

memorandum

DATE: March 11, 2014

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Erich Orth
Project Manager – TEP-TPP-3

Proposed Action: Celilo Converter Station Upgrades (*update to previous categorical exclusion issued on July 25, 2013*)

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

Location: The Dalles, Wasco County, Oregon

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is upgrading its Celilo Converter Station. In order to support work described in the previous categorical exclusion for this project (July 25, 2013), BPA needs to disconnect an existing transmission line conductor from converters being removed from the station and temporarily reconnect the line to different converters until station construction is complete. To support this action, BPA proposes to improve 3,560 feet of existing access road, create a rock landing for trucks at the base of a transmission tower, and construct a temporary parking lot for construction equipment.

BPA would rock and blade approximately 3,560 linear feet of existing access road on BPA property south of the station to tower 1/2 of BPA's Pacific Direct Current Intertie transmission line. A 60-foot by 60-foot rock landing would be built at the tower base with minimal excavation and fill to create a level surface.

The temporary parking lot would be built by removing topsoil from a 180-foot by 130-foot area and covering with 6 inches of lightly compacted crushed rock that would allow for water infiltration. Once the converter station upgrade is complete, the parking lot would be removed and the site revegetated and restored to original conditions.

The areas that would be disturbed are relatively level, previously disturbed grass/ shrub areas within and adjacent to existing transmission line rights-of-way and the substation. Construction workers would use the access road and rock landing in the fall of 2014 to disconnect the line, and again in the fall of 2015 to reconnect the line to new converters being installed.

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/ Carolyn Sharp
Carolyn Sharp
Environmental Project Manager

Concur:

/s/ Stacy Mason
Stacy Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: *March 11, 2014*

Attachment(s):
Provisions
Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

ATTACHMENT

PROVISIONS

This categorical exclusion will meet the following provisions:

Cultural resources:

- 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:

- 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.
- Designated areas would be used to store equipment and supplies.
- After construction, disturbed areas not needed for ongoing access or maintenance should be promptly reseeded with native species where possible.

Erosion control and land use:

- Require dust abatement on road and construction site, if necessary.
- Appropriate erosion and sediment control best management practices will be utilized for the protection of water resources, including a SWPPP and NPDES permit.
- Plan and schedule construction activities, when practical, to minimize temporary disturbance, displacement of crops, and interference with farming activities.

Public Health and Safety:

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

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Celilo Converter Station Upgrades (update to previous Categorical Exclusion issued on July 25, 2013)

Work Order #: 00315552, task 03

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 SHPO concurrence on no adverse affect to historic property received 1/28/14	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) None present	<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 The Celilo Converter Station is within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Because it is within the designated Urban Area planning boundary, work at the Converter Station is exempt from the National Scenic Area requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime or unique farmlands None present	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed: /s/ Carolyn Sharp

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