

memorandum

DATE: July 17, 2013

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Charla M. Burke
Project Manager, TEP-TPP-1

Proposed Action: McNary Substation Shunt Capacitor Addition

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.6 – Additions and modifications to transmission facilities

Location: McNary, Umatilla County, Oregon

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to add a 230-kilovolt (kV) shunt capacitor and to reconstruct an asphalt access road to its existing McNary Substation. The addition of the shunt capacitor would help stabilize the voltage during certain conditions to provide dynamic reactive margin at the McNary Powerhouse. The reconstruction of the asphalt road, Old 3rd Street, would remedy failing road conditions and additional road damage from heavy traffic use during the installation of the shunt capacitor.

In order to accommodate the new shunt capacitor, BPA would need to expand McNary Substation by approximately 2.6 acres. Within this new expansion area, ground disturbance would include soil removal and the addition of new fill materials. The amount of fill needed would range from 0 to 3.5 feet in depth in order to level out the expansion yard. All fill materials would be brought in through the existing access road located on the north side of the substation. Onsite material would be reused as much as possible, but if additional fill material is needed, a nearby supplier would be found. Any excess rocks would be kept onsite and used to stabilize drainage areas, ditches, or as landscaping features. Once the new area is graded, routine substation equipment would be brought in to occupy this new area. The equipment would include fencing, grounding, conduit, footings, high voltage equipment, overhead grounding pole, and other supplies. Outside of the fence-line, a 2:1 slope gradient and ditch would be constructed to allow for proper drainage from the substation.

In order to repair the failing road conditions of Old 3rd Street, which leads into McNary Substation, BPA would re-pave Old 3rd Street after the substation expansion and shunt capacitor work has been completed. The existing road itself is approximately 20 feet in width and 525 feet in length. The area of disturbance would require removal of the existing asphalt (oil mat) and failing subgrade and then recompaction of six inches of subgrade followed by placement of eight inches of 3-inch minus subbase, four inches of ¾-inch minus aggregate base, and 2.5 inches of asphalt concrete pavement. The new road section would match the existing road edge elevations with a 2 percent road crown. The work would include redressing the

shoulder disturbed in construction with 3 inches of ¾-inch minus road surfacing aggregate. All placed aggregate and asphalt would meet Oregon Department of Transportation roadway/paving densities. Lastly, the spoils from the expansion/construction activities as well as the degraded/removed asphalt and subgrade would be disposed of in an approved landfill.

Resource Review: BPA reviewed potential impacts to vegetation, wetlands and floodplains, water, federally listed species and critical habitat, and cultural resources by the proposed project.

Existing Environment. The project site is located within Umatilla County, OR, on existing BPA fee-owned property occupied by BPA's McNary Substation, and a portion of the BPA fee-owned right-of-way (ROW) along the BPA McNary Powerhouse transmission line corridor. McNary Substation is approximately 1.5 miles east of the town of Umatilla and approximately 1.1 miles west of the town of McNary. McNary Substation is down river from the McNary Dam by approximately one mile. McNary Substation consists of a control house, maintenance and equipment sheds, transmission lines and towers, substation equipment, and graveled and paved areas for vehicle circulation and equipment storage. Vegetated areas of the project site are previously disturbed with evidence of fill and grading as well as a small landscaped area around the substation. The surrounding landscape consists of farmland and rural residences, and contains upland, wetland, and riparian areas.

Vegetation. The project would remove a very small amount of existing vegetation comprised of non-native grasses and weeds alongside the access road. Disturbed areas would be replanted with a combination of native plant species if deemed appropriate. No sensitive or federally-listed plant species would be affected.

Water, Wetlands, and Floodplains. The Columbia River and associated off-channel remnants/wetlands are located within 485 feet to 0.5 miles north of the McNary Substation. The 100-year floodplain is located approximately 0.4 miles northwest of the project site. There are no perennial or intermittent streams within the project site itself, but there is an unnamed stream immediately northeast of the substation and a canal located immediate south of the substation. Best management practices (BMPs) would be utilized to prevent any erosion and/or runoff from construction activities from entering these water resources.

Federally Listed Species and Critical Habitat. Bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) is the only listed species in Umatilla County. The project would have no effect on this species or their critical habitat.

Cultural Resources. On December 19, 2012, BPA initiated Section 106 consultation with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. Based on background research and a cultural resource survey, BPA determined the proposed project would have no effect on cultural resources or historic properties. The Oregon SHPO concurred with BPA's determination in a letter dated June 13, 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/ Andrew M. Montañó
Andrew M. Montañó, PMP
Environmental Project Manager

Concur:

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

Date: *July 17, 2013*

Attachments:
Provisions
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

ATTACHMENT

PROVISIONS

This categorical exclusion will meet the following provisions:

Natural Resources

- Implement erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs) immediately after clearing and prior to ground disturbing activities to prevent erosion and runoff.
- Reseed disturbed areas with regionally appropriate native woody and herbaceous species.

Cultural Resources

In the event any archaeological or historical materials are encountered during project activities, the following actions should be taken:

- A field monitor should be present at all times during construction activities.
- Stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, a BPA archaeologist, appropriate BPA project staff, interested Tribes, Oregon SHPO, and the appropriate county, state, and federal agencies.
- 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, including restricting access.

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: McNary Substation Shunt Capacitor Addition

Work Order #: 00320706

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.

Environmental Resources	No Potential for Significance	No Potential, with Conditions (describe)
1. Historic Properties and Cultural Resources APE concurrence on 12/26/2012; Final Determination concurrence on 6/13/2013 (SHPO Case No. 12-1841)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands Implement erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs) that are protective of wetlands and water resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe) N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed: /s/ Andrew M. Montañó

Date: July 17, 2013