

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: August 25, 2010

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: David Tripp
Project Manager – TEP-CSB-1

Proposed Action: Badger Canyon Substation Radio Communication Tower Project

Budget Information: Work Order 00253262 Task 03

Categorical Exclusions Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021:

B1.7 “Acquisition, installation, operation, and removal of communication systems...”

B1.19 “Siting, construction, and operation of microwave and radio communication towers and associated facilities...”

Location: Badger Canyon Substation, Benton County, Washington - Township 8 North, Range 28 East, Section 1

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to replace a 40-foot monopole communication tower with a new communication tower and add digital radio equipment and antennas at Badger Canyon Substation in Benton County, Washington. This project is a part of BPA’s continuing effort to replace its outdated analog communication system with digital equipment. The new tower would be approximately 70-feet in height and would be supported by a three-legged base that would cover approximately a 20×20-foot area. A 6-foot, 8-GHz microwave antenna would be installed near the top of the tower. In addition to erecting the communication tower, a waveguide (cable) ice bridge would be installed from the new tower to the existing communication building. To support and connect the waveguide ice bridge, approximately three galvanized pipes with concrete footings would be required and a new entry port (about 1×2-feet) through the control house wall would be installed. The existing air conditioner opening would be covered to match existing siding. No control house expansion would occur.

All soil disturbing activities would occur on previously leveled, BPA-owned land, and would not impact an area of great visual value. Additionally, the required staging area would be located on a nearby parking lot and sufficient roads exist to access the site.

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.

It is BPA's opinion that the project, as designed, would have no effect on historic properties within the area of potential effect. Background research was undertaken by a BPA contract archaeologist using the Washington archeological electronic database. Between the four cultural resources surveys that had previously occurred within one mile of the APE (area of potential effect), the only diagnostic artifact that was found was a single solder top can mixed with modern and historic trash. 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 and Bands of the Yakama Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and the Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho on June 20, 2010. The DAHP sent a letter dated July 28, 2010 concurring with the findings.

Background research also revealed a small tributary to the Yakama River is located approximately 1,000 feet from the proposed APE. Although the tributary has the potential to contain anadromous fish species, BPA has determined that the proposed project, as designed, would not negatively affect the tributary or any wildlife within the tributary. Also, 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 installing the radio tower, antennas and equipment.

Based on the provisions identified on the attachment, this proposed action meets the requirements for the categorical exclusions referenced above. We therefore determine that the proposed action may be categorically excluded from further NEPA review and documentation.

/s/ Michael B. Henjum

Michael B. Henjum

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce

NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: August 25, 2010

Attachments:

Provisions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Provisions

This categorical exclusion will meet the following provisions:

Cultural Resources:

1. Should archaeological materials be unexpectedly encountered during construction of the project, stop work and notify the COTR. A qualified archaeologist should immediately be notified and an evaluation made and a treatment plan developed should the find be significant.

Vegetation Protection and Noxious Weeds:

2. Restrict construction activities to the area needed to work effectively. Construction crews will be instructed to restrict vehicles to designated areas and existing roads as much as possible.
3. Designated areas will be used to store equipment and supplies. The contractor will follow applicable state and federal regulations to protect plant communities.
4. After construction, disturbed areas not needed for ongoing access or maintenance will be promptly reseeded with native species where possible.
5. Seed mix for revegetation will.
6. contain a mixture of the common native bunchgrasses and dryland species present in the Project area. Native seed is commercially available for this area.
7. Do not spread noxious weed seeds:
 - Certify in writing that all vehicles, equipment, and machinery are free of all weeds including seeds before moving the equipment into the construction area. The COTR will inspect vehicles prior to bringing them on site.
 - When an area contaminated by weeds is encountered on, or off of, the construction site, use caution to prevent the spreading of weeds to other areas. This may include cleaning the equipment with high-pressure water prior to moving from one work site to another, or installing wheel washes. Notify the COTR as to the location of the noxious weeds.
8. Use only weed-free materials, or inert materials for mulching and for erosion control

Erosion Control and Land Use:

9. Require dust abatement on road and construction site, if necessary.
10. Appropriate erosion and sediment control best management practices will be utilized for the protection of water resources.
11. Provide a schedule of construction activities to all landowners/agencies along the corridor that could be affected by construction.
12. Plan and schedule construction activities, when practical, to minimize temporary disturbance, displacement of crops, and interference with farming activities.
13. 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:

14. Limit construction to daytime hours for noise abatement.
15. No equipment with un-muffled exhaust is allowed. Fit all equipment with sound-control devices that are as effective as the original equipment.
16. 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 will proceed only after measures approved by the ODEQ are put in place to prevent the spread of contaminated materials and protect the health and safety of workers.
17. Equip vehicles with fire suppression equipment, including a shovel, fire extinguisher, and bladder or water supply.
18. Equip construction vehicles with spill containment kits able to respond to construction related spills.

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Badger Canyon Radio Upgrade

Budget Number: Work Order # 00253262 Task# 3

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

Environmental Resources	No, with conditions
1. Cultural Resources	X
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s)	X
3. Floodplains or wetlands	X
4. Areas of special designation	X
5. Health & safety	X
6. Prime agricultural lands	X
7. Special sources of water	X
8. Consistency with state and local laws and regulations	X
9. Pollution control at Federal facilities	X

Signed: /s/ Michael B. Henjum

Date: August 25, 2010