



Oregon

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To: Energy Facility Siting Council

From: Christopher M. Clark, Senior Siting Analyst

Date: March 6, 2026

Subject: Agenda Item G (Potential Action Item):
Biglow Canyon Wind Farm, Request for Amendment 4 – Review of Draft Final Order and Possible Final Decision for the March 19-20, 2026, EFSC Meeting

Attachments: Attachment 1: Public Comments, Responses, and Replies on Proposed Order
Attachment 2: Staff Evaluation of Public Comments (Supplemental Packet)
Attachment 3: Draft Final Order (Supplemental Packet)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Oregon Department of Energy (Department) recommends the Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC or Council) approve the requested site certificate amendment and grant issuance of the Fourth Amended Site Certificate for the Biglow Canyon Wind Farm, subject to compliance with the existing and recommended amended and new site certificate conditions described in the Draft Final Order provided in Attachment 3 to this Staff Report.

APPROVED FACILITY

The Biglow Canyon Wind Farm (facility) is an operational 450-megawatt (MW) wind power generation facility, consisting of 217 wind turbines and related or supporting facilities located within a 25,000-acre (39 sq. mile) site boundary in Sherman County. The site is located approximately 2 miles northeast of the City of Wasco.

PROPOSED FACILITY MODIFICATIONS

In RFA4, Portland General Electric Company (certificate holder) seeks Council approval to construct and operate:

- A 125 MW solar photovoltaic power generation facility occupying up to 1,445 acres (2.25 sq. miles)
- A 500 megawatt-hour Battery Energy Storage System
- Related or supporting facilities including:
 - 34.5 kilovolt (kV) electrical collection system
 - Collector substation
 - 600-foot 230-kV transmission line
 - Operations and Maintenance Building
 - 10.5 miles of access roads
 - Perimeter fencing, gates, etc.

All proposed facility components would be located within a 1,924-acre (3 sq. mile) Solar Micrositing Area within the approved site boundary. The proposed Solar Micrositing Area is located approximately 4.8 miles northeast of the City of Wasco.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

April 17, 2024	Certificate holder met with Department for a pre-amendment conference; requested to use the proposed Solar Micrositing Area boundary as the basis for the study area boundaries and property owner lists for the proposed amendment.
April 21, 2025	Certificate holder submitted preliminary Request for Amendment 4.
April 29, 2025	Department issued Public Notice that pRFA4 had been received as required by OAR 345-027-0360(2).
April 30, 2025	Department requested comments from Reviewing Agencies, tribes identified by the Legislative Commission on Indian Services as potentially affected by the construction and operation of the facility components proposed in RFA4, and the Sherman County Court, as the Special Advisory Group for the facility appointed under ORS 469.480.
June 10, 2025	Department notified the certificate holder that pRFA4 was incomplete and issued requests for additional information (RAIs) needed to recommend findings and condition on applicable standards to the Council.
July 18, August 22, and September 19, 2025	Certificate Holder provided RAI responses.
November 7, 2025	Department informed the certificate holder that it had completed its review of the RAI responses and provided additional feedback.
November 22, 2025	Certificate holder provided a revised version of pRFA4 which, in addition to incorporating responses to the initial RAIs, removed facility components in a "Southern Solar Area" and a proposed 230-kV overhead transmission line from the proposal.
December 5, 2025	Department notified certificate holder that revised pRFA4, along with the RAI responses, was determined to be complete.
December 10, 2025	Certificate holder filed a complete RFA4.
December 16, 2025	Department issued Proposed Order and Public Notice of the Proposed Order and Complete Request for Amendment.
January 15, 2026	Public Hearing on Proposed Order and RFA4 held in Grass Valley, Oregon
January 30, 2026	Deadline for Public Comments on Proposed Order and RFA4
February 13, 2026	Deadline for Department and Certificate Holder to respond to Public Comments
February 27, 2026	Deadline for Commenters to reply to Department and Certificate Holder Responses
March 6, 2026	Deadline for Certificate Holder and Department to Sur-Reply to Commenter Replies

AMENDMENT PROCESS, PUBLIC COMMENTS, AND SCOPE OF COUNCIL REVIEW

The Council adopted changes to the Site Certificate Amendment process that became effective in October 2025. This is the first amendment request to be reviewed under the new rules. The purpose of the rule changes was to make the site certificate amendment review process more efficient and effective, improve the public comment process and increase the public's understanding of how to participate in the process. The new process includes a step for the certificate holder and the Department to respond to comments; allows for those commenters to then reply; and then concludes with an opportunity for the Department and certificate holder to offer sur-reply. The rules require the certificate holder to respond to all comments received during the comment period; the Department does not have the same obligation but chose to respond to comments raising substantive issues. A complete copy of all comments, responses and replies is included as Attachment 1 to this staff report.

The intent of this new comment process is for each commenter to receive feedback from the Department and the certificate holder on the nature of their comments – specifically, whether they were raised with sufficient specificity so that the commenters can then reply with additional information or clarification. Where comments were raised with sufficient specificity, the process is intended to provide each commenter with feedback on whether those issues warrant remedy or change to a recommended finding of fact or recommended new or amended condition, and provide an opportunity for commenters to further explain and provide factual reasoning to support the Department and Council's evaluation of whether the certificate holder has met their burden of proof that they either can or have satisfied the requirements of applicable Council standards and other laws.

Following the conclusion of the public comment process, the Department must issue a draft Final Order. EFSC will review the Department's draft Final Order and the Department's written analysis of comments, responses, replies and sur-replies, as applicable. EFSC may then issue a Final Order either approving or rejecting RFA4. If approved, the Council will issue an amended Site Certificate. The Department will provide its evaluation of comments and the draft Final Order in the supplemental packet for this meeting.

Under OAR 345-027-0375(2)(a), to issue an amended site certificate the Council must determine that the preponderance of evidence on the record supports the conclusion that the facility, as amended, complies with all applicable laws and Council standards. Because the construction and operation of the new solar photovoltaic power generation facility and other related or supporting facilities would potentially impact all resources protected by Council standards, and because the certificate holder proposes to rely on the technical expertise of a third-party to construct and operate the facility components proposed in RFA4, the Department recommends the Council find that all laws and Council standards applicable to an original site certificate application are applicable to the review of the facility components proposed in RFA4. This includes all the Council's general standards in OAR chapter 345, division 22, and for the proposed 600-foot 230-kV transmission line segment, Siting Standards for Transmission Lines under OAR 345-024-0090. Because there are no proposed changes to the existing Wind Power Generation Facility, the specific siting standards for wind facilities in OAR chapter 345, division 24 are not applicable to this review.

DEPARTMENT EVALUATION OF COMMENTS ON RFA4 AND THE PROPOSED ORDER

In the Proposed Order, the Department recommends that the facility, with the changes proposed in RFA4, complies with all required standards and should be approved by the Council, subject to new and recommended amended site certificate conditions, including but not limited to the select conditions discussed below.

The Proposed Order recommends the Council find that existing conditions of approval, or new or amended conditions that are generally consistent with recent orders, are adequate to ensure the facility, with the proposed changes, continues to comply with the following standards:

- Protected Areas: OAR 345-022-0040 (Section III.F., pages 147 - 157)
- Threatened and Endangered Species: OAR 345-022-0070 (Section III.I., pages 186 - 189)
- Scenic Resources: OAR 345-022-0080 (Section III.J., pages 189 - 196)
- Recreation: OAR 345-022-0100 (Section III.L., pages 203 - 208)
- Waste Minimization: OAR 345-022-0120 (Section III.O., pages 235 - 240)
- Siting Standards For Transmission Lines: OAR 345-024-0090 (Section III.P., pages 240 - 245)
- Noise Control Regulations: OAR 340-035-0035 (Section IV.A., pages 245 - 254)
- Water Rights (Section IV.C., pages 257 - 260)

The Department reviewed findings and conditions associated with other standards which required novel or unique conditions of approval prior to the public hearing at the Council's meeting on January 15, 2026. Each issue raised in comments has been assigned a unique ID number based on the standard the comment was determined to be associated with (as presented below and in Attachment 1 of this Staff Report). This report focuses on a subset of issues raised in comments received on the record of the Proposed Order that have resulted in material changes to conditions to be included in the draft Final Order. Please note a full evaluation of all changes in recommended findings of fact and conditions based on comments received and issues raised will be provided in the supplemental packet.

Issue GS-06 (Certificate Holder): Request for revision of proposed road dimension width, from 20 to 16 feet

In its comments on the Proposed Order, the certificate holder requested that Proposed Order Section I.D.3 be amended to clarify that the width of new facility access roads would be 16, rather than 20, feet. The 20-foot width standard was included in the Proposed Order based on the certificate holder's representations in RFA4 that all newly constructed roads would comply with 2022 Oregon Fire Code Requirements. In subsequent comments, the certificate holder stated that this representation was only intended to apply to certain external access roads and other roads needed for emergency access. In reply to the Department's response to comments, the certificate holder provided a map showing that new roads connecting existing facility access roads to the proposed substation, O&M building and solar array access gates would be designed to allow fire access (e.g. 20-foot roads) but all roads within solar array fencelines would be 16 feet.

Compliance with 2022 Oregon Fire Code Requirements is not required for all roads, only those that are intended to provide emergency vehicles access to structures and buildings in the event

of a fire-related emergency. In addition, during a brief call on March 4, 2026, the Department discussed the road width changes with Chief Burbank of the North Sherman County Rural Fire Protection District (RFPD). Chief Burbank confirmed that fire response within the proposed solar array perimeter fencelines would be limited, and that the RFPD would primarily seek to contain any fire that started within or spread into a solar array from outside of the perimeter fences and that response vehicles have off-road capabilities. Because there would be limited need to ensure access by full-size emergency vehicles to portions of the facility within the perimeter fencelines, the Department recommends the Council grant the additional flexibility requested; however, under the Construction Wildfire Management Plan attached to the draft Final Order, the final site plan must be reviewed and approved by the Department in consultation with local fire and emergency management officials.

Issue SS-01 (Certificate Holder): Request for flexibility to conduct ground disturbing activities on areas with steep slopes with engineer review

In the Proposed Order, the Department recommended the Council amend Condition 68 to prohibit development within areas of the proposed Solar Micrositing Area with slopes greater than 20 percent based on severe landslide hazard rating, the restrictions of the County's Natural Hazards Overlay Zone, and the potential for harm to waterways and habitat that could result from severe erosion or landslide issues in Biglow Canyon and its tributaries.

In its comments on the Proposed Order, the certificate holder requested that Recommended Amended Condition 68 be changed to allow ground disturbing activities in areas with slopes exceeding 20 percent when reviewed and approved by the Geotechnical Engineer of Record and designed to adequately address non-seismic hazard risks. In its response to comments, the Department requested additional information regarding the types of ground disturbing activities on slopes exceeding 20 percent that were under consideration. In its reply, the certificate holder provided an additional map showing where the certificate holder intended to cut and-fill existing slopes above 20 percent to below 20 percent.

Based on this additional information, the Department acknowledges that there are some areas within the proposed Solar Micrositing Area outside of Sherman County's Natural Hazard Combining Zone where cut and fill to grade existing slopes to below 20 percent would not present a significant hazard, but the Department continues to have concerns about the certificate holder's proposal to locate facility components on or near the steep edges of Biglow Canyon and other areas within the County's Natural Hazard Combining Zone (see RFA4 Land Use Exhibit, Figure K-2).

To ensure these areas are avoided, while providing additional flexibility on the remainder of the site, the Department suggests Recommended Amended Condition 68 be further revised. Changes to the condition as presented in the Proposed Order are shown in underline, strikethrough, black font; additional changes recommended as a result of the comment evaluation process are shown un underline, strikethrough, red font.

Recommended Amended Condition 68: The certificate holder shall design, engineer and construct the solar facility to avoid dangers to human safety presented by non-seismic hazards. ~~As used in this condition, "non-seismic hazards", including but not~~

limited to, settlement, landslides, flooding, and erosion, and collapsible soils. ~~Ground disturbing activities are not permitted in areas within Sherman County's Natural Hazard Combining Zone, nNo ground disturbing activity may occur in areas~~ where slopes exceeding 20 percent.

Issue SP-04/WF-09/WF-10 Comments related to 1-3" veg height under WMP

The Department evaluated several comments related to the recommendation that vegetation within the solar facility and along the facility perimeter fencelines be maintained at 1 to 3 inches during fire season to mitigate fire risk. Mr. McCullough requests that the recommendation be more clearly stated in the site certificate and implementing plans, and be required throughout the life of the facility (Issue WF-09). Sherman County Weed Department (SCWD) requests that the vegetation height standard be increased to 4 to 8 inches to support erosion control and associated viability of bunchgrass species.

In its comments, the certificate holder requested that the height standard be set at 10 to 12 inches year-round but in reply to the SCWDs comments, requested that ODOE take the District's professional recommendation into consideration and revise the Proposed Order and implementing plans accordingly to require management of grass height at 4 to 8 inches during dry season. Mr. McCullough commented that he did not agree that 8" vegetation would be safe from a wildfire standpoint but acknowledged the importance of not mowing native bunch grasses shorter than 3-4" to protect the crown of the plant. He conceded that a slightly taller vegetation height (3" to 6" during fire season June-Oct) would be acceptable considering erosion control, vegetation health, and fire risk together.

The Department maintains that vegetation management is a critical tool for minimizing wildfire risk associated with the proposed facility but defers to the professional recommendation of SCWD as to the appropriate standard to best balance wildfire risk mitigation and soil protection. Consistent with SCWDs recommendation, the Department has added the following language to Appendix F of the draft Comprehensive Revegetation and Soil Management Plan:

a. Vegetation Height and Clearance

- Vegetation within and adjacent to the Solar Components will be maintained as follows:
 - During the dry season (June to October), vegetation height will be limited to 4 to 8 inches. Vegetation will be mowed to a height of 4 inches prior to June of each year.
 - Outside of the dry season (November to May), vegetation will be maintained at a maximum height of less than 12 inches,
 - with a A minimum vertical clearance of 12 inches from all electrical and mechanical equipment will be maintained at all times.
- Vegetation exceeding this the heights listed above will be mowed or removed prior to local in accordance with any ODF- or County-issued fire restrictions.

Issue LU-11 (Oregon Wheat Growers League): Recommendation to include Oregon Wheat Growers League in Community Investment Selection Committee

The proposed Solar Micrositing Area is in Sherman County and is located entirely within the County's Exclusive Farm Use (F-1) Zone. Portions of the Solar Micrositing Area are also located within the County's Natural Hazards (NH) combining zone.

In RFA4, the certificate holder requests an Exception to Statewide Planning Goal 3 for the Solar Micrositing Area based on the following reasons:

1. **Locational Dependence:** The facility components proposed in RFA4 are locationally dependent on an existing substation with available interconnection capacity, are sited in proximity to major transportation corridors, and are co-located with the existing wind facility and other energy infrastructure.
2. **Economic Benefits:** The facility components proposed in RFA4 provide local rural economic development benefits through the creation of jobs, the generation of tax revenues, lease payments, and the creation of a Community Investment Plan.
3. **Minimal Impacts to Other resources:** The facility components proposed in RFA4 avoid and minimize impacts on other resources protected by Council Standards.
4. **Consistency with State Climate Goals and Policies:** The facility components proposed in RFA4 are consistent with Oregon's Policies and Goals Requiring the State to Address the Climate Crisis.

The Department recommends the Council find that the certificate holder has provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the facility components proposed in RFA4 are locationally dependent on nearby major transmission infrastructure and transportation corridors and that a proposed Community Investment Plan (CIP) is adequate to demonstrate the creation of rural economic development benefits.

Recommended Land Use Condition 6 would require the certificate holder to finalize and implement the plan and provide evidence that it has contributed at least \$1,600 per acre of cultivated land that will be occupied by facility components to a Community Investment Fund created and governed in accordance with the plan.

To help inform the development of the CIP and to identify potential projects that would support the local agricultural economy, the certificate holder met with, among other persons and groups, local wheat farmers and the Oregon Wheat Commission. That coordination led to the certificate holder including in the CIP five "pre-screened" projects that would qualify for funding. For other proposals, a five-person advisory committee (Selection Committee) would review applications and make recommendations to the Sherman County Board of Commissioners on funding. The Selection Committee would include one representative from Sherman County government; one representative from an academic institution engaged in agriculture research in Sherman County or an agricultural-related nonprofit entity located in Sherman County; *one dryland farm producer in the County*; one community member; and one representative with expertise in wildfire as it relates to agricultural lands.¹

¹ Proposed Order, p. 139 and Attachment E (the draft CIP), Section 4.2.1.
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It its comments, Oregon Wheat Growers League (OWGL) expressed concern that there is no guarantee a famer representative will be included in the Selection Committee and requested that they be included as the representative. In its response to this issue, the certificate holder noted that they supported revising the final CIP to include a representative from the OWGL on the Selection Committee. The certificate holder requested that ODOE acknowledge this request and recommend to EFSC that the CIP be revised in Section 4.2.1 to identify the addition of one representative from the OWGL. The Department agrees with the certificate holder’s request.

Issue LU-13 (OWGL): Concern with inclusion of agrivoltaics research as pre-screened project in Community Investment Plan

Dryland wheat agrivoltaics research is one of five pre-screened projects identified in the draft CIP as having a direct benefit to the rural agricultural economy of Sherman County. These five projects were developed based on outreach and coordination with key stakeholders from the Sherman County agricultural community, as well as state-wide agricultural-related organizations including local wheat farmers, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), Oregon State University (OSU) including its extension service in Sherman County and the College of Agricultural Sciences, the Oregon Wheat Commission, the Sherman County Fire District, Sherman County Emergency Services, the Rural Sherman County Fire Board, the Weed Master, the Road Master, the County Planning Office, and County Judge.

Further, as noted above, the Selection Committee for CIP mitigation projects will include one representative dryland farm producer in the County. In its comment, OWGL raised concern with inclusion of agrivoltaics research in pre-screened mitigation project list, alleging “[t]his areas is overstated” and the project “would not produce meaningful results” and recommends producer-led analysis of research proposals would allow research investments to match the growing area most effectively.

In its responses to OWGL’s comments, the certificate holder commented that it agreed the League’s input would be valuable in the development of a proposal for an agrivoltaics project and that it anticipates that the proponent of this project would seek the input from OWGL when developing the proposal to ensure that the research directly benefited the Sherman County wheat economy. The certificate holder requested that the Department acknowledge this request and recommend to the Council that the final CIP be revised at Section 5 to require the project proponent to consult OWGL when developing the project proposal to include in the CIP funding application.

Given the concerns of OWGL, and the certificate holder’s acknowledgement that additional input in the development of a proposal would be beneficial, the Department recommends the Council reject the Dryland Wheat Agrivoltaics Research in Sherman County as a pre-screened project. The project sponsor would continue to be able to apply for funding through the normal selection process and investing in research to further agrivoltaics for dryland wheat lands would continue to be one of the selection criteria for review. The Department recommends that having this project go through the full selection process is the best way to incentivize successful stakeholder engagement in the project design process.

Issue FW-03 (Certificate Holder): Flexibility on ground clearing activities in Category 2 Habitat

The draft Comprehensive Solar Revegetation and Soil Management Plan attached to the Proposed Order restricts vegetation disturbance during the critical period for ground nesting birds (April 15 to September 1) and requires that any initial mowing, vegetation removal and/or ground disturbance associated with site preparation be completed prior to April 15 or after September 1. The certificate holder commented that the proposed restrictions would preclude almost all work in those areas and would incentivize grading instead of mowing or drive and crush.

In response, the Department explained that the language was intended to require the certificate holder to complete all initial mowing, vegetation removal and ground disturbance *associated with site preparation* within the relatively minimal areas of Category 2 habitat before April 15 or after September 1, and not to prohibit any subsequent vegetation management activities such as mowing. The location and extent of Category 2 habitat is isolated, within a distinct location expanding 20 acres. The Department requested that the certificate holder provide reasons why, for the isolated area of Category 2 habitat, site preparation activities would not be able to be completed at time that would avoid the critical period for ground nesting birds.

In its reply, the certificate holder noted that construction is scheduled to begin in June and that if vegetation or ground disturbance is restricted in Category 2 habitat during the breeding season, then construction will not be able to begin in Category 2 habitat until after September 1. It remains unclear why the certificate holder would not be able to mobilize vegetation management crews for the limited area of Category 2 habitat prior to construction, or if waiting until September to work in the habitat area would not be feasible. In addition, the Department consulted with ODFW on the proposed change. ODFW commented that clearance surveys are ineffective for accurate identification and requested that vegetation removal activities occur prior to the beginning of nesting season (April 15).

Based on ODFW's recommendation and the information on the record, the Department does not recommend the Council make any additional changes to the requirement.

Issue HCA-02 (Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon): Adequacy of archaeological monitoring and protective measures

The certificate holder contracted with GeoVisions to survey the analysis area in 2024. The survey included a desktop review of records from previous surveys and pedestrian surveys of the proposed Solar Micrositing Area. Five archaeological sites and six isolates within the proposed Solar Micrositing Area were identified during the surveys. Four of the archaeological sites and one archaeological isolate are designated as unevaluated for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility. Unevaluated resources must generally be treated as likely to be eligible for NRHP listing until they are demonstrated to be ineligible by further testing or study. GeoVisions recommended the remaining resources are likely not eligible for NRHP listing. On June 10, 2025, Oregon SHPO provided a letter concurring with these recommendations.

As presented in the Proposed Order, Recommended Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Conditions 1 and 2 would require the certificate holder to either avoid ground disturbing activities within a 20-meter avoidance buffer of all unevaluated resources, or submit a Cultural

Resources Monitoring Program for approval. Recommended Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Conditions 3 to 5 would require the certificate holder to implement and update PGE's Inadvertent Discovery Plan during construction and operation of the facility components proposed in RFA4.

In comments on the Proposed Order, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon (CTWS) expressed concerns about the adequacy of the recommended conditions and requested that "the full suite of cultural resource protection measures identified through survey and consultation be implemented."

In its responses to this issue, the Department acknowledged that the monitoring requirements of these conditions are more limited than what was recommended by GeoVisions, which recommends that a Qualified Archaeologist be on site during all ground disturbing activities and that a Tribal Cultural Resource Monitor be present when ground disturbing activities occur within a 20-meter avoidance buffer. The Department requested that the certificate holder provide a draft Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan that is consistent with the recommendations included in the GeoVisions Report.

In the certificate holder's responses, they restated their commitment to cultural resource protection but disagreed with the recommendation for additional monitoring but noted that if the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) believed that certain resources should be managed differently or that additional protection measures should be required, the certificate holder would support continued government-to-government consultation between CTWSRO THPO and ODOE, as determinations regarding applicable standards, conditions, and mitigation requirements fall within the Council's and ODOE's purview.

In reply to the certificate holder, the CTWS THPO reiterated the importance of ensuring appropriate Tribal presence during ground-disturbing activities and requested that a Dedicated Tribal Monitor be incorporated into the construction-phase coordination framework.

In its sur-reply, the certificate holder agreed to provide interested Tribes with the opportunity to provide a Tribal Monitor during ground-disturbing activities, but emphasized their desire to ensure that construction activities can proceed on schedule, regardless if a tribal monitor is available on a given day.

The Department believes the request to have a Dedicated Tribal Monitor present during all ground disturbing activities goes beyond the recommendations in the GeoVisions Report, and beyond what was requested in the initial comment; however, the Department believes the Tribes' request to have a qualified archaeologist on site during ground disturbing activities is reasonable given the history of the area and potential for additional unidentified pre-contact sites or isolates to be present at the site documented in the cultural resources survey report. The Department further recommends that the requirements are consistent with the recommendations made in SHPO's concurrence letter.

Accordingly, the Department recommends further revisions to Recommended Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Condition 2 (GEN-HC-03) as follows:

Prior to construction activities that occur within the 20-meter avoidance buffer for archaeological sites (35SH00188, BSP-1-S02, BSP-1-S10, and BSP-1-S12) and archaeological isolate (BSP-1-I04), the certificate holder must submit to the Department for approval, in consultation with SHPO, a Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan demonstrating that an Oregon Qualified Archaeologist or Tribal Cultural Resource Monitor will be onsite during ground disturbing activities ~~associated with the resources listed in this condition at the site.~~ The plan may include exceptions to monitoring scope and frequency, subject to approval by the Department, in consultation with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. The certificate holder shall adhere to the measures approved in the Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan.

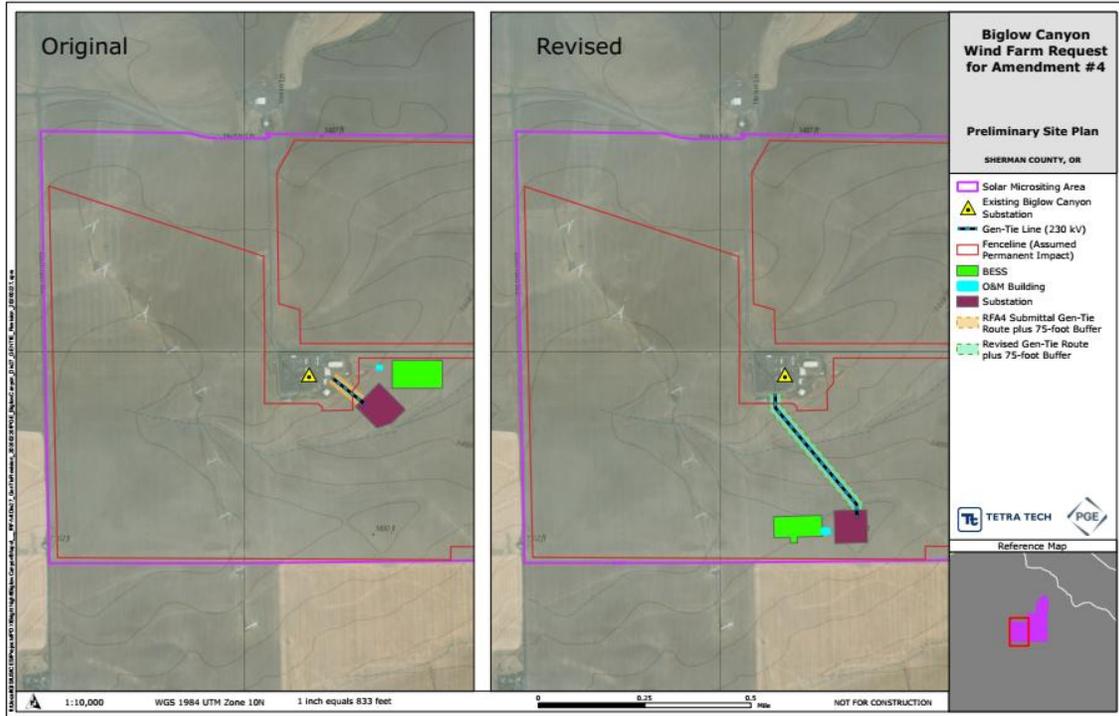
Issue TL-01: Request for additional flexibility in transmission line siting

In its comments on the Proposed Order, the certificate holder requested changes to recommended Amended Condition 119 to provide additional flexibility in transmission line siting. Specifically, the certificate holder requested permission to defer identification of the final location of the substation and transmission corridor to the final site design.

In response to this issue, the Department noted that under OAR 345-025-0010(5), the Council must specify an approved corridor for any transmission line approved in a site certificate. The Department noted that the certificate holder only included one proposed corridor for the 600-foot segment of 230 kV transmission line, which was presented in RFA4 Figure 2.2. The Department requested that any alternate corridors be presented so that they can be evaluated for compliance with applicable laws, rules and standards.

In its reply, the certificate holder explained that continued engineering evaluation of site conditions and infrastructure layout identified that the original substation site presented constraints relative to the existing infrastructure. Accordingly, a new location for the proposed substation and battery energy storage system (BESS) was identified to avoid low elevation areas, better align with existing infrastructure, and improve constructability, long-term operability, and overall infrastructure resilience. The certificate holder asserts that this refinement reflects prudent final engineering and results in improved consistency, new and existing infrastructure, rather than a change in project scope. Moving the collector substation location results in a corresponding adjustment to the transmission line corridor, with an updated alignment of a 230-kV transmission line approximately 1,900 feet in length, supported by three 80-foot tall steel monopole structures. The figure below shows the new location of the project substation and gen-tie transmission line, all still located within the Solar Micrositing Area.

Figure 1. Original and Revised Collector Substation Location and Transmission Corridor



The newly proposed substation location is within the proposed Solar Micrositing Area, and has been fully surveyed and evaluated for all applicable resources and impacts. In addition, there do not appear to be any residences or linear structures that could be inadvertently energized within the refined corridor. Accordingly, the Department recommends the Proposed Order and draft Amended Site Certificate be amended with the revised substation location. Site certificate conditions will require an updated site plan, acoustic modeling, retirement estimate, and other resource studies to be provided prior to construction.