

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: LSN Fiber Installation at Slatt Substation

LURR No: LURR 20160401

Project Manager: James Hall – TPC-TPP-4

Location: Gilliam County, Oregon

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) is proposing to allow LS Networks (LSN) to install fiber optic cable and a fiber vault on BPA's right-of-way (ROW) at Slatt Substation. The fiber installation would be located outside of an existing regeneration hut, north of Slatt Substation. The fiber would be placed inside 2-inch conduit, which would run for approximately 25-feet at a depth of 36 inches. LSN would install the new 4-foot by 4-foot underground vault in a location that would intercept existing conduit running between two existing customer vaults, before exiting BPA ROW and continuing to a non-BPA utility pole. Staging of construction equipment would occur off of BPA ROW.

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: June 14, 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 proposed work would occur on fee-owned ROW at Slatt Substation in Gilliam County, Oregon. The project area is adjacent to the northern BPA property boundary and is vegetated with grass and sage shrubs. The surrounding area is mostly undeveloped, range land.

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> Consulting parties for this project included: Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, and Nez Perce Tribe. BPA and Oregon SHPO discussed the project and concurrence was confirmed on June 14, 2017. No response was received from the remaining consulting parties.</p> <p>In the event any archaeological material is 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, BPA archaeologist, appropriate BPA project staff, interested Tribes, Oregon SHPO, 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> Directional boring for conduit installation would impact 25 linear feet of soil at approximately 3-feet deep. The 4-foot by 4-foot vault would be installed underground at a depth of approximately 4 feet.</p>		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Minimal disturbance to existing vegetation would occur. No special-status species are known to occur in the area.</p>		

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



Explanation: The proposed work would occur on BPA ROW inside the substation fence. No federally listed special-status species are known to occur in the area. The Washington ground squirrel is listed as endangered in Oregon. No evidence of ground squirrel presence was observed in or around the project area during the site visit, and soils and vegetation in the project area are inconsistent with known habitat requirements; therefore, no impacts to ground squirrel are anticipated.

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



Explanation: No water bodies, floodplains, or fish are present.

6. **Wetlands**



Explanation: No wetlands are present.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation: No new wells or use of groundwater are proposed.

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



Explanation: There would be no change in land use. No specially designated areas are present.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation: The fiber optic cable would be installed underground and the vault would be flush with the ground surface; therefore, the area would appear similar after project completion.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions would occur during construction.

11. **Noise**



Explanation: A temporary increase in noise would occur during daylight hours during construction.

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—all work would occur on BPA fee-owned property. LSN has coordinated work on adjacent property with the landowner.

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

Signed: /s/ Elizabeth Siping
Elizabeth Siping – ECT-4
Contract Environmental Protection Specialist
Flux Resources, LLC

Date: June 14, 2017