



ASSESSMENT OF ACTIONS HAVING AN EFFECT ON CULTURAL RESOURCES

A. DESCRIPTION OF UNDERTAKING

1. Park: Blue Ridge Pkwy

2. Project Description:

Project Name: New Asheville - Enka 115kV West Line Crossing of the Blue Ridge Parkway Corridor, Buncombe Co., NC

Prepared by: Steven Kidd **Date Prepared:** 03/14/2011 **Telephone:** 828-271-4779

PEPC Project Number: 25400

Locations:

Describe project and area of potential effects (as defined in 36 CFR 800.2[c])

Carolina Power & Light Company d/b/a Progress Energy Carolinas (PEC) proposes to design, build, and operate a new 115kV overhead electric transmission line to ensure continuation of reliable electric service to customers in western North Carolina. The new 115kV transmission line will extend generally north and west approximately 7.6 miles from an existing substation at PEC's Asheville Generating Plant (located at Skyland south of Asheville) to PEC's existing Enka Substation (located south of Enka near the intersection of Smoky Park Highway and Sand Hill Road). The entire project is located in Buncombe County, North Carolina. The Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) crossing is located south of Asheville, between NC Highway 191 (Brevard Road) and Interstate 26 near French Broad river mile 158 and near BRP Milepost 393. The proposed line will run parallel and adjacent to the existing transmission line and will increase the width of the permitted ROW from 100 feet to approximately 170 feet. This proposed addition is required to ensure continued reliability of the transmission system, which is experiencing growing demand for power by the citizens, businesses, and industries of the region.

PEC has hired a consultant, ClearWater Environmental Consultants, Inc., to write an Environmental Assessment (EA). The consultant was issued a Research and Collecting Permit (BLRI-2010-SCI-0015) on 5/11/10 to start survey work.

The EA discusses the portion of the transmission line and easement that is proposed to traverse the National Park Service's (NPS) BRP. The proposed transmission line and easement will cross BRP land perpendicularly for approximately 885 linear feet. A 43-foot wide proposed right-of-way (ROW) corridor west of and adjacent to the existing transmission line was reviewed and evaluated for the purposes of this assessment. Impact topics were reviewed for the assessment area and five impact topics were selected for further review. These topics are: vegetation; visual/scenic resources and quality, and visual intrusions; view area landscape; visitor activities; and transportation. These topics are carried through the EA and further discussed within the "Affected Environments" section (Section 7.0) and the "Environmental Consequences" section (Section 8.0). It is concluded in this EA that through the use of construction techniques and proposed mitigative measures, no significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts will occur.

3. Has the area of potential effects been surveyed to identify cultural resources?

☐ No
☒ Yes

Source or reference: "Archaeological Survey for Portions of the Progress Energy Asheville-Enka 115kV Transmission Line Project Involving the Blue Ridge Parkway, Buncombe County, North Carolina," dated January 2011 and authored by TRC Environmental Corporation.

4. Potentially Affected Resource(s):

The area where overhead lines will be placed underground was examined by a professional archeological firm. No archeological sites were located.

5. The proposed action will: (check as many as apply)

- ☐ No **Destroy, remove, or alter features/elements from a historic structure**
☐ No **Replace historic features/elements in kind**
☐ No **Add non-historic features/elements to a historic structure**
☐ No **Alter or remove features/elements of a historic setting or environment (inc. terrain)**
☒ Yes **Add non-historic features/elements (inc. visual, audible, or atmospheric) to a historic setting or cultural landscape**
☐ No **Disturb, destroy, or make archeological resources inaccessible**
☐ No **Disturb, destroy, or make ethnographic resources inaccessible**
☐ No **Potentially affect presently unidentified cultural resources**
☐ No **Begin or contribute to deterioration of historic features, terrain, setting, landscape elements, or archeological or ethnographic resources**
☐ No **Involve a real property transaction (exchange, sale, or lease of land or structures)**
☐ No **Other (please specify):**

6. Supporting Study Data:

"Environmental Assessment for the New Asheville – Enka 115kV West Line Crossing of the Blue Ridge Parkway Corridor, Buncombe County, NC on the property of the National Park Service," Appendix E and Appendix L.

B. REVIEWS BY CULTURAL RESOURCE SPECIALISTS

The park 106 coordinator requested review by the park's cultural resource specialist/advisors as indicated by check-off boxes or as follows:

☒ **Archeologist**

Name: Steven Kidd

Date: 09/21/2010

Comments: UPDATE: 3-14-2011 Archeological testing of the area where overhead lines will be placed underground was conducted and no archeological sites were located.

Archeological testing/monitoring required. Based on the results of archeological survey and testing the presence or absence of archeological sites will be determined in the area of the undertaking. If sites are

located their significance will be determined and the criteria of effect and adverse effect applied. Results of this process, including appropriate recommendations to avoid or lessen adverse impacts, will be reported to the park.

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: ☐ No Historic Properties Affected ☒ No Adverse Effect ☐ Adverse Effect ☐ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations: UPDATE: 3-14-2011 TRC conducted an archeological examination of the area where the overhead lines will be placed underground. No archeological sites were located in the proposed area. The adverse impact of adding a new transmission line within the existing right-of-way will be mitigated by the measures stated within section 4.3.2 of the EA. Mitigation efforts will be sufficient to diminish the impact of the new transmission line to cultural landscapes. TRC archeological firm will conduct archeological excavations within the APE for this project. Study findings will be provided once received.

Doc Method: Combined NEPA/NHPA Document

[X] 106 Advisor

Name: Tommy Jones

Date: 01/21/2011

Comments: UPDATE: Changes to the project have eliminated ground-disturbing activities within the parkway corridor and reduced the visual effects, but there are still visual effects, however minor, on the historic parkway. For that reason, cultural resources cannot be simply dismissed from consideration without explanation, as they are at 3.2.4. In addition, at 9.0, compliance with NHPA, especially Section 106, should be made explicit and not simply included in a list of laws, etc., that may or may not be applicable in this situation. end update 1/21/2011 -----

It appears that this project will have an adverse effect on the parkway. If Section 106 requirements are to be met through the EA process, the SHPO/THPO and Advisory Council must be notified of that intent as early as possible. See CFR 800.8, "Coordination with the National Environmental Policy Act." 4/13/2009

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: ☐ No Historic Properties Affected ☒ No Adverse Effect ☐ Adverse Effect ☐ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Doc Method: Standard 4-Step Process

[X] Historical Landscape Architect

Name: Tracy Stakely

Date: 10/01/2010

Comments: Upon review of the 9/15/10 Draft EA, I concur with the determination of adverse impact to the cultural landscape. Impacts will be long-term but minor since the proposed new transmission line will be located in the existing ROW corridor, the ROW will only be minimally expanded, and the new line will only be seen from a small section of the parkway.

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: ☐ No Historic Properties Affected ☐ No Adverse Effect ☒ Adverse Effect ☐ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations: Mitigation measures identified in section 6.2 of the 9/15 Draft EA are sufficient to diminish the impact on the cultural landscape/viewshed. Park should ensure all suggested actions are implemented.

Doc Method: Combined NEPA/NHPA Document

No Reviews From: Curator, Historical Architect, Historian, Other Advisor, Anthropologist

C. PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR'S REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Assessment of Effect:

<input type="checkbox"/> No Historic Properties Affected	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Adverse Effect	<input type="checkbox"/> Adverse Effect
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2. Documentation Method:

☐ **A. STANDARD 36 CFR PART 800 CONSULTATION**

Further consultation under 36 CFR Part 800 is needed.

☐ **B. STREAMLINED REVIEW UNDER THE 2008 SERVICEWIDE PROGRAMMATIC AGREEMENT (PA)**

The above action meets all conditions for a streamlined review under section III of the 2008 Servicewide PA for Section 106 compliance.

APPLICABLE STREAMLINED REVIEW Criteria
(Specify 1-16 of the list of streamlined review criteria.)

☐ **C. PLAN-RELATED UNDERTAKING**

Consultation and review of the proposed undertaking were completed in the context of a plan review process, in accordance with the 2008 Servicewide PA and 36 CFR Part 800.

Specify plan/EA/EIS:

☐ **D. UNDERTAKING RELATED TO ANOTHER AGREEMENT**

The proposed undertaking is covered for Section 106 purposes under another document such as a statewide agreement established in accord with 36 CFR 800.7 or counterpart regulations.

Specify: _____

☒ **E. COMBINED NEPA/NHPA Document**

Documentation is required for the preparation of an EA/FONSI or an EIS/ROD has been developed and used so as also to meet the requirements of 36 CFR 800.3 through 800.6

☐ **F. No Potential to Cause Effects [800.3(a)(1)]**

☐ **G. Memo to SHPO/THPO**

☐ **H. Memo to ACHP**

3. Additional Consulting Parties Information:

Additional Consulting Parties: No

4. Stipulations and Conditions:

Following are listed any stipulations or conditions necessary to ensure that the assessment of effect above is consistent with 36 CFR Part 800 criteria of effect or to avoid or reduce potential adverse effects.

5. Mitigations/Treatment Measures:

Measures to prevent or minimize loss or impairment of historic/prehistoric properties:

Mitigations listed under Sec. 4.3.2 Cultural Resources in the EA.

Recommended by Park Section 106 coordinator:

Name: Bambi Teague **Title:** Park Section 106 Coordinator

D. SUPERINTENDENT'S APPROVAL

The proposed work conforms to the NPS *Management Policies* and *Cultural Resource Management Guideline*, and I have reviewed and approve the recommendations, stipulations, or conditions noted in Section C of this form.

Signature of Deputy Superintendent Monik Mayn Date: 3-14-11