

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Conkelley Substation Property Transfers

Project Manager: Joan Kendall TERR-3

Location: Flathead County, Montana

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.24 Property Transfers

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to sell portions of its Conkelley Substation to the Columbia Falls Aluminum Company (CFAC). BPA would sell certain associated substation assets that have been used to serve power to CFAC's aluminum plant that is no longer operating. The substation assets to be sold would include, but not be limited to, footings, support structures, bus work, jumpers, transformers, disconnect switches, surface rock, and appurtenances.

CFAC closed its aluminum plant in early 2015 and BPA plans to terminate the point-to-point contract that served power to the aluminum plant via the Conkelley Substation. However, once the contract is terminated BPA will have stranded investments at the Conkelley Substation. Selling those substation investments that were used to service CFAC's aluminum plant would avoid stranding investments and would also satisfy the provisions of BPA's 1996 Policy for Sale or Lease of Delivery Facilities, which gives BPA customers the right, upon request, to purchase or lease substations that are used to deliver power to the requesting customer or customers.

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/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: August 27, 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: Conkelley Substation Property Transfers

Project Site Description

The Conkelley Substation is located in Kalispell County, Montana next to the Columbia Falls Aluminum Company plant.

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"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> BPA will transfer ownership of a small portion of specific substation assets immediately adjacent to the aluminum plant. The majority of the substation will remain intact, functioning, and in BPA ownership.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No disturbance proposed – property sale only.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No disturbance proposed – property sale only.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No disturbance proposed – property sale only.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No disturbance proposed – property sale only.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No disturbance proposed – property sale only.		

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation:

No disturbance proposed – property sale only.

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

Explanation:

BPA would sell a portion of the substation property to CFAC. Land Use would remain unchanged.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation:

No disturbance proposed – property sale only.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation:

No disturbance proposed – property sale only.

11. **Noise**

Explanation:

No disturbance proposed – property sale only.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation:

The substation is adjacent to Columbia Falls Aluminum Plant, which has been proposed for listing on the Superfund National Priorities List. BPA is not listed as a potentially responsible party and therefore has nothing to disclose under CERCLA.

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: The substation is located adjacent to the proposed Columbia Falls Aluminum Superfund Site. BPA is not listed as a potentially responsible party and therefore has nothing to disclose under

CERCLA. Sale of the substation property would have no effect on the status of the site.

- 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. All property transfers would occur on BPA fee-property.

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

Date: August 27, 2015