

memorandum

DATE: June 9, 2011

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Roger Thomas
Project Manager – TECT-CSB-1

Proposed Action: Omak Area 3G Radio Site Upgrades

Budget Information: Work Orders 197229, 197230, & 197231; Task 03

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.19 “Siting, construction, and operation of microwave and radio communication towers and associated facilities...”

Location: Okanogan and Douglas counties, Washington

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to upgrade communication equipment at three existing BPA facilities in Okanogan and Douglas counties, Washington. The work would occur at two existing BPA radio sites, Fox Mountain and Foster Creek, and at the BPA East Omak Substation. BPA must vacate radio frequencies in the 1710-1755 MHz band to comply with a Federal law mandating reallocation of frequencies to be used for advanced wireless networks. The proposed work is required as part of this effort, as well as to ensure communications reliability by upgrading and replacing outdated facilities. The project is scheduled for summer 2011. The individual site work is described below:

Foster Creek Radio Site – WA T29N R26E SEC 30&31 - The BPA Foster Creek radio site is located in Douglas County, Washington. The proposed work at the existing site involves construction of a new 60’ tall lattice-steel tower and antenna system, an expansion of the graveled yard by approximately 40’x60’, and installation of new conduit entry port on the side of the communications building. The new tower would be located adjacent to an existing 175’ tower and is required to support the new antenna. The perimeter fence at the site would be relocated to enclose the new tower, and the additional 0.2 acre area within the fence would be leveled and graveled. The site is accessible via existing, maintained roads.

Fox Mountain Radio Site – WA T33N R25E SEC 28 - The BPA Fox Mountain radio site is located in Okanogan County, Washington. The proposed work at the existing site involves installing two new antennas on the existing 60’ tower, constructing a new generator and equipment building on a concrete pad footing, and expanding the existing rocked yard and perimeter fence by approximately 30’x50’. Some maintenance and repair work may be required on the existing access road to the site, including grading and rocking. Any access road maintenance work would occur within the existing road prism.

East Omak Substation Radio Facilities – WA T34N R26E SEC 24 - The proposed project would include upgrading the antenna system on an existing monopole tower within the East Omak Substation in the town of Omak in Okanogan County, Washington. All work would occur within the confines of the existing fenced and rocked electrical yard.

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.

BPA has determined that there would be no effect on any listed or proposed threatened or endangered species, or critical habitat, under the Endangered Species Act. There would be no impact to floodplains or wetlands, and the project would not impact areas of great visual value.

Archaeological background research and a field survey in May 2011 of the project sites resulted in a BPA determination that no historic properties would be affected from the proposed project. On May 23, 2011, BPA sent letters along with a copy of the cultural resources report and findings to the Washington State Historic Preservation Office and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. Letters were received from both parties concurring with BPA's determination.

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: June 9, 2011

Attachment:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Omak Area 3G Radio Site Upgrades

Work Order #: 197229, 197230, & 197231; Task 03

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 and Confederated Tribes of the Colville concurrence received on determination of No Historic Properties Affected.	<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 will be prepared for excavation work, if necessary.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Other – Visual impacts The project will not impact areas of great visual value. The new tower at Foster Creek RS is 60' tall and surrounded by similar transmission infrastructure and larger towers, and the EG building at Fox Mt is one of several other radio and communications facilities at the site.	<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

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