

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Snohomish Substation Equipment Replacement and Expansion Project

Project No.: P01066

Project Manager: Jay Chester TEP-TPP-1

Location: City of Snohomish, Washington

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

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to upgrade electrical equipment that supports operations at Snohomish Substation. Work to be performed under this project includes the following:

- Replacing capacitors, circuit switchers, breakers and disconnect switches for equipment supporting 115-kilovolt (kV) and 230-kV equipment.
- Replacing equipment within the 115-kV and 230-kV yards, as well as installing equipment within the substation including breakers, distribution panels, transformers, transfer switches, cables, insulator pedestals, footings for equipment, and additional duct backs.
- Expanding the 115-kV and 230-kV substation yards to accommodate new circuit breaker, current limiting reactor, and the new capacitor groups. The 115-kV and 230-kV yards would each be expanded by approximately 0.5 acre, for a total expansion of 1 acre. The expansion would entail grading and leveling undeveloped areas within BPA fee-owned property adjacent to the existing yards. Once leveled, BPA would import fill material to prepare the yard foundations. The fill would consist of a mixture of clean imported soil and possibly soil obtained from onsite excavations, as well as various grades of clean imported granular fill (rock). The 115-kV yard expansion would encroach into approximately 0.3 acre of an adjacent emergent wetland; the 230-kV yard expansion would occur within an upland area consisting of gravel driveway and a grass lawn.

BPA's own construction crews would implement the improvements and expansions. The existing equipment yard located immediately east of the 115-kV substation yard would be used for equipment and vehicle storage during construction. The proposed improvements listed above would be constructed in Fiscal Year 2016 over a period of 10 months.

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/ Justin Moffett

Justin Moffett

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: September 10, 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.

Proposed Action: Snohomish Substation Equipment Replacement and Expansion Project

Project Site Description

The project site is located on BPA fee-owned property in the City of Snohomish. The site consists of the rocked substation yard, transmission lines and associated structures, and graveled and paved areas for vehicle access and equipment storage. The surrounding landscape includes herbaceous wetlands and upland habitat which are previously disturbed with evidence of fill and grading. Existing vegetation is primarily non-native forbs and grasses, and invasive weeds including reed canarygrass and Scotch broom. Much of the site has been cleared and is regularly mowed to accommodate the transmission lines and structures present on the site.

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> The Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) concurred with BPA's determination of No Historic Properties Affected on April 22, 2015. BPA also consulted with the Tulalip Tribes and the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe; however, they did not provide any comment on the project.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ In the event any archaeological material is encountered during project activities, the following actions shall be taken:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, archaeologist, and project manager, interested tribes, DAHP, and the appropriate local, state and federal agencies. Implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering.• Take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site, including restricting access.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Approximately 1 acre of permanent disturbance for substation expansion and equipment installation.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Implement erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs) prior to any clearing and ground disturbing activities.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> No federal or state-listed species present within the project site. Approximately 1 acre of non-native forbs, grasses (including lawn), and invasive weeds to be removed.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u></p>		

- ✓ Reseed disturbed areas with a regionally appropriate seed mix.
- ✓ Clean and inspect all construction vehicles and equipment prior exiting project site to prevent spread of invasive weeds (i.e., reed canarygrass and Scotch broom) offsite.

4. **Wildlife** (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)

Explanation: No federal or state-listed species or associated habitats within the project site.

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

Explanation: The project site is located outside the floodplain and no in-water work is proposed. Federally-listed bull trout, Puget Sound chinook salmon, and Puget Sound steelhead are known to occur in the Snohomish River, which is approximately 2 miles downstream of the project site. The Snohomish River is also Critical Habitat for Puget Sound chinook salmon. Stormwater runoff from expansion areas would be piped into the existing collection and treatment system.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: BPA identified three palustrine, emergent wetlands within the 115-kV capacitor yard expansion area. The proposed project would permanently fill approximately 0.3 acre of wetland. BPA submitted a Joint Aquatic Resource Permit Application to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Washington State Department of Environmental Quality requesting authorization to fill the wetlands under Nationwide Permit 12. BPA would mitigate wetland impacts by.

Mitigation:

- ✓ Purchase 0.3 acre of mitigation credits from the Skykomish Habitat Mitigation Bank.
- ✓ Do not allow petroleum products, sediment, or other deleterious materials to enter any wetlands.
- ✓ Ensure spill containment and cleanup materials are readily available at the project site, staging areas, and in construction vehicles.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: No new wells or use of groundwater proposed. Proposed excavation would not be deep enough to intercept groundwater.

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

Explanation: All construction activities would occur on BPA fee-owned property.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: The substation expansion would be relatively small (1 acre) relative to the size of the existing substation (>35 acres) and would be visually consistent with existing structures and equipment located inside the substation. Views from adjacent residences located approximately 500 feet south of the substation are screened by existing vegetation and topography.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: Fugitive dust and vehicle emissions would be produced during construction activities would be temporary and minimal.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: Construction noise would be intermittent, temporary, and localized. Construction would be limited to daytime hours (7am-5pm). The closest residences are located approximately 500 feet south of the substation and would not be adversely affected by construction noise.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: Project activities would not affect human health or safety.

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:

- 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: Adjacent property owners were not contacted. The project is located entirely within BPA fee-owned property. The closest private residences are located 500 feet south of the 115 kV yard expansion.

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

Signed: /s/ Justin Moffett

Date: September 10, 2015