

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Underground Conductor Installation at John Day Substation

LURR No.: 20170137

Project Manager: Laura Loop – TERR-3

Location: Sherman County, OR

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to allow Pacific Power to bury an overhead distribution line for BPA to complete its re-conductor project at John Day Substation in Sherman County, Oregon.

Pacific Power would install two 6-inch conduits at a depth of 3 feet outside the John Day Substation yard fence, adjacent to the existing access road, for approximately 1,300 feet. Conductor would be installed in the conduit, which would remain in place permanently. That temporary conductor would be used while the permanent conductor is de-energized and placed on the ground for approximately one month. After BPA's re-conductor project is complete, the permanent conductor would be replaced aerially on existing poles.

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/ Elizabeth Siping

Elizabeth Siping

Contract Environmental Protection Specialist

Flux Resources, LLC

Reviewed by:

/s/ Gene Lynard

Gene Lynard

Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: January 30, 2017

Attachment: 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 site is located adjacent to the east of the fenced yard of BPA's John Day Substation in Sherman County, Oregon. The site lies underneath of the John Day Powerhouse – John Day No. 1-4 transmission lines, in addition to three other BPA transmission lines. John Day Substation is located about 1 mile south of the Columbia River in a rural, agricultural area.

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The BPA archaeologist determined that an APE had been previously surveyed and that no further investigations were needed; however, due to the depth of the proposed project a cultural monitor was deemed necessary.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u> Ensure that an archaeologist is present during ground-disturbing activities. In the event any archaeological or historic materials are encountered during project activities, the following actions should be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead and the BPA archaeologist. Appropriate BPA project staff, interested Tribes, Oregon SHPO, and the appropriate county, state, and federal agencies should also be notified.• 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> Trenching would occur at a depth of 3 feet for approximately 1,300 feet. The area has likely been previously disturbed in association with substation and roads construction and maintenance.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The project area is sparsely vegetated with herbaceous species. No special-status species are present.</p>		

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



Explanation: Project work would occur just outside of the substation in an area that does not provide wildlife habitat. No federal or state special-status species are present.

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



Explanation: No water bodies are present within the project area.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands are present within the project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No new wells or use of groundwater is proposed. Maximum depth of ground disturbance would be 3 feet, which is not at groundwater depth.

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



Explanation: No change to land use is proposed.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: No permanent visual impacts are anticipated. Temporary ground disturbance would occur during trenching.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions is anticipated during trenching.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: A temporary increase in noise is anticipated during trenching.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation: No impact to human health and safety is anticipated.

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: No notification needed. The site is BPA fee-owned property.

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

Signed: /s/ Elizabeth Siping
Elizabeth Siping – ECT-4

Date: January 30, 2017