



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

August 3, 2012

In reply refer to: KEC-4

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DETERMINATION

Proposed Action: Pacific Direct Current Intertie (PDCI) Upgrade Project

Environmental Project Manager: Claire McClory, KEC-4, 503-230-5922, (fax) 503-230-5699, cdmclory@bpa.gov

Budget Information: WO# 00315552, Task 03

Location: The Dalles, Oregon to the Nevada-Oregon border; Lake, Jefferson, Crook, Deschutes, and Wasco counties, Oregon.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to upgrade a 265-mile long portion of the Celilo-Sylmar 500-kV transmission line from the Celilo Converter Station in The Dalles, Oregon to the Nevada-Oregon border where BPA's ownership of the 846-mile line terminates. BPA would also expand the Celilo Converter Station by about 20 acres to accommodate new equipment. The project would upgrade the PDCI North-South transfer capability from its current 3100 megawatt (MW) capacity to 3220 MW, with full potential of 3800 MW capacity. Equipment upgrades would improve reliability and performance of the aging line.

The transmission line upgrade would include replacing equipment on existing towers, adding four new towers and a section of new conductor, improving existing access roads, and adding some new roads. About 1,300 existing lattice steel transmission towers would be upgraded with new hardware assemblies (insulators, dampers, shunts, and jumpers atop each tower) along the 265-mile portion of line. In addition, four new lattice steel structures would be constructed within the existing transmission line right-of-way and about 1.8 miles of the existing transmission line would be reconducted to match conductor on the remainder of the line.

To accommodate construction equipment, about 185 miles of existing access road outside the transmission line right-of-way would be improved (rocking, grading, and minor expansion of the existing road footprint) and about 15 miles of new permanent and temporary spur roads would be

added in areas where existing access is not available to individual tower sites (typically where right-of-way crosses agricultural fields). Additional disturbance would include up to eight 10-acre temporary staging areas. Some vegetation removal and revegetation could also take place.

At Celilo Converter Station, BPA would decommission two existing aging terminals and install a new two-converter terminal in a 20-acre expansion of the northeast portion of the existing substation fence.

Class of Action to be Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): C4. Upgrading or rebuilding more than approximately 20 miles in length of existing power lines.

We have determined that the proposed action is within the class of actions normally requiring an Environmental Assessment (EA), but not necessarily requiring an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as listed in Subpart D of 10 C.F.R. Part 1021. Therefore, we have determined that an EA will be prepared to assess the impacts of the proposed action. On the basis of the analysis in the EA, BPA will either prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact and proceed with the action, or will prepare an EIS if the EA reveals the potential for significant environmental impacts.

/s/ Stacy L. Mason
Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: *August 3, 2012*