

# memorandum

DATE: November 1, 2010

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Johny Luiz  
Project Manager – TEP-CSB-2

**Proposed Action:** Central Ferry Area Radio Communications Project

**Budget Information:** Work Orders 252766, 252767, 252768, 252769, and 252771

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B4.6: “Additions or modifications to electric power transmission facilities that would not affect the environment beyond the previously developed facility area...”

**Locations:** Franklin, Garfield, Whitman and Walla Walla Counties, Washington

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to install additional communication equipment at five existing BPA facilities in southeastern Washington. The proposed action would occur at two existing radio sites and three existing substations located in Franklin, Garfield, Whitman, and Walla Walla counties, Washington. The project would involve installation of a new 150-foot radio tower and communication building at both of the existing radio sites, and a new 25-foot radio antenna tower at each of the existing substation yards. The proposed communications upgrades are required to maintain BPA’s ability to monitor and operate the transmission system in the region.

*Kahlotus Radio Station Site – Franklin County, Washington (T13N R34E SEC14)*

The proposed work at this site includes installing a 150-foot tall radio tower and antenna system, 10x25-foot communications building, 10x15-foot generator building and removal of an existing latrine. The perimeter security fence at the site would be expanded to enclose the new structures. Site preparation for the tower footings would include excavation of an estimated 25x25-foot area up to 6 feet deep. The communications building would require an approximately 15x30-foot pad footing and the generator building would require a 15x20-foot footing, both approximately 2 feet deep. The entire radio site and proposed construction area is less than 0.75 acres and would be located on BPA property.

*Pomeroy Radio Station Site – Garfield County, Washington (T10N R42E SEC8)*

The proposed work at this site includes installing a 150-foot tall radio tower and antenna system, and an additional 10x25-foot communications building. Site preparation for the tower footings and building would be the same as at the Kahlotus Radio station (see above). The Pomeroy radio station site is located adjacent to the Pomeroy substation yard, and construction would

occur in a previously disturbed 100x150-foot area. Some land acquisition may be necessary adjacent to the site to provide adequate space for the tower footprint.

*Little Goose Substation – Whitman County, Washington (T13N R38E SEC28)*

*Lower Granite Substation – Garfield County, Washington (T14N R43E SEC3)*

*Lower Monumental Substation – Walla Walla County, Washington (T12N R34E SEC)*

The proposed project would also include construction of 25-foot tall radio towers and antenna systems within each of the BPA substations listed above. All of the proposed ground disturbing activities would take place within the existing substation footprints. Installation of each of the 25-foot towers would require excavation of an approximate 12x12-foot area up to 2 feet deep. Additional communications equipment may also be installed within the existing substation control houses.

All of the proposed work would occur at existing BPA facilities that are easily accessed via maintained access roads. The proposed project is scheduled to be completed by summer 2011.

**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 will 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.

BPA has determined that there will be no effect on any listed or proposed threatened or endangered species, or designated critical habitat, under the Endangered Species Act. There will also be no impact to floodplains or wetlands as a result of the proposed project, and no impact to areas of great visual value.

A background review and field survey of the project was performed by a BPA contract archaeologist, who determined that no historic properties would be affected per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. On October 1, 2010, BPA sent letters along with a copy of the cultural resources report and its determination to the Washington SHPO, Yakama Indian Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Nez Perce Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Wanapum Tribe, and Spokane Tribe of Indians for their review and comment. In a letter dated October 5, 2010, the Washington SHPO concurred with BPA's determination of no historic properties affected.

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/ Makary A. Hutson

Makary A. Hutson

Environmental Project Manager –KEC-4

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer – KEC-4

DATE: November 1, 2010

Attachments:

Environmental Provisions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROVISIONS

This categorical exclusion will meet the following provisions:

1. In the event any archaeological or historic materials are encountered during project activities, the following actions should be taken:
  - Stop work in the immediate vicinity and immediately notify the appropriate BPA project staff and a BPA 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.
2. All standard erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs) will be used for any ground disturbances and road improvements to avoid/minimize excessive erosion, soil sloughing, and other surface alterations during the construction phase.
3. Any excess spoils resulting from excavation should be disposed of properly, per BPA's specifications. Also, all waste/trash generated during construction will be collected, removed, and disposed legally off-site.
4. Immediately notify the KEP environmental lead in the event of a spill or release to the environment. Maintain appropriate emergency spill response materials on-site to control unexpected and unanticipated releases of petroleum-based products or other hazardous materials. Have emergency supplies in an easily accessible location and clearly marked. Disposal of any spill material will be in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements.
5. If there are any changes in construction activities that require relocation or change of work parameters, or for sites that have not been previously identified as work sites, construction shall not proceed until the KEP environmental lead can evaluate those changes.

## Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Central Ferry Area Radio Communications Project

Work Order #: 252766, 252767, 252768, 252769, and 252771

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 SHPO concurrence on determination of no historic properties affected received from the WA SHPO on 10/5/2010.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s) No T&E species or their habitats are present in the project area.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Floodplains or wetlands No floodplains or wetlands will be impacted.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Areas of special designation There are not any areas of special designation present in the project vicinity.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Health & safety There are no known health and safety concerns from the proposed project.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prime agricultural lands The project will not have an impact on prime agricultural lands.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water There are not any special sources of water present in the project area.	<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 Typical construction wastes may be generated (oil and vehicle fuel). Control measures would help prevent accidental release of hazardous materials and clean-up and disposal would be according to applicable hazardous waste laws and regulations. PAC has been submitted for work in the existing yards.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Other – Visual impacts The project will not impact areas of great visual value. The new communications equipment will be located on sites with existing transmission infrastructure and similar facilities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

**Supporting documentation is in the official project file.**

Signed: /s/ Makary A. Hutson

Date: November 1, 2010