

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: July 30, 2013

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Joseph Cottrell
Realty Specialist – TERR-Franklin

Proposed Action: Port of Morrow Land Acquisition

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.24 Property Transfers

Location: Boardman, Umatilla County, Oregon

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to acquire 187 acres from the Port of Morrow (Port) in a location where there is likely to be a future need for transmission facilities based on trends in load growth and customer requests. The parcel is located roughly 1.5 miles east of Boardman and is intersected by a corridor that contains three BPA transmission lines; McNary-Jones Canyon No. 1 230-kilovolt (kV); McNary-Boardman No. 1 230-kV; and McNary-Coyote Springs No. 1 500-kV. The parcel is zoned for industrial use and the major share of the parcel is in active agricultural production. The space in between the irrigated crop circles (35 acres) is degraded grassland habitat dominated by weed species. The Port would retain water rights associated with the parcel.

A separate environmental analysis will be conducted in the future for any facilities that BPA may propose to construct on this parcel.

Findings:

A survey for Washington ground squirrel, a state-listed and ESA candidate species, was conducted on April 26 and May 7, 2013 according to Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife survey protocol. No evidence of Washington ground squirrel, including burrows, call notes or sightings was found.

Pursuant to its responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR 800, BPA determined that the proposed action is a federal undertaking that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties and initiated consultation with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office and potentially interested tribes. On November 6, 2012 SHPO responded with their concurrence of no adverse effect. No response was received from any of the consulted tribes.

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/ Carolyn A. Sharp
Carolyn A. Sharp
Environmental Project Manager

Concur:

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

Date: *July 31, 2013*

Attachment:
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Port of Morrow Land Acquisition

Work Order #: 00313524

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 SHPO concurrence on No Adverse Effect received 11/6/12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) Washington ground squirrel(candidate species) surveys conducted May 2013, no evidence of species	<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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands Industrial zoning, utilities are allowed use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water Port of Morrow would retain water rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed: /s/ Carolyn Sharp

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