

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Ellensburg Substation Expansion and Control House Addition

Project Manager: Rasha Kroonen TEP-TPP-1

Location: City of Ellensburg, Kittitas County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.11 Electric power substations and interconnection facilities...

Description of the Proposed Action: The proposed project is to expand the northwest corner of BPA's existing Ellensburg Substation fenced area to provide space for a new Power Control Assembly (PCA), which would replace the existing substation control house that is inundated by frequent flooding. The existing control house would remain in place, but would be emptied of its equipment, including relays, instruments, meters, batteries, and chargers. The new PCA would be a prefabricated 28-foot by 35-foot structure placed on drilled piers. The new finish floor would be raised one foot above 100-year floodplain levels (3.75 feet above existing grade). New cables would run from the new PCA to existing yard equipment for station service. In addition, all PCB contaminated power and circuit transformers and disconnect switches within the substation would be removed and replaced.

A new 4-foot by 4-foot fiber vault would be placed on the north side of Dolarway Road in BPA transmission line right-of-way. New fiber would run aerially from the vault to an existing wood pole on the Columbia-Ellensburg transmission line structure, then into a new vault on the south side of Dolarway Road within the substation property. The fiber would be placed in a previously utilized 4-inch PVC conduit for approximately 800 feet before it would terminate into an existing vault located within the substation equipment yard. Some excavation and repair work would be needed for the subsurface fiber, as the existing conduit was damaged during previous substation work.

A new 250-foot by 100-foot section of fence would be added to the northwest corner of the substation to accommodate the new PCA structure. About 3 inches of existing surface rock in the unfenced area would be removed and used later to bring the newly fenced area up to grade with the rest of the substation complex. The existing septic tank and leech field pipes would be removed and piped sewer service would be connected to the local system from the new PCA. All work associated with the substation expansion and PCA addition would be within a previously disturbed, graveled area that is presently used by BPA personnel as a parking area. All work to replace PCB contaminated equipment would occur within the existing substation footprint. Site grading would not impact surface flow patterns.

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) 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), BPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

/s/ Claire McClory

Claire McClory
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Katherine S. Pierce

Katherine S. Pierce
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: July 23, 2015

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

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Project Site Description

The Ellensburg Substation site is located in an industrial area on the west side of the City of Ellensburg in Washington. The site has been heavily rocked and graded for substation installation.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u></p> <p>The Ellensburg Substation is considered eligible for the National Register. BPA determined that the proposed project would have no adverse effect to historic properties provided the existing control house remains in place. No response was received from consulting parties after the 30 day consultation window ended on July 5, 2015.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ BPA to provide cultural resource monitoring during initial excavation for fence posts for the new section of fence and for the new fiber vaults at the request of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville. A letter and report documenting the finding will be sent to consulting parties. 		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u></p> <p>Minimal soil disturbance. Site would be regraded to direct surface flows south during flood events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cut and fill slopes outside the switchyard fence shall be re-seeded with native grasses as recommended by the local county agricultural extension agent. ✓ Standard erosion and sediment control measures shall be in place prior to ground disturbing activities. 		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u></p> <p>All work in the existing electrical yard/rocked parking area; no plants present/disturbed.</p>		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u></p> <p>None present.</p>		

5. **Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish**
(including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)



Explanation:

The Ellensburg Substation is located in a mapped FEMA floodplain. The site historically floods approximately once every 5 years. The new PCA finish floor would be elevated one foot above flood water depth (3.75 feet above existing grade) to avoid impacts to the floodplain and flood impacts to the new control house.

- ✓ Excess soil that has been stockpiled on the site shall be removed to offset any floodplain volume displaced by the new control house foundation piers.
- ✓ Surface rock shall be removed prior to construction and reused to regrade the site so that flows will generally follow existing yard grades, directing surface flows south. Reusing existing yard material will result in no net import or export of fill material.
- ✓ Any excess excavation material shall be disposed of off-site.
- ✓ There is no practicable alternative to constructing the PCA in the already graveled and graded area and the proposed project has been designed to minimize potential harm within the flood plan.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation:

None present.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation:

None present.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**



Explanation:

All work will take place on existing BPA fee-owned property.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation:

The new PCA and fence line would be visible from Dolarway Road, but would not markedly change the existing views of the substation from the road.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation:

Small amount of dust and vehicle emissions during construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation:

Temporary construction noise during daylight hours. Operational noise would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation:

Removal of PCB-containing equipment will eliminate a potential health/environmental hazard.

- ✓ PCB contaminated equipment would be removed using BMPs to prevent accidental spills. Equipment shall be managed and disposed of in accordance with all applicable state and federal regulations.

Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:

- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary: All PCB containing equipment would be managed and disposed of according to applicable state and federal regulations.

- Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases.

Explanation, if necessary:

- 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, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

Explanation, if necessary:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: Not applicable.

Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts on any environmentally sensitive resources.

Signed: /s/ Claire McClory
Claire McClory KEC-4

Date: July 23, 2015