Marion Industrial Substation Project

Environmental Assessment

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Bonneville
POWER ADMINISTRATION

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MASTER

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MARION INDUSTRIAL SUBSTATION PROJECT

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

1.0 Purpose of and Need for Action

Consumers Power, Inc. (CPI), proposes to construct a new distribution substation under the existing Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) Albany-Lebanon transmission line near the city of Albany in Linn County, Oregon (Figure 1). BPA is proposing to grant a new Point of Delivery to CPI at this substation. The purpose of the project is to serve the developing industrial needs in the Marion Industrial Park and on the 550 acres of nearby land within CPI's service area that are zoned for residential use. CPI prepared, and the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) has approved a Borrower's Environmental Report (BER) which addresses this action along with several other proposed projects in the CPI service area. Portions of this BER are summarized in this brief EA. BPA is preparing its own EA since Department of Energy National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidelines require additional environmental concerns to be addressed than are required by REA's NEPA guidelines.

2.0 Alternatives

The preferred alternative is to locate the new substation on a half-acre parcel within the existing Marion Industrial Park. The substation would be placed directly beneath the existing BPA 115-kV Albany-Lebanon transmission line, so no new transmission facilities will be required. The substation will be a factory pre-assembled substation.

An alternative substation site was investigated on Lochner Road approximately one-half mile southeast of the proposed site. It was also located under the Albany-Lebanon transmission line. It was discovered, however, that this site is located in the 100-year floodplain of Oak Creek; therefore, this alternative was dropped from further consideration.

Other alternatives considered in the BER were to install additional transmission capacity in the Froman Substation approximately 5 miles away and construct additional distribution circuits to this area, and the no action alternative. The Froman Substation alternative would result in higher electrical losses due to the need for much longer distribution circuits, and was therefore eliminated from further consideration. The no action alternative would result in the inability of CPI to serve the developing loads in the zoned industrial and residential areas.

3.0 Environmental Impacts

The one-half acre site is located within the urban growth boundary of the city of Albany. It is zoned as industrial, and within an approved industrial park. The project is included both in CPI's 1984 Long-Range Plan and in their 1990-91 Work Plan, which was approved by REA by letter dated May 2, 1991. The site is not located in a coastal zone.

The site is presently planted in ryegrass which has recently been mowed. Therefore, constructing the substation on this site will result in conversion of farmland to other uses, but since it is within the urban growth boundary, it is exempt from the provisions of the Federal Farmland Protection Act. The zoning of the area as industrial and the surrounding service area of this substation as residential indicates that the farmland will be converted to other uses regardless of the construction of the substation.

There are no recreational resources or areas having a special designation such as federally and state-designated wilderness areas, national parks, national natural landmarks, wild and scenic rivers, state or federal wildlife refuges, or marine sanctuaries located in the vicinity of the site. REA's informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicated that there are no endangered or threatened species occurring in the vicinity of the proposed site. Correspondence with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife revealed no concerns on their part regarding this project.

The site is located outside of the 100-year floodplain mapped by the National Flood Insurance Program. The southern portion of the parcel being acquired by Consumer's Power is located within the floodplain of Oak Creek, but the substation site is located on the northern half of the parcel, above the floodplain elevation.

The site is located in an area mapped by the Soil Conservation Service as a hydric soil. However, it is not identified on the National Wetlands Inventory Maps as a wetland, and a field review revealed that the site does not meet the criteria listed in "A Field Manual for Wetlands Determination" to be delineated as a wetland.

The substation equipment will contain approximately 2700 gallons of mineral oil. The substation will be designed to contain any potential oil or hazardous material spills into surface or groundwater. There are no sole-source aquifers located in the vicinity. Therefore, the provisions of the (CWA) and the (SDWA) will be complied with.

No burning or other air discharges would occur in relation to the proposed action; air quality standards would not be violated. Any hazardous waste generated as a result of the construction, operation, or maintenance of the substation will be disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and any other applicable laws. The proposed action does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Toxic Substances Control Act since it would not involve the distribution, use, or disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls. Pesticides will not be used in the construction, operation, or maintenance of this substation, so the provisions of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act do not apply.

Consumers Power contacted the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding the potential effect of the project on cultural resources. In a letter dated February 14, 1990, the SHPO responded with a letter stating that the proposed projects would have no effect on sites on, or eligible for inclusion on, the National Register of Historic Places.

Since the substation will be located in an industrial development at the end of a road, little or no visual impacts are anticipated. The substation would be in context with the industrial setting, and would not be visible from any residences or major thoroughfares. At the request of the city, CPI will provide landscaping to mitigate adverse visual impact.

Noise generated by the substation is not expected to increase the ambient noise levels significantly, since it is located in an industrial development.

Construction of the substation will require only minor earthwork, and erosion problems are not anticipated.

4.0 Conclusions

No or minimal impacts on the environment were identified in this analysis of the potential impacts of the Marion Industrial Substation Project.

5.0 Agencies and Persons Consulted

BPA has consulted with the persons and agencies listed below regarding issues associated with the Marion Industrial Substation Project:

David J. Blake, Director of Engineering, Consumers Power, Inc.

CPI consulted with the persons and agencies listed below during the preparation of their Borrower's Environmental Report.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service

6.0 References

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