

memorandum

DATE: June 3, 2013

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Rudiger Krohn
Project Manager – TESH-CSB-2

Proposed Action: Tri-Cities Maintenance Headquarters Project

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.15 Support Buildings

Location: Pasco, Franklin County, Washington T9N, R30E, Section 21

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to build a maintenance headquarters facility (MHQ facility) on 18 acres in Franklin County, Washington. The site is located in Pasco, WA, in a fallow agricultural field that is zoned light industrial by the City of Pasco. The vegetation at the site consists of invasive weed species such as Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), tumble mustard (*Sisymbrium altissimum*), cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) and tarweed (*Madia* spp.). The site is located on the edge of the city in an industrial area at the junction of Interstate Highway 182 and State Highway 395.

The MHQ facility and storage yard would support the transmission services field maintenance and operations responsibilities in the Tri-Cities Area. The MHQ facility would consist of an office building (13,214 square feet) and two maintenance buildings (19,650 and 11,285 square feet). The buildings would be one story tall, with a 4-foot-deep foundation. There would also be four paved parking areas. Altogether, the buildings would take up 1 acre, while the paved area around the buildings—including parking spaces—would take up 4 acres. The storage yard would cover most of the remaining site, which would have a compacted rock surface. A small amount of landscaping would be located within and adjacent to the buildings, and a swale (for on-site water treatment and dispersal) would be located in the northeast corner. A new paved road would be built from Commercial Avenue to the facility across property owned by the City of Pasco, and a paved approach would be added to connect the site to Capital Avenue. The new road would be approximately 480 feet long by 30 feet wide (0.3 acre). The facility would include outdoor lighting, and utilities would be buried underground and connected to existing infrastructure along Commercial Avenue.

The facility would support approximately 72 maintenance employees, who would travel in and out of the site daily. The existing road system was designed for and would accommodate traffic associated with the facility. The storage yard would store equipment and supplies used for transmission line maintenance, such as wood poles for transmission line structures, machinery, and transformer heatlines. There would be no storage of radioactive materials or hazardous waste.

Analysis

Neither the MHQ facility nor the storage yard would impact federally listed threatened or endangered (listed) species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), federally designated critical habitat, or essential fish habitat (TriCitiesMHQ_NoEffectMemo_2013). Although the proposed site is located within the historic range of Washington ground squirrel (*Uroditellus washingtoni*, ESA federal candidate species) and habitat for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*, federal species of concern), field surveys of the site did not find evidence for either species—including individual animals or burrows (BPA_Tri-CitiesMHQ_WildlifeSurvey_2013).

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.

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.

/s/ Kara Hempy-Mayer
Kara Hempy-Mayer
Environmental Project Manager

Concur:

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

Date: *June 3, 2013*

Attachments:
Provisions
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

ATTACHMENT

PROVISIONS

This categorical exclusion would meet the following provisions:

1. If Washington ground squirrel or burrowing owl are found on site prior to or during construction, the following actions should be taken:
 - Stop work in the immediate vicinity and immediately notify the KEP environmental lead (Shawn Barndt, 503-880-4822) and the WDFW Area Habitat Biologist for Yakima, Benton, and Franklin counties (Eric Bartrand, 509-457-9310).
 - Implement reasonable and prudent measures to protect the species found, if needed.

2. In the event any archaeological or historic materials are encountered during project activities, the following actions should be taken:
 - Stop work in the immediate vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead (Shawn Barndt, 503-880-4822). The BPA cultural resource specialist (Brian O'Donnchadha, 503-230-5960), interested Tribes, and the appropriate county, state, and federal agencies should also 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 and restrict access to the site of discovery.

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Tri-Cities Maintenance Headquarters Project

Work Order #: 283512

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 No effect determination based on review and survey: received concurrence from DAHP on May 22, 2013. No concerns were received from the tribes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) None present	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands None present	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation None present	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety Workers would follow BPA standards for health and safety during construction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands Eighteen acres of Farmland of Statewide/Unique Importance would be converted to the Tri-Cities MHQ facility (buildings and storage yard). This is a small amount relative to the total amount in Franklin County – most of which is Farmland of Statewide/Unique Importance (320,000 acres) or Prime Farmland if Irrigated (220,000 acres). In addition, the site is not irrigated and is zoned for light industrial, so the project is consistent with local land use planning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water None present	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe) Migratory Bird Act: the site is located in potential burrowing owl habitat, but no evidence of burrowing owls was found. Potential habitat is poor quality.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Supporting Documentation:

TriCitiesMHQ_NoEffectMemo_2013
BPA_Tri-CitiesMHQ_WildlifeSurvey_2013

Signed: /s/ Kara Hempy-Mayer

Date: June 3, 2013