

memorandum

DATE: May 1, 2012

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Anna Cosola
Project Manager – TPC-TPP-4

Proposed Action: Whitefish In-line Hydroelectric Project

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.1 Contracts, policies, and marketing and allocation plans for electric power.

Location: Flathead County, Montana

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: In response to the City of Whitefish's small generator interconnection request, BPA proposes to integrate their existing 261-kW In-Line Hydroelectric Project into the Federal Columbia River Transmission System (FCRTS). The proposed point of receipt of the electricity generated from the Whitefish In-line Hydroelectric Project is the existing Trumble Creek Tap. In order to integrate the project, BPA would prepare a Balancing Area Authority Services Agreement between BPA and the City of Whitefish, and a Construction Agreement between BPA and the host utility, Flathead Electric Cooperative (FEC), for generation revenue metering installation. BPA would, at BPA's expense, provide FEC with equipment specifications, witness acceptance tests on revenue meter transformers prior to installation, and perform in-service revenue metering checks on voltages and currents on the date of energization. All other work would be performed by FEC within the facility control house or in areas that have been previously disturbed.

The purpose of the Whitefish In-Line Hydroelectric project is to allow an identified retail consumer of FEC, the City of Whitefish, to offset local load that is electrically interconnected on the same portion of FEC's distribution system ("onsite consumer load") through net metering of the electricity generated from the facility. The facility is owned and operated by the same identified retail consumer of FEC, the City of Whitefish, and will allow the offset of power purchased from the local electric service provider, FEC.

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, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011). 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, has not been segmented to meet the

definition of a categorical exclusion, 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, (iv) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, or (v) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements.

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/ Zachary R. Gustafson
Zachary R. Gustafson
Environmental Project Manager

Concur:

/s/ Stacy Mason
Stacy Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: May 1, 2012

Attachment:
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Whitefish In-Line Hydroelectric Project

Work Order #: 257305

This project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts on the following environmentally sensitive resources. See 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B for complete descriptions of the resources. This checklist is to be used as a summary – further discussion may be included in the Categorical Exclusion Memorandum.

<u>Environmental Resources</u>	<u>No Potential for Significance</u>	<u>No Potential, with Conditions (describe)</u>
1. Historic Properties and 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 or unique farmlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: /s/ Zachary R. Gustafson

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