

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: NoaNet Fiber Installation at Columbia Substation

LURR No.: 20070123

Project Manager: James Hall, TPC-TPP-4

Location: Douglas County, Washington.

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

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow Northwest Open Access Network (NoaNet) to install fiber optic cable across BPA fee-owned property at the BPA Columbia Substation in Douglas County, Washington.

NoaNet would install a fiber optic cable within existing PVC conduit. This fiber installation would begin at the NoaNet regeneration hut, located on the eastern side of the substation and continue across approximately 2,000 feet of BPA property to tower 21/3 of the Rocky Reach-Columbia No. 1 transmission line. Another segment of fiber would extend 500 feet to tower 32/3 of the Vantage-Columbia No. 1 transmission line. The project would not have any ground disturbance, other than minor construction vehicle traffic.

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/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Motus Staffing & Recruiting

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: February 1, 2016

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 project location is adjacent to the Columbia Substation, in eastern Washington. The site sits on a terrace that slopes down to the Columbia River, which is located 0.35 miles to the west. The existing conduit wraps around the western, southern, and eastern sides of the substation, just outside of the substation fence-line. The habitat at the site consists of shrub/steppe ecosystem. Agricultural lands surround the substation property to the north, east, and south. A review of the National Wetland Inventory, soil information, topography, and aerial photos did not reveal any wetlands or water bodies at 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"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The proposed project does not have the potential to affect historical or cultural resources. No ground disturbance is associated with the project and there are no known historical or cultural resources at this location.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project does not include any ground disturbance.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project does not include ground disturbance. No special-status plant species or habitat present.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project does not include ground disturbance. No special-status wildlife species or habitat present.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> The project area does not have any water bodies, floodplains or listed fish species.		

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: The project area does not have any wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: The project would not impact groundwater or aquifers. No ground disturbance is proposed.

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

Explanation: There will be no permanent changes to the land use at this location.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: There would be no visual changes to the project area or surrounding environment.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: Small amount of dust and vehicle emissions during construction.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Temporary construction noise during daylight hours. Operation noise would not change.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: No impact.

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: The project would be occurring on BPA fee-owned property. There would be no visual or other effects to adjacent landowners.

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

Signed: /s/ Beth Belanger

Beth Belanger
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Motus Staffing & Recruiting

Date: February 1, 2016