

# memorandum

DATE: July 1, 2013

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Kelly Gardner, PMP  
Project Manager, TEP-TPP-1

**Proposed Action:** Nine Canyon Substation Communication Tower Addition: 331800 McNary Sub Bus Tie Relay Replacements and 310427 McNary-Badger Canyon Transfer Trip Install

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

**Location:** Kennewick, Benton County, Washington

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

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to install a 60-foot communications tower and associated communication equipment at the Benton County Public Utility District's Nine Canyon Substation in Benton County, Washington. The upgrade would involve replacing the existing digital radio communication system with a new larger capacity digital radio communication system to allow for more bandwidth capability to the upgraded substation control equipment. The Nine Canyon Substation is adjacent to the Nine Canyon Wind Facility owned by Energy Northwest near Kennewick, Washington.

This project will install a new 60-foot, 4-leg Valmont communication tower with 2 new antennas. This new tower foundation will be 23-foot square by 48-inches deep, and will be installed 12-inches below grade. The new tower foundation will be installed on the northwest corner of the substation yard using excavation equipment to lay the foundation. Radio and associated equipment will be installed inside the Benton County PUD control house.

Approximately 175 cubic yards of spoils from excavation for the new tower foundation would be disposed of off-site. Tree removal would not be necessary, as the site is surrounded by wind turbines and agricultural land. The site is accessible via existing, maintained roads.

The existing monopole and associated equipment installed inside the control house would be removed after the new tower and radio equipment have been installed and placed in-service. This will take approximately 30 days after the new radio is energized. The monopole would be removed and the foundation would be removed to 6-inches below grade and covered with switchyard rock. A new radio and new antennas would also be installed at BPA's existing Franklin Substation within the control house. The new antennas would be installed on an existing tower at Franklin Substation.

**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 1, 2013*

Attachments:  
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions  
Provisions

## **ATTACHMENT**

### **PROVISIONS**

This categorical exclusion will meet the following provisions:

#### **Cultural resources:**

1. Should archaeological materials be unexpectedly encountered during construction of the project, stop work and notify the COTR. A qualified archaeologist should immediately be notified and an evaluation made and a treatment plan developed should the find be significant.

#### **Vegetation protection and noxious weeds:**

2. Restrict construction activities to the area needed to work effectively. Construction crews would be instructed to restrict vehicles to designated areas and existing roads as much as possible.
3. Designated areas would be used to store equipment and supplies. The contractor would follow applicable state and federal regulations to protect plant communities.
4. After construction, disturbed areas not needed for ongoing access or maintenance should be promptly reseeded with native species where possible.
5. Seed mix for any revegetation efforts should contain a mixture of the common native bunchgrasses and dryland species present in the Project area. Native seed is commercially available for this area.
6. 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 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 as to the location of the noxious weeds. Use only weed-free materials, or inert materials for mulching and for erosion control.

#### **Erosion control and land use:**

7. Require dust abatement on road and construction site, if necessary.
8. Appropriate erosion and sediment control best management practices will be utilized for the protection of water resources.
9. Provide a schedule of construction activities to all landowners/agencies along the corridor that could be affected by construction.
10. Plan and schedule construction activities, when practical, to minimize temporary disturbance, displacement of crops, and interference with farming activities.

11. 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:**

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

# Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

**Name of Proposed Project:** Nine Canyon Substation Communication Tower Addition: 331800  
 McNary Sub Bus Tie Relay Replacements and 310427 McNary-Badger  
 Canyon Transfer Trip Install

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**Work Order #:** 00310412

**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 APE concurrence on 5/13/2013; Final Determination concurrence on 6/10/2013	<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 N/A	<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, but health and safety provisions are outlined in the Categorical Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed: /s/ Andrew M. Montaño

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