

memorandum

DATE: September 2, 2014

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEPR-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Nathan Mullen
Civil Engineer – TEP-TPP-3

Proposed Action: Wautoma-Ostrander No. 1 Upgrade

PP&A Project No.: 2,361

Categorical Exclusions Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.3, Routine maintenance; B4.6, Additions and modifications to transmission facilities

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Location: The proposed project is located in the BPA Tri-Cities, The Dalles, and Longview districts in Benton, Yakima, Klickitat, and Skamania counties, Washington and Multnomah and Clackamas counties, Oregon. The project activities would be conducted at selected locations along the 162 mile, 500-kilovolt Wautoma-Ostrander No. 1 transmission line between Wautoma Substation and Ostrander Substation. Project areas are located in agricultural, grazing, rural residential, private timber, BPA fee-owned, Washington Department of Natural Resources, Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area, and United States Forest Service lands.

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to address surface impairments that were identified on the Wautoma-Ostrander No. 1 transmission line. BPA identified 12 surface impairments where the distances from the conductor to the ground surface do not provide adequate clearance for operation at 100°C. Removing the surface impairments would allow BPA's Wautoma-Ostrander No. 1 transmission line to meet current National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) standards for operation at 100°C. The project would also include modifying five transmission structures to transpose the electrical phasing of the transmission line, thus increasing power transmission efficiency. Table 1, below, details project activities.

Following the excavation and placement of soil and/or other construction activities, all disturbed areas would be stabilized for erosion and sediment control, and seeded with an appropriate seed mix.

Equipment that would be likely to be used for this project, and would be likely to disturb the ground, would include a combination of the following: dump trucks, a bulldozer, backhoes, excavators, cranes, bucket trucks, and work trucks.

Table 1			
Span or Str	County	TRS	Activity
1/3 - 1/4	Benton, WA	T12N R24E SEC 20	Remove approx. 115 cubic yards of soil and place within the right-of-way (ROW) to the south of the impairment. No planned road improvements.
8/4 - 8/5	Yakima, WA	T11N R23E SEC 8 and 9	Remove approx. 45 cubic yards of soil and place within the ROW to the southwest of the impairment. No planned road improvements.
11/4 - 11/5	Yakima, WA	T11N R22E SEC 24	Remove approx. 15 cubic yards of soil and place within the ROW to the south of the impairment. No planned road improvements.
22/1	Yakima, WA	T10N R21E SEC 26	Replace middle arm on tower 22/1 and relocate conductors. No planned road improvements. May need to build 500 square feet crane pad.
60/4 - 61/1 and 61/1 - 61/2	Klickitat, WA	T6N R17E SEC 34 and T5N R17E SEC 3	Relocate tower 61/1 approximately 65 feet north on line and raise 25 ft. May require road improvements within the ROW.
71/1 - 71/2 and 71/2 - 71/3	Klickitat, WA	T5N R16E SEC 29 and 30	Relocate tower 71/2 approximately 65 feet northeast on line and raise 25 feet. No planned road improvements.
71/5 - 72/1	Klickitat, WA	T5N R16E SEC 30	Remove approx. 580 cubic yards of soil and place within the ROW to the west to the impairment.
72/3	Klickitat, WA	T5N R16E SEC 30	Install a new deadend transposition tower 72/3. A new access road to the new structure is required.
74/4	Klickitat, WA	T5N R15E SEC 34	Install new jumpers and support hardware. New tower built in 2012. Existing temporary access road.
75/3 - 75/4	Klickitat, WA	T5N R15E SEC 33 and 34	Remove approx. 325 cubic yards of soil and place within the ROW to the east of the impairment. No planned road improvements.
97/3 - 97/4	Klickitat, WA	T4N R12E SEC 31 and 32	Remove approx. 600 cubic yards of soil and place within the ROW to the north of the impairment. No planned road improvements.
130/4	Skamania, WA	T2N R7E SEC 10	Install new jumpers and support hardware. May require one small section of road improvements.
130/5 - 131/1	Skamania, WA	T2N R7E SEC 9 and 10	Replace conductor suspension hardware (floating deadends) at tower 131/1. Avoid Cultural Site. May require minor road improvements.
149/4 - 150/1	Multnomah, OR	T1S R5E SEC 13 and 14	Remove approx. 85 cubic yards of soil and place within the ROW to the east of the impairment. No planned road improvements. The access road between 151/4 and 153/1 is no longer part of this upgrade project.
154/5	Clackamas, OR	T1S R5E SEC 32	Remove transposition support hardware and install new jumpers. No planned road improvements.

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/ Oden Jahn

Oden Jahn
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

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

DATE: September 2, 2014

Attachments:
Provisions
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

ATTACHMENT

PROVISIONS

The following project conditions and conservation measures would be implemented for this project:

1. Vehicles and construction equipment are not allowed off of access roads, structure sites, pulling and tensioning sites, or staging areas.
2. Erosion and sediment control devices must be installed according to manufacturer instructions or the applicable Washington Stormwater Manual prior to ground disturbing activities, and in such a manner as to insure that sediment and sediment laden water do not enter waterbodies or wetlands, or violate applicable water standards.
3. No wetland impacts are anticipated for this project. Placement of fill, in any water body or wetland is not allowed, except when applicable permits have been issued and only in accordance with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other applicable permit conditions.
4. Spill containment and cleanup materials shall be readily available in construction equipment, staging areas, and at work sites. Fire extinguishers, shovels, and clearly marked spill kits shall be available at these locations. Any spill response materials used shall be replaced within 24 hours.
5. To prevent the spread of noxious weeds and other contaminants, all vehicles and equipment must be clean (e.g. power washed) and inspected to ensure they are free of soil, mud, seeds, plant parts, and petroleum products prior to entering project areas, waterways, and/or when moving from a weed-infested area to an area that is not weed-infested.
6. Seed/mulch/fertilize all disturbed areas with an appropriate seed mix and method according to the procedures listed in the applicable Washington Stormwater Manual, BMP C120 and C121, that takes into account site conditions and future phases of construction. With the exception of landowner-required seed mixes, substitutions to the recommended seed mixes must be approved by the BPA Environmental Lead. Use manufacturer-recommended seeding rates appropriate for the means of application. All seed mixes, mulches, and non-vegetative erosion controls must be "Certified Noxious Weed Free."
7. Known cultural resources will be avoided. On-site cultural resource and/or tribal monitors will be required during all ground disturbing construction activities at locations determined through Section 106 consultation. An Avoidance and Monitoring Plan and Inadvertent Discovery Protocol have been prepared for this project.
8. Areas of known and potential northern spotted owl (NSO) habitat have been identified in or near project locations. No project activities, other than construction site reconnaissance using typical work pick-up trucks or work with hand tools (no machinery), may be done between March 1 and September 30 in these areas.

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Wautoma-Ostrander No. 1 Upgrade Project

Work Order #: 297149

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 BPA proposes to implement and Avoidance and Monitoring Plan for identified historical properties, and provide an archaeological and/or tribal monitor. At DAHP's request, an Inadvertent Discovery Protocol was also prepared for this project. Thus it was determined that there will be "no adverse effect" to historic properties for this project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) Known populations of pygmy rabbit, marbled murrelet and critical habitat, gray wolf, golden paintbrush, yellow-billed cuckoo, streaked horned lark and critical habitat, Umtanum desert buckwheat and critical habitat, Willamette daisy and critical habitat, North American wolverine, water howellia, Fender's blue butterfly and critical habitat. Bradshaw's desert-parsley, Kincaid's lupine and critical habitat, Canada lynx and critical habitat, Columbia River chum salmon and critical habitat, Lower Columbia River coho salmon, Middle Columbia River steelhead and critical habitat, Lower Columbia River Chinook salmon and critical habitat, Oregon chub and critical habitat, Oregon spotted frog and critical habitat, bull trout and critical habitat, Nelson's checker-mallow, Ute ladies'-tresses, northern spotted owl and grizzly bear occur far outside of the project areas. Further, the ROW nature of the project areas does not typically provide the required habitat conditions for the above-mentioned terrestrial species or their critical habitat. For project areas adjacent to Lower Columbia River steelhead and critical habitat, Best Management Practices would be installed such that project activities would not affect the water quality of nearby surface waters. For project activities in proximity to northern spotted owl, no work would be performed between March 1 and September 30. It was determined that this project would have "No Effect" to Essential Fish Habitat, T&E Species, or their critical habitats.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area (CGNSA) – On August 1, 2012, BPA received a letter from the USFS CGNSA indicating that the proposed project was determined to be maintenance of existing transmission facilities as well as "Uses Allowed Outright". Since then, the project has changed slightly; however, these changes are not expected to noticeably alter the appearance or character of the Wautoma-Ostrander No. 1 transmission line at the project areas within the CGNSA. The CGNSA has been notified of these changes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: /s/ Oden W. Jahn

Date: 8/29/2014

Oden W. Jahn, KEPR-4