

# memorandum

DATE: October 7, 2011

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEPR-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Mike Normandeau  
Customer Account Executive – PSE-SPOKANE

**Proposed Action:** Columbia Rural Electric Association (Columbia REA) Dayton Substation Tap Line Project

**Budget Information:** Work Order 00118303, Task 17

**PP&A Project No.:** PP&A 2089

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B4.12: Construction of electric power lines approximately 10 miles in length or less that are not for the integration of major new generation resources into a main transmission system.

**Location:** Dayton, Columbia County, Washington  
Township 10 North, Range 39 East, Sections 14-17, 20 & 24  
Township 10 North, Range 40 East, Sections 19 & 30

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

**Description of the Proposed Action:** The Columbia REA has requested to provide power to Columbia REA's Dayton Substation via interconnection to an existing BPA transmission line in Columbia County, Washington. Columbia REA will construct, own, operate, and maintain the proposed tap line from their Dayton Substation to the point of interconnection, but entered into an agreement with BPA to provide financial assistance to construct the approximately 7.5-mile, 115-kilovolt (kV) tap line. The purpose of this project is to provide direct BPA transmission service to the Columbia REA Dayton Substation, which is currently served indirectly through a BPA power transfer agreement.

The proposed Dayton Substation tap line will consist of 60-to-80-foot tall, single wood poles located primarily along an existing distribution line corridor in agricultural fields along Patit Road, east of the town of Dayton. The line would originate from Dayton Substation and proceed 7.5 miles to the point of interconnection on the BPA Walla Walla-Tucannon 115-kV transmission line, between structures 40/2 and 40/3. The existing distribution line poles along Patit Road will be removed after the tap line is constructed, and Columbia REA will underbuild the distribution line on the new tap line. Construction of the tap line is scheduled to begin in early 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 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.

No cultural artifacts or historic properties were identified during an intensive survey of the project area and literature review completed in May 2011 by a third party archaeological firm. Based on this and correspondence with interested parties, BPA determined the project will have “No Historic Properties Affected” on cultural resources or historic properties as protected under the National Historic Preservation Act. The Washington SHPO concurred with BPA’s finding on September 15, 2011.

No threatened or endangered species, critical habitat, or other sensitive areas will be impacted from the proposed tap line project. The project will span Patit Creek, which is designated critical habitat for the middle Columbia River steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) (federally listed as threatened). The line structures on either side of the two Patit Creek crossings will be located more than 100-feet from the stream and no riparian clearing is required. There is existing access to the project areas on either side of the creek, and no in-water or near-water work will occur. Based on this, the proposal will not affect any listed threatened or endangered species, or critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act, or Essential Fish Habitat under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

Based on the conditions 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  
Biological Scientist (Environmental)

Concur: /s/ Katherine S. Pierce  
Katherine S. Pierce  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: October 7, 2011

Attachment:  
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

## Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

**Name of Proposed Project:** Columbia REA Dayton Substation Tap Line Project

**Work Order #:** 00118303, Task 17      **PP&A Project No.:** PP&A 2089

**Prepared by:** Makary A. Hutson      **Routing:** KEPR-4      **Date:** 9/29/2011

**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 On September 15, 2011, the Washington SHPO concurred with BPA's determination of "No Historic Properties Affected". A cultural monitor during ground disturbing activities was requested during tribal consultation, and a cultural monitoring plan will be submitted to Washington DAHP. If any archaeological material is encountered during construction, the BPA environmental lead will immediately be notified and work halted in the vicinity of the finds until they can be inspected and assessed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) No in-stream or near-stream work will occur at the Patit Creek crossings. BMPs should be installed as necessary to ensure construction activities do not affect the water quality of Patit Creek.	<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 Columbia REA is responsible for satisfying all state and local permitting and environmental requirements relating to planning, construction, and maintenance of their tap line.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9. Pollution control at Federal facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Other – Visual Impacts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>