

Third Powerplant Generating Units Overhaul Activities Environmental Assessment Grand Coulee, Washington Draft Addendum

Background

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for a proposal to overhaul the Third Powerplant (TPP) Generating Units at Grand Coulee Dam. The EA identified no significant impacts to relevant resources in the project area. Reclamation signed a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for this project on April 28, 2010.

Since then it has been identified that the potential for impacts to the Grand Coulee Dam School District were not evaluated in the EA. This addendum to the EA and FONSI analyzes the effects of the proposed action on District enrollments to determine if there are any significant impacts.

Preferred Alternative

Under the Preferred Alternative, Reclamation will overhaul the TPP generating units. The overhaul will include work on the generators, turbines, shafts, and the auxiliary equipment. The main portion of the overhaul work will be completed within the confines of the TPP.

There are logistical challenges because the overhaul requires lay-down space for all turbine and generator parts as they are removed. More space is required during the overhaul than for initial construction when parts were delivered as needed. Several large and heavy items require special consideration for storage before being installed and during maintenance. It is expected that these large parts would occupy most of the TPP floor space except for access aisles needed to move smaller components. In order to make room to refurbish the existing parts, a new permanent 30,000-square-foot material storage building would be erected adjacent to the TPP, and the spare parts currently stored in the repair areas of the TPP would be relocated to the new building.

A temporary building will be erected by the contractor for sandblasting and painting of repaired items. The building is estimated to be 130 feet by 65 feet. The building would be constructed in a previously disturbed area northwest of the TPP, just to the west of the proposed materials storage building. The contractor will be given the option of building a second temporary structure to serve as a fabrication building. This building would be located to the west of the proposed material storage building and be the same size as the other temporary building. Upon completion of the project, estimated to be ten years in duration, the temporary buildings will be removed from the site.

Affected Environment and Environmental Impacts

Schools

The Grand Coulee School District operates Center Elementary School, Grand Coulee Middle School, and Lake Roosevelt High School. Funding for the district budget is derived from different sources, which for 2009-2010 included Federal funds (33 percent), State funds (55 percent), and local sources (12 percent). Information about the Grand Coulee Dam School District was obtained from the State of Washington, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Washington State Report Card. The state publishes a Report Card for each school district in the state. The report summarizes funding, enrollment, and staffing each year. The data are given in Table 1 for the past six years.

Table 1 Grand Coulee Dam School District Information*

	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Student Count	754	748	748	698	698	655
Total Revenue per Student	\$9,823	\$10,616	\$10,872	\$11,839	\$12,614	\$12,899
Local Taxes per Student	\$949	\$1,083	\$1,108	\$1,472	\$1,498	\$1,507
Students per Certificated Instructional Staff	16	17	17	17	17	16

*<http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/summary.aspx?groupLevel=District&schoolId=78&reportLevel=District&orgLinkId=78&yrs=2010-11&year=2010-11>

The TPP overhaul is scheduled to be conducted in two phases, with three generating units being overhauled during each phase. Much of this work could be done by multiple subcontractors who would be on site for the duration of their portion of the work and then leave the local area. Most would not likely relocate their families to the local area. The staffing information received from potential contractors indicated that an additional 28 workers would be located in the Grand Coulee area. From this, it is estimated that the TPP overhaul could temporarily add 30 students to the Grand Coulee school system during the ten-year period of the project. Table 2 gives the average total revenue per student and the number of students per instructional staff for the proposed action in the unlikely event that all projected 30 students were added at one time. The information in Table 2 also assumes there would be no increase in state or Federal revenues and no additions to the number of instructional staff.

Table 2 Revenue per Student and Students per Staff Member for the Proposed Action Based on 2010-2011 Conditions

With Addition of 30 Students	
Total Revenue per Student with Proposed Action	Students per Certificated Instructional Staff with Proposed Action
\$12,334	17

An immediate increase of 30 students would result in a minor change in funding level per student in the event that state revenues did not respond to the increased student population. Even if this were to occur, the average revenue per student would be comparable to that of the last six school years. Until student-based state and Federal funding levels were increased in response to the added student population, this would result in a decrease in average funding level per student. While this is an important effect that affects the school district's short- and long-range planning and budgeting, the majority of the funding lag is expected to be temporary (less than one academic year) and the effect is of low magnitude. Thus, it does not rise to the level of a significant impact or require mitigation. The ratio of students to instructional staff members is dependent on the grade distribution, but overall would remain at a similar ratio as the last six school years if there was no increase in revenues associated with the increased student population, or if increased revenues did not translate into an addition of instructional staff. Based on these two factors, the proposed action would not result in a significant impact on the school district.

Conclusion

Since no new significant effects were identified in this analysis, the existing FONSI should remain valid.