

United States Government

Department of Energy  
Bonneville Power Administration

# memorandum

DATE: May 2, 2011

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Chad Hamel  
Project Manager – TEP-TPP-1

**Proposed Action:** Midway Area Fiber Project

**Budget Information:** Work Order 00224734, Task 3

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B4.7 Adding fiber optic cable to transmission structures or burying fiber optic cable in existing transmission line rights-of-way.

**Location:** Grant and Benton Counties, Washington  
Township 13 North, Range 24 East, Sections 2, 11, and 14

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

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to install about 1.5 miles of aerial fiber optic cable on the existing Midway-Rocky Ford No.1 230-kilovolt (kV) transmission line. The new fiber optic cable would replace the overhead groundwire (OHGW) on the Midway-Rocky Ford No.1 transmission towers. The fiber would span from a tower in the Midway Substation yard to tower 1/1 (first mile/first tower) on the Midway-Rocky Ford line, where a new fiber splice enclosure box would be installed on the tower. The fiber would then continue to replace the existing OHGW and span to tower 2/1 on the north side of the Columba River, where another splice enclosure would be installed on the tower. From tower 2/1, the fiber would jump to tower 1/6 on the Midway-Vantage 230-kV line, where it would run down the tower leg and be spliced within an existing vault, completing the redundant path.

There are no ground disturbing activities and no access road improvements required for this project. The existing OHGW (which serves as lightning strike protection) would be used to pull the fiber line in as it is removed, and the new fiber optic cable would also serve as lightning protection. Fiber pulling sites would be located in the existing BPA ROW on either side of tower 1/1, or near tower 1/6 on the Midway-Vantage transmission line. The new fiber line would be visually nearly identical to the existing OHGW.

**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.

Background research indicated that several cultural resource surveys have been previously completed in the project vicinity, and numerous historic-era archaeological deposits have been identified and recorded near the area of potential effect. The proposed undertaking does not require any direct ground disturbing activities, and the work areas would avoid all known archaeological sites. Therefore, BPA archaeologists determined that the project, as designed, would have no effect on historic properties. The Washington SHPO concurred with BPA's determination of No Historic Properties Affected on April 4, 2011.

BPA has determined that there will be no effect on any listed or proposed threatened or endangered species, or critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act. No floodplains or wetlands would be impacted from installation of the fiber optic cable, and the addition of fiber optic cable would not have any visual or aesthetic impacts.

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

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: May 2, 2011

Attachments:

Environmental Provisions

Environmental Checklist

## **Environmental Provisions**

This categorical exclusion will meet the following provisions:

1. **DOE Hanford National Monument:**

- Courtesy call to Randy Krekel prior to work on the Hanford site (office: 509-376-4264, cell: 509-205-7480).
- The contractor shall bring in clean vehicles (no excessive mud, etc. stuck to undercarriage) and do a visual inspection of all vehicles before entering the property. All plant material will be removed before entering.
- Adhere to all fire and security regulations on the Hanford site.

2. **The Midway-Rocky Ford No.1 (tower 1/3) and Midway-Vantage (tower 1/4) Columbia River crossing structures should ONLY BE ACCESSED via the BPA Schultz-Wautoma ROW access road to the west (AUC-54-AR-1).** The primary Midway-Vantage ROW access road (#19059) between Midway-Vantage line towers 1/3 and 1/4 is CLOSED to any vehicle traffic per a pending MOA with regional Tribes. For any questions, contact Shawn Barndt, Regional KEP lead (cell: 503-880-4822) or Terry Kugler, TLM Lineman Foreman (cell: 509-607-0699).

3. **Cultural Resources:** 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, Hanford-DOE staff, the Washington SHPO, and tribal cultural resource staff 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.
4. Restrict construction activities to the area needed to work effectively. Construction crews should be instructed to restrict vehicles to designated areas and existing roads as much as possible.
5. 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.
6. No in-stream work. Any ground disturbing work, refueling of vehicles and vehicle maintenance should not take place where any spilled material may enter any natural or manmade drainage conveyance including ditches, catch basins and pipes. Drip pans and absorbent pads will be placed under all leaking construction equipment.
7. 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.
8. 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: Midway Fiber Project

Work Order #: 00224734, Task 3

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 WA SHPO concurrence on determination of No Historic Properties Affected received on April 4, 2011.	<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 PAC would be prepared, if necessary.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Other – Visual impacts The project will not impact areas of great visual value. The fiber optic cable will replace existing OHGW on 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 Hutson

Date: May 2, 2011