

memorandum

DATE: July 23, 2012

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEPR-4

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Kerry Cook
Supervisory Civil Engineer – TELF-TPP-3

Proposed Action: Columbia and Willamette River Crossings Liquefaction Hazard Assessment

PP&A Project No.: 2359

Categorical Exclusions Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B3.1, Site characterization and environmental monitoring

Location: Project activities would take place at four transmission line river crossings in Columbia and Multnomah counties, Oregon, and Clark and Cowlitz counties, Washington. The Townships, Ranges, and Sections are listed below:

State	County	Township	Range	Section(s)
Oregon	Columbia	7N	3W	2,3
Oregon	Columbia	8N	3W	35
Oregon	Multnomah	1N	3E	14,23
Oregon	Multnomah	2N	1E	29,30
Oregon	Multnomah	2N	1W	34,35
Washington	Clark	1N	3E	14
Washington	Clark	2N	1E	57
Washington	Cowlitz	8N	3W	35,39

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to perform geotechnical testing at four transmission line river crossings on the Columbia and Willamette rivers. Geotechnical testing would assess the capacity of the soils in these areas to undergo liquefaction. Results of the testing would be used evaluate the need for seismic hardening of the transmission towers in these areas.

Geotechnical testing would consist of eight inch drilled borings and/or cone penetrometer tests, each to a depth of approximately 60 feet, at 17 locations in Oregon and Washington. Where practicable, the testing locations would be located within 150 feet of existing transmission towers, and would be performed within previously-disturbed access roads. The ground disturbance associated with the drilled borings would be minor. Once the boring has reached sufficient depth, and results have been recorded, bentonite clay will be placed within the bore hole from the bottom, up to 10 to 15 feet below the ground surface so that the bore hole does not serve as a conduit for the movement of groundwater. Soils removed from the boring would be

placed back in the boring up to the ground surface. Remaining soils are expected to be minimal (one to two cubic feet) and would be spread adjacent to the boring. The cone penetrometer test involves pushing a two-inch-diameter rod vertically into the soil. Once sufficient depth has been achieved, the rod would be removed. A small amount surface rock from the road surface may need to be hand-excavated prior to performing the test and replaced after the test; however, this test is not expected to produce any excess material.

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/ Oden Jahn

Oden Jahn

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur: /s/ Stacy Mason

Stacy Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: July 23, 2012

Attachment:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Columbia and Willamette River Crossings Liquefaction Hazard Assessment

Work Order #: 00304879

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
On June 28, 2012, WA DAHP concurred with BPA's determination of "No Historic Properties Affected". There was no response from the OR SHPO or the tribes. BPA received no response from the tribes. If cultural resources are discovered during the course of construction, all work shall cease immediately and an environmental representative should be notified. Work may not resume until the site has been cleared by the DAHP/SHPO and appropriate tribes.		
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Known populations of marbled murrelet, gray wolf, Willamette daisy, water howellia, Bradshaw's desert parsley, Kincaid's lupine, Columbian white-tailed deer, bull trout, Nelson's checker-mallow, and northern spotted owl occur far outside of the project area. Further, the project area does not provide the required habitat conditions for the above-mentioned species. Although the project area is adjacent to recorded anadromous fish usage, the project activities involve only small disturbances to the ground located at least 100 feet from any water body. The areas between the project locations and the water bodies are also heavily vegetated and/or sloped away from the water bodies, thus it is not anticipated that sediment would enter a waterbody. Further no modification of existing or potential habitat would occur as part of this project. It was determined that this project would have "No Effect" to T&E Species, or their habitat(s).		
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"/>
No water wells were identified in the project area. Bore holes will be sealed with bentonite to prevent the bore holes from serving as a conduit for groundwater movement.		
8. Other (describe)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: /s/ Oden W. Jahn

Date: July 20, 2012