

# Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



**Proposed Action:** MCI Fiber Decommissioning at Alvey, Bandon, and Reston Substations

**Project Manager:** James Hall—TPC-TPP-4

**Location:** Coos, Douglas and Lane Counties, Oregon

**Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021):** B1.27 Disconnection of Utilities

**Description of the Proposed Action:** BPA proposes to decommission MCI (now Verizon) fiber optic cable facilities at various locations on BPA's system in Western Oregon. MCI had a fiber lease with BPA that has recently expired. Under the terms and conditions of the lease, MCI must decommission their leased fibers and restore locations to previous conditions, once the lease has terminated.

BPA would decommission MCI's leased fibers by disconnecting the MCI fibers and restoring them to join the remaining BPA fibers at the following locations:

- Structure 3/3 of the Alvey-Fairview No. 1 transmission line (two miles south of Alvey Substation)
- Structure 69/1 of the Alvey-Fairview No. 1 transmission line (at Reston Substation)
- Structure 20/3 of the Fairview-Bandon No. 1 transmission line (six miles east of Bandon Substation)

At these locations, MCI would remove their fiber cables from BPA's poles and customer splice boxes. MCI shall also remove all MCI cables and/or equipment, excluding underground conduit and vaults, which would be abandoned in place.

Additionally, at BPA's Reston Substation, BPA would allow MCI to remove two existing buildings that have housed MCI's equipment. The concrete pads beneath the buildings would also be removed, along with a propane tank, bollards and a chain-link fence. All areas of ground disturbance would be restored and gravel would be added, as needed.

**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 Recruiting & Staffing

Reviewed by:

/s/ David K. Kennedy for

Gene Lynard  
Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason  
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: May 16, 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.

**Proposed Action:** MCI Fiber Decommissioning at Alvey, Bandon, and Reston Substations

### Project Site Description

The project would occur on existing transmission line structures within existing rights of way, and also at Reston Substation. One of the transmission structures is located in an agricultural field, one is in scrub-shrub habitat and the last is a grassy field. All transmission structure sites are located adjacent to existing access roads. The work at Reston Substation would take place in a pre-developed graveled area near the electrical yard.

### Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
<p>1. <b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The fiber decommissioning work at Alvey and Bandon would not involve any ground disturbance. The building and equipment removal at Reston Substation was reviewed by BPA cultural staff and it was determined that the project area has been previously surveyed for archaeological resources. Additionally, the buildings that would be removed were constructed in the mid 1990's and are not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, BPA has determined the undertaking does not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties.</p>		
<p>2. <b>Geology and Soils</b></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The fiber decommissioning work at Alvey and Bandon would not involve any ground disturbance. The ground disturbance at Reston Substation would be minimal. All disturbed soils would be compacted and graveled after the concrete pads are removed.</p>		
<p>3. <b>Plants</b> (including federal/state special-status species)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The fiber decommissioning work at Alvey and Bandon would not involve any ground disturbance; therefore, there would be no impact to plants.</p> <p>The project area at Reston Substation consists of compacted gravel, or concrete, and is devoid of vegetation. Therefore, the project would have no impact on plant species.</p>		
<p>4. <b>Wildlife</b> (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> The fiber decommissioning work at Alvey and Bandon would be of a short duration and would not involve any ground disturbance; therefore, there would be no impact to wildlife.</p> <p>At Reston Substation, there are no known occurrences of special-status species in the project vicinity; however, the project area is adjacent to an ephemeral stream, which appears to have connectivity to Rock Creek. Salmonid species are known to occur in Rock Creek. Best management practices (BMPs) would be utilized to avoid sedimentation of the adjacent stream. BMPs shall include: installing silt fencing between the project area and drainage; no equipment would be allowed in the stream channel; all disturbed soils would be tamped down</p>		

and graveled after removal of the concrete pads, fence, propane tanks and bollards.

The deconstruction work would be done during the day and the noise levels would be consistent with the ambient levels of the adjacent highway; therefore, the project is unlikely to impact wildlife.

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

Explanation: The fiber decommissioning work at Alvey and Bandon would not involve any ground disturbance; therefore, there would be no impact to water bodies, floodplains, and fish.

The project area at Reston Substation is adjacent to an ephemeral stream. The following BMPs would be utilized to avoid sedimentation of the adjacent stream: installing silt fencing between the project area and drainage; no equipment would be allowed in the stream channel; all disturbed soils would be tamped down and graveled after removal of the concrete pads, fence, propane tanks and bollards.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: The fiber decommissioning work at Alvey and Bandon would not involve any ground disturbance; therefore, there would be no impact to wetlands.

The project area at Reston Substation has been previously developed, including grading and gravelling of the site. There would be no impact to wetlands.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: The project would not impact groundwater or aquifers, as the maximum depth of disturbance at Reston Substation would be less than 4 feet deep, and there would be no ground disturbance at Alvey and Bandon Substations.

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

Explanation: There would be no change to land use at any of the project locations. Additionally, there are no specially designated areas nearby.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: There would be no change to the visual quality at any of the project locations.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: There would be no impact to air quality at any of the project locations.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: There may be minimal temporary construction noise, which would be comparable to ambient noise at the project locations.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: There would be no impact to human health or safety at any of the project locations.

### **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:

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### **Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination**

Description: The project would be occurring at BPA facilities and adjacent landowners would not be affected.

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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 Recruiting & Staffing

Date: May 16, 2017