC-4, or Sunshine Clark-Schmidt – KEC-4 at least two weeks prior to disturbing the ground around poles 8/4a and 8/4b to arrange for the monitor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) To prevent nest abandonment and harm to the Golden Eagle fledglings, no heavy machinery or helicopters will be operated between towers 21/4 and 23/1 as well as between towers 9/2 and 10/4 of the Little Goose-Lower Granite transmission lines until either it is visually confirmed by a BPA biologist that the fledglings have vacated the nest or until after July 15 .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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/ Gene Lynard for Michael Henjum Date: July 7, 2011