

memorandum

DATE: June 30, 2014

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Vincent Majors
Project Manager – TEP-CSB-2

Proposed Action: Harney Substation Digital Communications Upgrade

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.7 Electronic equipment

Location: Harney County, Oregon

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to replace existing analog communication equipment with digital equipment in its Harney Substation in Harney County, Oregon. The upgrade would involve expanding the substation electrical yard, replacing the radio tower, and installing new digital equipment. Existing analog communication equipment at Harney Substation is outdated, and replacement parts for repairs were discontinued by the manufacturer in 1999. The upgrades would ensure communication system reliability and compliance with North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) standards and Western Electric Coordinating Council (WECC) requirements.

To complete the project, BPA would expand the eastern side of Harney Substation yard by approximately 3,100 square feet within BPA fee-owned property to accommodate the installation of new equipment and provide adequate access for operation and maintenance activities. BPA would pour a 28-foot by 28-foot concrete foundation in a hole excavated 36 inches below grade, and attach a 60-foot tall self-supporting steel lattice radio tower with a 6-foot long antenna to the new foundation. A new grounding mat would be installed 18 inches below grade in the expansion area, and connected to the existing substation grounding mat. BPA would replace the communication equipment within the existing control house, and connect it to the new radio tower and antenna. Once the new equipment is tested and operational, BPA would remove and decommission the existing monopole radio tower and antenna. The perimeter fence would be extended to enclose the substation expansion area, and all disturbed areas within the substation yard would be graded and rocked.

Disturbance would result from organics/soil/debris removal, equipment 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 sagebrush, non-native forbs and grasses, and invasive weeds. Disturbed areas would be reseeded with a regionally appropriate seed mix and mulched. The project site would be accessed from the existing substation entrance off State Highway 20.

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/ Stacy Mason
Stacy Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: *June 30, 2014*

Attachments:
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions
Provisions

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 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 adjacent drainage ditches.
- Ensure spill containment and cleanup materials are readily available at the project site, staging areas, and in construction vehicles and equipment.
- Reseed disturbed areas with a regionally appropriate seed mix and apply mulch.
- Dispose of excavated soil in specified on-site locations, or to BPA-approved off-site facilities in accordance with BPA's Pollution Abatement.

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, Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, 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: Harney Substation Digital Communications Upgrade

Work Order #: 305265

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 Harney Substation is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Proposed project would not alter character-defining features of the substation, and BPA would avoid a small lithic scatter located in the area. Concurrence June 26, 2014 Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. Tribes consulted: the Confederated Tribes of Siletz and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) Not present. Project is located outside of sage grouse habitat.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands Not present.	<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 Carryback very gravelly loam, considered farmland of statewide importance. Soils at the project site are not used as farmland.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water None present.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed: /s/ Zachary Gustafson

Date: June 30, 2014