

# memorandum

DATE: September 24, 2013

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEPR-Bell-1

SUBJECT: Environmental Clearance Memorandum

TO: Molly Kovaka  
Project Manager – TEP-CSB-2

**Proposed Action:** Dixon Substation fiber optic cable installation

**PP&A Project No.:** 2674

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B4.7 Fiber optic cable

**Location:** Township 18 North, Range 21 West, Section 20, Sanders County, Montana.

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to connect its Dixon Substation to an existing fiber optic cable on the Hot Springs-Rattlesnake line. The project will involve installing a buried concrete vault, about 180 feet of buried fiber optic cable, and equipment within the existing substation. The fiber will allow improved substation communications with other parts of the electrical system.

A four foot square concrete vault will be placed below grade near the Hot Springs-Rattlesnake wood pole structure 26/2. The fiber will be placed in four inch PVC conduit installed in a trench (about 2-to-3 feet wide and 3-to-4 feet deep) from the vault location to the substation fence. All work will be within BPA's existing disturbed right-of-way and the project is located within the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe's Flathead Indian Reservation.

Once the vault and conduit have been put in place, the excavations will be backfilled using the excavated soil. Any remaining soil will be disposed of on-site within the footprint of the disturbed areas and graded to conform to the existing land contours. If deemed necessary, the disturbed areas will be reseeded using a native seed mix to help restore native vegetation and improve erosion control. All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards.

**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/ Philip W. Smith, for:

Michael A. Rosales  
Physical Scientist

Concur: /s/ Stacy Mason

Stacy Mason  
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: September 24, 2013

Attachments:

Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions  
Effects Determination for T&E Species

## Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions

Name of Proposed Project: Dixon Substation fiber optic cable installation

Work Order #: 329711

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A cultural survey was performed at the proposed disturbance areas and the cultural resource report findings indicated this undertaking will not affect historic properties.</li> <li>• A letter and copy of the report was sent to the CSKT THPO on August 5, 2013, requesting concurrence on BPA's "No Adverse Effect on Historic Properties" determination but no response was received within the regulatory 30-day window.</li> <li>• In the event that archaeological or historic materials are discovered during project activities, work in the immediate vicinity will halt, the area will be secured, and a BPA archaeologist and the THPO will be notified.</li> </ul>		
2. T & E Species, or their habitat(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No T&E species are present within ½ mile of the project.		
3. Floodplains or wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Surface waters are not located near the proposed travel route.		
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"/>
8. Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List supporting documentation attached (if needed):

Signed: /s/ Michael A. Rosales

Date: September 11, 2013

Michael A. Rosales, KEPR/Bell-1