

United States Government

Department of Energy  
Bonneville Power Administration

# memorandum

DATE: February 14, 2012

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Walker Miller  
Project Manager – TPC-PASCO

**Proposed Action:** Grant County PUD – Columbia Substation Interconnection Project

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

**Location:** Columbia Substation, Douglas County, Washington - Township 21 North, Range 22 East, Section 21 of the Rock Island Dam Quadrangle

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

**Description of the Proposed Action:** In response to a line and load interconnection request made by Grant County Public Utility District (Grant PUD), BPA proposes to interconnect Grant's new 230-kV transmission line into bay 7 within the BPA owned 230-kV Columbia Substation. In addition, at Grant PUD's expense, BPA would install a new 230-kV breaker, disconnect switches, protective relaying equipment, controls, communication equipment, and metering equipment at Columbia Substation.

Three steel tubular towers or laminated poles for Grant PUD's new Rocky Ford line would be constructed outside the substation fenced area and within BPA fee-owned property. An existing apple orchard located east of the substation would be affected by two of the new tower sites, requiring removal of existing apple trees for tower placement and to gain temporary access to the new tower sites. Grant PUD would negotiate with the existing lease holder to identify mitigation and/or compensation for the loss or partial loss of trees. No permanent access roads would be needed within BPA's fee-owned property. Construction staging would occur in previously disturbed areas outside of BPA's fee-owned property.

Based on background research conducted by the consulting firm Applied Archaeological Research, Inc. (AAR) between May 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of 2009 BPA's Cultural Resources staff determined, as designed, the proposed project would have no adverse effect on historic properties. BPA sent letters including a summary of the cultural resources report stating the findings to the Washington State Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP), the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation. The DAHP responded with a letter dated November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 concurring with the findings. BPA received no response from the tribes. In the event that cultural resources are found during construction, all work would immediately cease and BPA would notify and consult with the Washington SHPO and above mentioned tribes.

The project area is greater than 1,000 feet from any water features and is absent of unique wildlife habitat or other environmentally sensitive resources. Because of the previous disturbance and lack of habitat, no threatened or endangered species are likely to be present. There would also be no effect to floodplains or wetlands. It was therefore determined that no adverse environmental effects would occur from construction of the project.

**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.

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/ Claire McClory

Claire McClory

Environmental Project Manager – KEC-4

Concur:

/s/ Stacy Mason

Stacy Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer – KEC-4

Date: February 14, 2012

Attachment:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

## Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Grant County PUD – Columbia Substation Interconnection Project

Work Order #: 00225363, Task 1

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.

Environmental Resources	No Potential for Significance	No Potential, with Conditions (describe)
1. Historic Properties and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 or unique farmlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Special sources of water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signe: /s/ Claire McClory

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