

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: November 8, 2011

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Michael R. Gilchrist – TEP-TPP-1 – Project Manager

Proposed Action: La Pine Substation Expansion Project

Budget Information: WO #'s 00224401 & 00252240

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.11 “Construction of electric power substations... or modification of existing substations...”

Location: Section 18, Township 22 South, Range 11 East, of the Finley Butte Quadrangle in Deschutes County, Oregon

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to expand La Pine Substation on both the west and south sides of the existing substation yard. The expansion area on the west side would include the addition of a new 115-kilovolt (kV) shunt capacitor bank and is required to improve regional transmission voltage stability and to increase transmission network efficiency. The southward expansion area would include the installation of a new 230-kV bus-tie breaker, two disconnect switches, and a bus support structure. In addition, the existing control house would be expanded approximately 30 feet to the south. The new bus-tie breaker would function as a temporary replacement to other on-site breakers while they are deactivated for service and maintenance, as required by BPA operations and maintenance safety standards.

Proposed project dimensions:

- The fenced in substation yard would be expanded 105 feet to the west and 70 feet to the south. Also, a 240 foot section of the west end of north fence line would be expanded out 10 feet.
- Approximately 60 to 70 feet of tree and vegetation clearing beyond the proposed fence line would be required on the south and west side.
- The entire substation yard expansion area would be leveled and graded with up to 3 to 4 feet of gravel.
- Approximately 600 linear feet of gravel road would be constructed to access the northwest corner of the fenced area.

Both the existing substation yard and the proposed expansion area are located within the Deschutes National Forest. BPA would coordinate with the Forest Service to ensure the existing land use permit is modified to adequately address this proposed action.

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). 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, 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, or (iv) adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources.

On July 8, 2010 BPA initiated Section 106 consultation with Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, The Klamath Tribes, the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, and the Burns-Paiute Tribe of the Burns Paiute Indian Colony. During a site survey on October 13, 2010, a BPA in-house contract archaeologist indentified four historic trash scatters within the proposed project area. The trash scatters were later determined to be associated with the Shevlin-Hixon logging camp, a site eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP) under criterion A for the site's contribution to a nationally significant industrial theme: railroad logging systems and economic development of central Oregon. Given the facts that the potential impacts to the site would be small, the impacted areas do not represent the main concentration of the artifacts, and that the site has been well documented, it was determined that the proposed undertaking would have no adverse effect on historic properties. A detailed cultural resource report and a summary letter were sent on September 22, 2011 to the Oregon SHPO, the above mentioned tribes, and the U.S. Forest Service Deschutes National Forest Office. A concurrence letter dated October 5, 2011 was received regarding this cultural resource report from the Oregon SHPO and no written reply was received from the tribes. Ongoing coordination between BPA and Forest Service archaeologists has occurred to ensure cultural resource compliance is achieved.

As part of the Forest Service's project review documentation, a thorough biological evaluation was performed. The resulting wildlife report concluded the proposed project is consistent with all applicable Forest Service Project Design Criteria as described in the Forest Service's 2010-2013 Joint Aquatic and Terrestrial Programmatic Biological Assessment and that this project would have no effect on any threatened or endangered species or their habitat. BPA concurs with the Forest Service's determination. In addition, the project area is absent of water features including floodplains or wetlands.

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.

Sincerely,

/s/ Michael Henjum

Michael Henjum
Physical Scientist

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: November 8, 2011

Attachment:

Provisions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions Checklist

Provisions

This categorical exclusion would meet the following provisions:

Forest Service Permit Requirements:

1. BPA shall comply with all obligations and requirements set forth in the existing Forest Service land use permit, the Forest Service's Decision Memorandum, and all other associated documentation pertaining to this project.

Cultural resources:

2. Both BPA and Forest Service archaeologists will be notified at least 1 month prior to all construction activities to ensure the indentified cultural resources are adequately managed.
3. Should archaeological materials be unexpectedly encountered during project activities, the following actions should be taken:
 - Stop work and immediately notify the COTR and a qualified archaeologist. In addition, all concerned Tribes and appropriate county, state, federal agencies should be notified.
 - 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.
 - Take reasonable steps to restrict access to the site of discovery.

Land use:

4. 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.
5. Require dust abatement on road and construction site, if necessary.
6. Provide a schedule of construction activities to the applicable Forest Service personnel.
7. Keep gates in as found condition (opened or closed). Coordinate construction sequence with landowner so that livestock may be moved if necessary.

Public health and safety:

8. All standard erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs) would be used for any ground disturbances and road improvements to avoid/minimize excessive erosion, soil sloughing, and other surface alterations during the construction phase.
9. 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 would proceed only after measures approved by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) are put in place to prevent the spread of contaminated materials and protect the health and safety of workers.

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: La Pine Substation Expansion Project

Work Order #: 00224401 & 00252240

This project has been found to not adversely affect the following environmentally sensitive resources, laws, and regulations:

Environmental Resources	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect With Conditions
1. Cultural Resources Both BPA and Forest Service archaeologists will be notified at least 1 month prior to all construction activities to ensure the indentified cultural resources are adequately managed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime agricultural lands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Consistency with state and local laws and regulations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Pollution control at Federal facilities A Pollution Abatement Clearance (PAC) will be acquired for all materials (e.g., soil, footings, yard rock, etc.) removed from the substation yard.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10. Other All provisions within the Forest Service land use permit and other associated documentation needs to be thoroughly reviewed and addressed prior to and throughout the project implementation process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Note: Supporting documentation is in the Project file.

Signed: /s/ Michael Henjum

Date: November 8, 2011