



Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office
P.O. Box 550
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DOE/EA-2044

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
ENERGY NORTHWEST WNP-1/4 LEASE RENEWAL, HANFORD SITE,
WASHINGTON**

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy Richland Operations Office

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) completed a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) *Environmental Assessment for the Energy Northwest WNP-1/4 Lease Renewal on the Hanford Site* (EA) (DOE/RL-2044) that analyzed the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action, to renew the Energy Northwest lease for Washington Nuclear Project 1 and 4 (WNP-1/4). The lease was originally issued in 1975. During the 1970s and 1980s, this area was used for the construction of two nuclear reactors and related infrastructure; construction of the reactors was subsequently abandoned. The lease area, also referred as the Industrial Development Complex (IDC), is highly industrialized.

In addition to the Proposed Action, a No Action Alternative was analyzed as required by DOE NEPA-implementing regulations. Based on the analysis presented in the Final Environmental Assessment (EA), and consultations with tribes, and agencies with jurisdiction, DOE has determined that the Proposed Action will not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of NEPA. Therefore, the preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required, and DOE is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY AND CONTACT INFORMATION: The FONSI and the Final EA (DOE/EA-2044) are available at:

- <http://www.hanford.gov/page.cfm/EnvironmentalAssessments>.
- U.S. Department of Energy Public Reading Room
Washington State University, Tri-Cities
Consolidated Information Center, Room 101-L
2770 University Drive
Richland, WA 99352

For questions about this FONSI or EA:

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For information about the DOE NEPA process:

Office of NEPA Policy Compliance
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585
<http://energy.gov/nepa/office-nepa-policy-and-compliance>

PROPOSED ACTION: The Proposed Action is for DOE to renew the WNP-1/4 lease, which includes continuation of subleasing existing office and warehouse space. Additionally, DOE is proposing to have Energy Northwest transition from groundwater wells to surface water as a potable water source. Groundwater wells would be removed from service and decommissioned per Washington Department of Ecology guidelines. Minor modifications to the existing water distribution system, primarily at the IDC, would be required to support the transition to a surface water source.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: Under the No Action Alternative, DOE would not renew the lease and the WNP-1/4 lease would continue as a year-to-year lease with current terms and conditions in effect. Subleasing of existing office and warehouse space to tenants would continue and the water source would continue to be groundwater wells.

Under the Proposed Action, the transition from groundwater wells to surface water to supply potable water to the IDC would require the following modifications:

- Intake Structure. One of three existing intake structures for WNP-1/4 in the Columbia River would be used to gravitationally fill the existing pump house vault.
- Pump House Electricity. To pump water from the existing pump house to the IDC, a 15 kV overhead powerline would be installed in an existing utility corridor. The powerline would be located within 10 feet of the north side of the existing access road and have 30-foot tall wooden poles installed at approximately 100-foot intervals.
- Treatment of Water at the IDC. A skid-mounted water treatment system would be installed adjacent to the existing storage tank on a concrete slab approximately 10 feet wide by 12 feet long. Pipes would be installed to route water and electricity to the treatment system.

Construction for the above activities is estimated to take 12 weeks with a crew of up to eight people.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES: The EA considered potential environmental impacts to soils and geology; water resources; air quality; climate change; biological resources; floodplains and wetlands; historic properties and cultural resources; land use; visual quality; noise; transportation and traffic; socioeconomics and environmental justice; and also Intentional Destructive Acts as required by DOE NEPA-implementing regulations. The analysis of environmental consequences in the EA is incorporated by reference. A summary is provided below:

Under the No Action Alternative, water would not be withdrawn from the Columbia River to replace use of groundwater. The environmental impacts from the Proposed Action would not take place. Although the groundwater wells are monitored to prevent impacts to health from contaminated groundwater, the beneficial impact of providing a safe water source (Columbia River) in the long term would not take place.

Under the Proposed Action, water withdrawal through an existing intake structure may affect fish listed under the Endangered Species Act, and essential fish habitat protected under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, but is unlikely to cause adverse effects. This determination is based on on-going evaluations of the existing intake structure screen by the National Marine Fisheries Service, and completion of Informal Consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

Under the Proposed Action, installation of the powerline, pipes and water treatment system at the IDC would remove a small amount (less than 0.2 acres) of vegetation in previously disturbed areas. Temporary, construction-related activities could disturb wildlife and increase the potential for spread of noxious weeds. The best management practices (procedures already in place at Hanford and Energy Northwest) would further reduce the already minor impacts of the Proposed Action to a negligible level.

The historic Bonneville Power Administration Midway-Benton #1 Transmission Line was the only cultural resource identified within the highly disturbed area potentially affected by the Proposed Action. No other cultural resources were documented during the field survey, and DOE has reached a finding of *No Adverse Effect* to historic properties under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Monitoring will take place during installation of the poles for the powerline for the possibility of inadvertent discovery of any cultural resources.

DETERMINATION:

Based on the analysis in the EA, I have determined that the Proposed Action to renew the WNP-1/4 lease will not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the context of NEPA. Therefore, the preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required, and DOE is issuing this FONSI.

Issued in Richland, Washington, this 6th day of January, 2017.



Doug S. Shoop
Manager
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