

memorandum

DATE: January 22, 2014

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Chad Hamel
Project Manager – TEP-TPP-1

Proposed Action: St. Clair Loop in to Olympia-South Tacoma No.1 230-kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.11 Electric power substations and interconnection facilities

Location: Thurston County, Washington

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to interconnect Puget Sound Energy's (PSE) St. Clair Substation via a new tap on BPA's existing Olympia-South Tacoma No.1 230-kV transmission line near the City of Lacey in Thurston County, Washington. PSE, a customer of BPA, plans to upgrade its St. Clair Substation from a 115-kV to a 230-kV facility, and construct a new double circuit 230-kV transmission line to connect the substation to the proposed tap point. Completion of the project would allow PSE to increase its transmission capacity to maintain reliable service to rapidly growing load within its service area.

In order to complete the proposed project, BPA would, at PSE's expense, tap BPA's existing Olympia-South Tacoma No.1 230-kV transmission line at the proposed Point of Interconnection (POI) between structures 14/4 and 14/5. To construct the tap, BPA would remove existing wood H-frame structure 14/4, and design and construct one new steel lattice structure at the adjacent POI. Four structure footings would be installed in holes excavated 10 feet wide by 10 feet long by 12 feet deep, and the new steel structure would be attached to the footings. BPA would subsequently terminate the final spans of PSE's new double circuit 230-kV transmission lines on this structure, and would install temporary guard structures while stringing the new conductor to prevent contact with BPA's existing Olympia-Grand Coulee No.1 287-kV transmission line. The temporary guard structures would be installed in 2 feet wide by 10 feet deep holes augered by a drill rig, and would be removed following the completion of construction activities. The completed tap would split BPA's Olympia-South Tacoma No.1 230-kV transmission line into two lines, to be known as the BPA Olympia-PSE St. Clair and PSE St. Clair-BPA South Tacoma 230-kV transmission lines. PSE would design, construct, operate, and maintain the portion of these new double circuit 230-kV transmission lines which would extend from the northern edge of BPA's ROW at the POI to PSE's St. Clair Substation.

In addition, BPA would, at PSE's expense, allow PSE to bring fiber from its St. Clair Substation to connect with available BPA fiber at an existing splice point at structure 10/4 of BPA's Olympia-Grand Coulee No.1 287-kV transmission line. PSE would connect to BPA fiber in a new customer vault provided and installed by PSE at the base of structure 10/4. BPA would connect the fiber to an existing aerial splice can located on structure 10/4.

Disturbance would result from organics/soil/debris removal, structure removal and installation, excavation, grading, the addition and compaction of fill materials, and the movement of construction vehicles and heavy equipment. The project would remove existing vegetation comprised of non-native forbs and grasses, and invasive weeds. Disturbed areas would be reseeded with a regionally appropriate seed mix and mulched. The POI would be accessed from either an existing access road through an entrance from SE Yelm Highway, or from SE Gallup Drive near its intersection with SE Wildhorse Lane. The fiber splice point would be accessed from an existing access road through an entrance on Spurgeon Creek Road.

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

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce
Katherine S. Pierce or Stacy Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: *January 22, 2014*

Attachments:
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions
Provisions

PROVISIONS

This categorical exclusion will meet the following provisions:

Natural Resources

- Avoid flagged and/or staked areas to prevent impacts to natural resources.
- Implement erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs) immediately after clearing and prior to initiating ground disturbing activities to prevent erosion and runoff.
- Do not allow petroleum products, sediment, and other deleterious materials (i.e. concrete wash out) to enter any stream, wetland, waterbody, or drainage conveyance.
- Ensure spill containment and cleanup materials are readily available at the project site, staging areas, and in construction vehicles and equipment. Replace any used spill response material within 24 hours.
- Reseed disturbed areas with a regionally appropriate seed mix and apply mulch.

Cultural Resources

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

- Stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, a BPA archaeologist, appropriate BPA project staff, interested Tribes, Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, 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: St. Clair Loop in to Olympia-South Tacoma No.1 230-kV Transmission Line

Work Order #: 315316

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 Concurrence October 14, 2013 Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. Tribes consulted: the Nisqually Indian Tribe.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) Not present.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands Avoid flagged and/or staked areas to prevent impacts to natural resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation Not present.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands Soil group is classified as Spanaway gravelly sandy loam, considered prime farmland if irrigated. Soils within the project area are not used as farmland, and are not irrigated.	<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"/>

Signed: /s/ Zachary R. Gustafson

Date: January 22, 2014